

REGIONAL NIAGARA BICYCLING
COMMITTEE

Thursday, April 3, 2008
Regional Headquarters – Campbell West
Committee Room #4
7:00 p.m.



In Attendance:

Brian Baty	-	Regional Councillor (Chair)
Ken Forgeron	-	Regional Planning and Development
Eric Flora	-	Regional Public Works Department
Dianne Coppola	-	Regional Public Health Department
Barb Henderson	-	Mayor, Township of Wainfleet/Regional Councillor
Dave Hunt	-	Public-at-Large/Cycle Ontario Alliance
Bob Romanuk	-	Public-at-Large
Pat Maloney	-	Public-at-Large
Peter Davies	-	Public-at-Large/Niagara Freewheelers
Paul Pattison	-	Public-at-Large
Tim Whittle	-	Niagara Region Police Service
Frank Pravitz	-	MTO
Dave Evans	-	Guest
Iain Glass	-	Guest (Brock University)
Julie Bittner	-	Regional Public Works Department

1. Adoption of Agenda

- Adopted as shown.

2. Introduction of Invited Guests

Ian Glass and Dave Evans, two cyclists and members from the public were introduced to the Committee. They were invited to attend the meeting by Ken Forgeron to see what the RNBC was all about and to consider the possibility of future membership.

Ken Forgeron announced that long time RNBC member John Reep had handed in his resignation. John has been a long standing member and advocate who will be missed. His contributions to the Committee have been appreciated.

3. Review of Previous Meeting Notes (February 21, 2008)

- Three revisions noted: Page 3 – “McLeod Road Environmental Assessment (EA) City of Niagara Falls” should be changed to read “St. David’s Road (EA), City of Thorold.” Also, the word “concept” should be added at the end of bullet two.
- Motion on page 6 under Policy Task Force should be revised to indicate that the “recommendations should be forwarded to Regional Planning staff who will discuss the revisions with the City of Port Colborne.”

Motion:

To approve RNBC Meeting Notes of February 21, 2008 as revised.

Moved By: Paul Pattison

Seconded By: Dave Hunt

Carried

4. Review of Previous Action Items (February 21, 2008)

- **Action Item #1 – “Councillor Baty to write a letter to both Brock University and Niagara College Student Unions encouraging them to involve their students in pursuing the issue of bike racks on buses to their campuses.”** - Still outstanding – Eric Flora indicated that the City of Niagara Falls is undertaking a transit masterplan and would like to make a presentation to the RNBC in May. The overall concept is still an issue, but the study could assist in encouraging other municipalities to go forward with the installation of bike racks on buses. Eric Flora suggested that Brock University should continue to lobby for bike racks on buses.
- **Action Item #2 - “Councillor Baty noted that the upcoming report on the RNBC Strategic Plan should be developed and finalized prior to its presentation to cycling clubs like the Niagara Freewheelers for their input.”** – Completed.
- **Action Item #3 – “RNBC and NEDC explore further the possibility of hiring a person to put together a business plan and/or marketing/promotion campaign to promote cycling in Niagara.”** – Progress is being made. A suggestion was made about working with Justin LaFontaine (Bike Train Initiative) to help create a business plan/marketing campaign. Mr. LaFontaine is developing an educational program to assist tourist operations/hotels on how to go about attracting cyclists to their locations.
- **Action Item #4 – “Eric Flora to have staff prepare sketch of possible trail linkage location and arrange meetings with the MTO and Mayors of Pelham and Thorold. This action item is in relation to the 406 crossing of the Thorold/Fonthill Spur.”** – Eric Flora to meet with the mayors of Pelham and Thorold at a future date to discuss.
- **Action Item #5 – “Paul Pattison is to compose a letter in support of the BTAC policy program. A second letter to the City of St. Catharines urging the City to make more of a commitment in its Official Plan and engineering work to facilitate bicycling as one method of combating climate change. Letters will be drafted for signature by Councillor Baty.”** – A draft has been composed for Brian Baty’s signature. A more generic letter will be sent to all municipalities, including Planning, Engineering and Parks Departments within the Niagara Region.
- **Action Item #7 – Frank Pravitz to coordinate meeting in early April with the Development and Mapping Division to discuss the funding issue for the completion of GIS Mapping of the Freewheelers’ cycling routes.** – Meeting to take place April 11th. A grant through the Healthy Living program has been applied for as well.
- **Action Item #18 – Bicycling Parking/Transit Shelter – Proposed structure design will accommodate 12 bikes and an attached bus shelter with bench.** – Ken Forgeron explained that two proposals have been received by shelter manufacturers. The proposals were discussed very positively at a recent CMT meeting. CMT as a group were very supportive, but want to see more detailed designs. Councillor Baty has agreed to present this information to senior staff.

5. Business Arising

- The Strategic Planning Presentation was well received by both the Planning and Public Works Committee and the Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee.
- The three “Proposed Strategic Priorities” were looked at and the two “Critical Issues” were brought forward as well.
- Recommendations #2 (how as a committee do we move forward with active transportation) and Recommendation #3 (creation of a full-time Sustainable Transportation Coordinator) were referred back to staff for a report taking into consideration the joint mandates between the GNCR and the RNBC.

6. Items for Consideration

Possible Rotation Chairs of RNBC

- The Committee was in agreement that a Regional Councillor should continue to chair the RNBC. Councillor Brian Baty agreed to continue in the role.

RNBC Strategic Planning Process – Action Plan for “Area of Focus #2”

- The committee focused on Objective #2 – assisting Niagara municipalities and other stakeholders with the development and implementation of relevant planning documents....for walking/cycling (goal statement abbreviated).
- In the interest of time, it was suggested that any comments or suggestions be e-mailed to Dianne Coppola regarding “Area of Focus #2”.
- Currently, the Region will fund (with Council approval) the implementation of bike lanes on local roads which are on the Regional Niagara Bicycling Network when requested by a area municipality. Also, the Wine Route Enhancement Study has shown that they want certain routes looked at. A suggestion brought forward by the Commissioner of Public Works was that a long range view of not just Regional roads, but local roads should be looked at with priorities established. Perhaps a planning session should be held by the RNBC to prioritize the routes and establish a long term plan. Frank Pravitz expressed interest in the project.

Reconstitution of the RNBC

- Ken Forgeron suggested that this issue be deferred until after the completion of the Strategic Plan. Areas of focus actions are complete.

AODA Customer Service Standard

- Deferred

Future of the Bicycle Friendly Awards Program

- A status report on the program was distributed at the February meeting by Dianne Coppola.
- A discussion was held regarding the value of the program and whether it was worth continuing in its present form, a modified version or discontinued altogether.
- Additional staff support and financial resources would be needed in order to maintain the current program and to move it forward.
- The Committee decided that although the program had seen improvements since its initial conception, it was not growing to the extent that we should continue to put additional staff resources and money into it.
- It was suggested that the Committee could still give recognition if someone saw a business/workplace or school which really stood out from a bicycle friendly standpoint.

Toronto-Niagara Bike Train 2008 – RNBC Participation in Launch Event

- Funding by Greenbelt Foundation and the Ministry of Environment has been increased over 2007.
- Some stops in St. Catharines will be included this year.
- Launch event will be the end of June
- A request has been received to have RNBC members take the train from Toronto to Niagara and back again to celebrate the launch with other dignitaries.
- As in 2007, requesting volunteers to act as bicycle ambassadors again this year to provide information and directions to those departing the train once they arrive in St. Catharines/Niagara Falls.

Agenda Items for Joint Meeting of Bicycling Committees: May 24th

- Ken Forgeron requested members to forward possible agenda items for consideration by the City of Hamilton who will be hosting the event.

Facilitating Bicycle Transportation at the New Hospital: St. Catharines

- Paul Pattison and Frank Pravitz met with Don May, the consultant for the Niagara Health System, who is co-ordinating the development/design approvals. It was suggested that a letter be provided outlining measures (bicycle friendly) that could be incorporated into the design. Some suggestions for changes to a draft letter were prepared. Ken Forgeron agreed to finalize it for Councillor Baty's signature.

Bicycling Mapping, GPS & Google Earth: PowerPoint Presentation (Bob Romanuk)

- With the current web based cycling map you are limited to the number of files you can download from the website
- With Google, users are allowed to mark up routes and share with others
- Marked Google maps can also be viewed from Google Earth
- Photos can be embedded as Waypoints on the map
- Points of Interest (POIs) – For example, parks, restaurants, Waypoints can be identified
- Waypoints are specific locations often designated by a set of coordinates and stored in a GIS database
- Waypoints can be used to identify landmarks and changes of direction for looping tours
- Tour Guide GPX files – with POI loaded software you can upload these files to a compatible unit
- Tour Guide files include POIs, routing information along with optional MP3 sound files to enable an audio tour
- Question was posed, "How will GIS assist cyclists with their future mapping needs if GPS units are used?" Ken Forgeron suggested posing this question to Tom Jamieson of the Region's GIS division. **(Action Item)**

6. Task Force Reports

Education and Enforcement Task Force (Tim Whittle)

CAN-BIKE Program

- Tim Whittle reported that the CAN-BIKE Program he reported on at the last meeting will be taking place this summer in partnership with various organizations, including the Regional Public Health Department, Regional Police Service, Children's Safety Village and the YMCA.
- The pilot project in Welland will be initiated to allow 20 high risk students between the ages of 9 and 12 to attend a free one week camp. At the camp the children will take part in 10 hours of CAN-BIKE training.
- Students will be given a bike and helmet (the 40 helmets that were donated previously will be used for this event).

Police Week

- Will be a one day event (May 10) this year as opposed to a three day event.
- Will be held at the Pen Centre with a Bike Rodeo to take place.
- Requested the set-up of the RNBC display and volunteers for to staff the display and help with the safety clinic. Ken Forgeron volunteered to co-ordinate the display and volunteers.

Bicycle Safety Clinic

- NRP is launching a bicycle self-registration program.
- Official launch date is May 10

- The registration form will be available from bicycle retailers and from the NRP website
- Bicycle owners can complete the form and attach a photo of their bike and send it to the NRP service.
- This will assist the NRP service in returning your bike to you if it is stolen

Encouragement Task Force (Dianne Coppola)

- Dianne Coppola distributed an envelope containing material for its 2008 “Bike to Get There” campaign.

Policy Task Force (Dave Hunt)

- Next step is to incorporate the proposed policies from the Regional Bikeways Masterplan into the Regional Policy Plan.

Engineering Task Force (Eric Flora)

- Possible car pool or future GO Bus lot at the Casablanca interchange in Grimsby
- Bowen Road – received notice that the Bowen interchange is part of a larger feasibility study – Public Information Centre to held on April 17
- 406 EA – Twinning from Port Robinson Road to East Main Street – PIC tentatively scheduled for May 27th
- St. David’s Road – Study is currently with the City of St. Catharines.

7. Items for Information:

- Bike Summit is being held April 25th. Paul Pattison expressed interest in attending on behalf of the RNBC.
- Toronto International Bike Show was held in March. Once again, the Regional Bicycling map was very popular.
- Waterloo Conference: It was reported that many municipalities are hiring Sustainable/Alternative Transportation Coordinators or Transportation Demand Management Coordinators and developing Bicycle Master Plans.

8. Items for Distribution (Ken Forgeron)

The following items were distributed at the April 3rd, 2008 meeting:

- a) 2008 Bike Train schedule
- b) Ride on the Bike Train, “New Ontario pilot program pumps up, speeds cyclists from doorstep to train head – via rails.”
- c) Bicycle Friendly Awards Application/Nomination Form
- d) April 3 article from the Niagara Falls Review, “Commuters jamming Niagara roads.”
- e) January 2008 Cycle Ontario Alliance Ontario Bike Plan
- f) Tour de Greenbelt Bicycle Ride (Fall 2008)
- g) Bike to Get There Passport
- h) On-Campus Accommodation for Cyclists (Brock University)
- i) Draft letter to Donald May from RNBC Chair Brian Baty re: New St. Catharines Hospital and Active Transportation
- j) February 27, 2008 article from www.torontoist.com re: Bike Train II – Bike Harder

10. Items for Next Agenda

- AODA Customer Service Standard (deferred from April meeting) Eric Flora

11. Meeting Adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn:
Moved By: Peter Davies
Seconded By: Paul Pattison

12. Date of Next Meeting:

Thursday, May 15, 2008
Committee Room #4 - Campbell West - 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Notes Reviewed by: Ken Forgeron, Senior Planner
Meeting Notes Recorded by: Julie Bittner