

REGIONAL NIAGARA BICYCLING COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES



Thursday, August 10, 2006
Committee Room #4
7:00 p.m.
(As revised September 21, 2006)

Present:

Brian Baty	- Regional Councillor
Paul Pattison	- Public at Large
Gregg Dame	- Public at Large & Port Colborne Trails & Bikeways Committee
Jan Somerwil	- Public at Large
Dave Hunt	- Public at Large and Cycle Ontario Alliance
Bob Romanuk	- Public at Large & Niagara Falls Trails & Bikeways Committee
Dianne Coppola	- Regional Niagara Public Health
Ken Forgeron	- Regional Niagara Planning
Eric Flora	- Regional Niagara Public Works

Regrets:

Councillor Leavens	- Chair, RNBC
Julie Bittner	- Regional Niagara Public Works (Transportation)

The meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m.

1. Adoption of Agenda

With the addition of the agenda items listed below, the agenda was adopted.

➤ Ms. Coppola's agenda items were moved to the beginning of the meeting.

2. Revamping the Bicycle Friendly Awards Program: Initial Thoughts

Ms. Coppola reported that a meeting for the Bicycle Friendly Awards will be held on August 29th. Some items to be discussed at the meeting are the simplifying of the awards program process, reviewing the criteria and the categories and to award some previous award winners for ideas and previous judges. It is anticipated that three meetings will be held.

3. Healthy Living and Safe Routes to Schools Program

Ms. Coppola and Ken Forgeron will issue a brief backgrounder on this issue which will be discussed at the RNBC strategic planning session. **(Action Item)**

The Ministry of Health Promotion will be holding a Healthy Eating and Active Living Conference on November 29th.

4. Review of Previous Meeting Notes (June 22, 2006)

- Mr. Dave Hunt's name was omitted from the list of those present at the last RNBC meeting.
- The notes should say that both John Docker and Tom Jamieson are from the Region's Public Works Dept.

A motion was passed to approve the meeting notes of June 22, 2006 as amended.

5. Business Arising

The Committee was provided updates on a number of "Action Items" which arose out of the June 22, 2006 meeting notes:

- Mr. Flora reported that 2-3 weeks will be needed in order to manufacture the signage to direct cyclists to the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge.
- Corporate Communications will need to be kept updated on the proposed RNBC newsletter. At a future RNBC meeting a discussion will be held on the type of structure used for the newsletter. Once completed the newsletter will be e-mailed to all Regional Councillors, distributed to other RNBC partners and be posted on the RNBC website.

6. Request for Bicycling Facilities: York Rd. West of St. David's

Mr. Eric Mannapso sent a letter stating that although Queenston Rd. is on the Region's Cycling Network, the Winery Route shows York Rd. as a major east/west route and Steve Bauer has cycling tours on this route as well. Queenston Rd. has gravel and tar sections while York Rd. is paved.

Mr. Flora reported that there was a public consultation process where citizens had the chance to provide comments on the proposed network routes. Mr. Flora said that at the time there were maintenance and right-of-way issues regarding York Rd. However, he did suggest revisiting the network.

Mr. Romanuk commented that Queenston Rd is the better alternative; however, he thought that there was a need to reduce the speeds along the road.

Mr. Flora said that he would investigate the possibility of adding an edge line to York Rd.
(Action Item)

7. Recommended Bicycle Rack Designs for New Regional H/Q Building

A request was made by Regional staff asking the RNBC what type of design and where the bike racks should be located at the new regional headquarters building. Agreement was reached on several quite simple but effective designs. Also, considerable discussion occurred on the need to provide secure, sheltered and well lit facilities. Bob Romanuk

spoke about designs used elsewhere comprised of fenced in, locked and covered bicycle parking compounds. Ken Forgeron agreed to present the Committee's recommendations to the Regional staff member co-ordinating construction of the new addition to the Regional administration building. **(Action Item)**

8. Evaluating Bicycling Facilities in Holland

Jan Somerwil spoke about a Dutch article he copied and commented on regarding a way of measuring areas as to their suitability for cycling. The RNBC may want to explore this technology in the future if it chooses to re-evaluate the approved Regional bicycling network.

9. Bicycle Lanes and Provincial Interchanges: Portland's Blue Lanes

Mr. Hunt reported on a Portland study regarding the painting of bike lanes blue where the bike lanes approached Provincial interchanges and were crossed by cyclists. As well, improved signage was installed at these locations. The purpose of the study was to determine whether cyclists and motorists operated at a safer manner after the improved signage was installed and the blue lines painted. A copy of the study has been sent to the Ministry of Transportation for their consideration.

Mr. Pattison said that if a possible pilot study were to be in Niagara region, similar to the one done in Portland, some locations to be considered should be St. David's Road or Mountain Road at the QEW interchanges.

Mr. Flora said that TAC maybe developing some specifications and he would do some research into this. **(Action Item)**

10. Update on Various EA's

Lakeshore Road (Port Weller) EA – A bump-up request has been made which may delay the 2006 construction of this project.

Lakeshore Road (NOTL) EA – Expressions of interest are being requested.

QEW Widening Through St. Catharines – September 13th is the last date for comments on the ESR. Bike facilities are to be provided on all crossings.

11. Fall Strategic Planning Session – Next Steps

The RNBC strategic planning session tentatively could be held on a Saturday in October. A package of information including the RNBC Terms of Reference, Bicycle Master Plan, web address and previous meeting minutes will need to be pulled together. More discussion on this topic is expected.

12. Possible Pilot Project: Bicycle Racks on Brock Buses

Currently, none of the local transit authorities are interested in installing bicycle racks on their buses. A suggestion was made that perhaps the RNBC could request that a bicycle racks on buses pilot project be implemented. As for who would pay for the bicycle racks to be installed on two buses going to Brock University and/or Niagara College, that would have to be determined.

Also, there is legislation in place which currently does not allow public transit buses to transport bicycles from one municipality to another. Mr. Flora reported discussions have been held with various organizations (example, OCTA) to lobby the provincial government to change this legislation.

The committee suggested that Brock University should continue to push this issue forward. **(Action Item)**

13. Task Force Reports

Encouragement

Dianne Coppola provided her report earlier in the meeting.

Engineering

Mr. Flora updated the committee on the following projects:

East-West Line - The Region agreed to fund the additional costs for paved shoulders along East & West Line between Four Mile Creek Road and Lakeshore Rd. in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Mountain Road in Niagara Falls – The RNBC's request for 1.5 metre lane bike facilities was provided to the consultant.

Pelham Road – This project is currently under construction. The area under construction is Regional Road 69 from 1st Street Louth to Louth St.

O'Reilly' Bridge – The RNBC's request for 1.5 metre lane bike facilities was provided to the consultant.

Beckett's Bridge – Has been officially re-opened. The re-opening event was well attended by a number of cyclists.

Right-of-Way Policies – The right-of-way policy by-law has been approved by Regional Council. Three appeals have been made which are currently being negotiated with regional staff.

Portage Rd. Plaza Project – The consultant would like to meet with an RNBC Engineering Task Force representative to discuss the proposed Plaza staging plan and its effect on cyclists. **(Action Item)**

Policy

No report.

Enforcement and Education

No report.

14. New Business

Car Free Day

Ken Forgeron reported on plans by the Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG) of Brock University to celebrate International Car Free Day on September 22, 2006. This is an annual event celebrated by people around the world to highlight problems caused by our dependence on the private automobile, including air pollution, climate change, stress and safety issues.

Motion:

To participate in car free day by setting up and staffing, through volunteers, the RNBC display at a St. Catharines venue being organized.

Moved by: Dave Hunt

Seconded by: Paul Pattison

Carried

15. Fort Erie Information Sessions

Two information sessions are scheduled within the Town of Fort Erie on September 12 and 13. The purpose of these sessions is to provide information to members of the public on what services the Region provides.

16. 2007 Ontario Trails Conference

The 2007 OTC Conference will be held in the Niagara region. Participation in the event may include presentations by the Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee.

17. Communications Issues

It was announced that Doug Draper, recently hired by the Region to assist in the area of communications, may be available to assist the RNBC if communications issues arise.

18. Items for Next Agenda

- Internship student
- Formation of the RNBC – 2007-2011
- Staging areas and parking for trail riding (Bob Romanuk)

19. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on September 21 in Committee Room 4 at the Regional H/Q building.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Meeting Notes Taken by:

Ken Forgeron, MCIP, RPP
Senior Planner

Typed by:

Julie Bittner
Public Works Department