

REGIONAL NIAGARA BICYCLING
COMMITTEE

Thursday, September 18, 2008
Regional Headquarters – Campbell West
Committee Room #4
7:00 p.m.



In Attendance:

Brian Baty	-	Regional Councillor (Chair)
Eric Flora	-	Niagara Region Public Works
Ken Forgeron	-	Niagara Region Planning Services
Dianne Coppola	-	Niagara Region Public Health
Bob Romanuk	-	Public-at-Large/N.F.Trails & Bikeways Committee
Paul Pattison	-	Public-at-Large
Dave Evans	-	Public at large
Frank Pravitz	-	MTO
Penny Pitt	-	Administrative Assistant, Clerk's Department

Regrets

Barb Henderson, Dave Hunt, Pat Maloney, Peter Davies, Tim Whittle

Guest – Manoj Dilwaria – Delcan

1. **Adoption of Agenda**

The agenda was adopted with an addition to announcements of Paul Pattison's update on the City of St. Catharines.

2. **Review of Previous Meeting Notes**

The Meeting Notes of August 7, 2008 were approved.

Motion:

That staff approve of the Meeting Notes of August 7, 2008

Moved By: Paul Pattison

Seconded By: Dave Evans

Carried

3. **Review of Previous Action Items**

Items 4, 13, 15 and 19 were marked complete. Additional comments were made on Items 2 (upcoming Cycle Tourism Forum), 16 (Oct 29/08 discussion with GNCR Committee), 17(Councillor Baty to meet with CAO), 20 (local transit authorities still considering this issue), 21(Niagara Region has made an application) and 24(Peter Davies to develop 2 routes). Please see the Update on Action Items dated October 30, 2008.

4. **Presentation: St. David's Road EA**

Eric Flora reported that the St. David's Road Pedestrian and Cycling Needs Environmental Assessment Project was initiated by the City of St. Catharines. The portion of St. David's Road between the St. David's Road westbound to 406 northbound on-ramp and Burleigh Hill road is now under the Niagara Region jurisdiction. Mr. Manoj Dilwaria from Delcan was introduced to the committee and he followed with his presentation, providing copies to all members. The presentation regarding the environmental assessment on St. David's Road included an overview of the study area, the need for the study, issues and constraints, preferred and alternative design concepts and the next steps to be taken. Following a question and answer period the following motion was made:

Motion:

That staff aggressively pursue this project with the City of St. Catharines, City of Thorold, Brock University and the Ministry of Transportation so that the preferred design concept for the St. David's Road Cycle/Pedestrian right of way begins to move forward in a more timely fashion and that the Regional Niagara Bicycling Committee be updated monthly as to how this project is progressing.

**Moved By: Paul Pattison
Seconded By: Bob Romanuk**

Carried

5. Business Arising

There was no business arising to report.

6. Items for Consideration

Prioritizing and Operationalizing the RNBC

Dianne Coppola provided the committee with an overview of prioritization methods to use in implementing the RNBC Strategic Plan. Through discussion, a suggestion was made to separate the committee in three groups to represent the three areas of focus, Network, Policy and Promotion. Councillor Baty suggested staff coordinate membership on the work groups and set up a meeting to review and prioritize the action items. The work groups can then bring this back to the full committee for review, further discussion and adoption. **(ACTION ITEM)**

Reconstituting and Resourcing the RNBC

Ken Forgeron suggested that since the strategic plan was now set out, the committee should advertise for more members including Brock University and Niagara College in order to bring more members to the table. After discussion it was decided that recruitment should wait until the action items of the Strategic Plan have been finalized by the end of 2008.

Niagara to GTA Corridor: Bikeway consideration

Ken Forgeron commented on the fact that in reviewing the August 2008 issue of the NGTA newsletter he found no mention of bicycling. The RNBC had provided comments to MTO about maintaining connectivity in the bike network, including safe crossings of highways. Eric Flora expanded with information that the "Area Transportation System Problems and Opportunities Report" will be distributed in late 2008. Public Information Centres will be held at that time to provide the public with the opportunity to review and provide comments on the report and discuss study issues with Project Team representatives. A meeting with the Ministry of Transportation and the RNBC will be arranged closest to the report distribution date. **(ACTION ITEM)**

7. Task Force Reports

Engineering /Network Task Force

- Report PWP 37-2008 Projects/Studies Activity Report, Transportation Strategy was distributed to the committee
- Eric Flora briefly went over the Regional projects that are related to the cycling network.
- Bikeways Master Plan – staff to update GIS Layer - Memo to TSSC Sept. 30th will be sent out if approved by the TSSC
- Meeting to be held with Paul Pattison, Eric Flora, and Niagara Falls Bridge Commission to discuss Queenston Lewiston Bridge Plaza improvements. **(ACTION ITEM)**
- Frank Pravitz recommended speaking to John Rizzo re Regional hot mix program, Part II **(ACTION ITEM)**
- 406 Port Robinson Road to East Main Street Preliminary Design and Environmental Assessment Study – Project Team would like to meet with RNBC before next PIC to discuss their input to date

Education and Enforcement Task Force

Discussion regarding the Safety Poster/Brochure was deferred to the next meeting due to absence of Pat Maloney and Tim Whittle.

Encouragement Task Force

Dianne Coppola advised the committee that three applications for the Bicycle Friendly Awards were received. Volunteers were needed to help judge the applications. The judging committee would meet on October 8, 2008 from 3 – 4 p.m. in Campbell East Room 205. Councillor Baty and Ken Forgeron's offer of assistance was accepted. Awards will not be presented at Council as has been past custom due to the small number of awards and the committee's earlier decision to fade out the awards program in its current format. The judging committee can determine how best to get the awards to the winners, either mailing out the plaques with a cover letter from Councillor Baty or individual presentations at the winner's site depending on location.

Policy Task Force

Regional Planning staff met recently with the City of Port Colborne who are considering revisions to its Official Plan. This will include changes to policies that will better facilitate walking and cycling.

The Policy Task Force will meet in early October to consider possible revisions to the bicycling policies and mapping contained in the Regional Policy Plan. This will be a public process and formal amendment under the *Planning Act*.

8. Items for Information

Update on GNCR/RNBC Joint Meeting of Sept. 17, 2008

Councillor Baty, Paul Pattison, Dianne Coppola, Eric Flora, Ken Forgeron and Penny Pitt attended the GNCR/RNBC joint meeting. Council Baty gave an overview of the Regional Niagara Bicycling Committee Strategic Plan and a copy of the report was distributed among the two committees.

Daryl Bender, Project Manager, Alternative Transportation, City of Hamilton Public Works, was the guest speaker. Daryl primarily works on cycling infrastructure. One of his current tasks is the development of a new Cycling Master Plan for the City. He also manages the implementation of bike lanes. Prior to working for the City of Hamilton, Daryl worked as a transportation planner at McMaster University and with private consulting firms. He is a past professor at Mohawk College in their Transportation Engineering program. Within the transportation profession, Daryl's main passions are cycling and transit.

Daryl's presentation discussed the evolving expertise of TDM (Transportation Demand Management), whereby a variety of modes of travel are promoted and improved to curb auto traffic - including cycling, transit, carpooling, etc. He stressed the following points: Trail networks are not exclusively for recreation, but they are also used by commuters. TDM is not only expanding the network for cycling and transit, rather it includes promotion - through printed materials, maps, etc. and through websites. There is growing demand from employers to provide this service to employees as parking lots need to expand beyond available land, traffic congestion increases and the cost of driving increases.

Preceding a discussion of the Strategic Plan, facilitated by Mary Balfour, Ken Forgeron provided copies of a current organizational chart which provides an overview of the committee hierarchy regarding general and active transportation issues. Dianne Coppola provided the committees with an explanation of the Healthy Active Living Corporate Steering Team and its basic functions.

The discussion was focused on two issues; (1) whether there is a need for a different organization structure/committee to provide overall coordination for all active transportation issues (cycling, walking, and trails) and (2) exploring the pros and cons of having a full time staff person responsible for coordinating active transportation issues. Comments from members of both committees were compiled and will be distributed for further comments from the RNBC committee members not in attendance. **(ACTION ITEM)**

NRPS Media Releases

The following media releases were distributed among the committee.

- Man critically injured in limited speed motorcycle collision
- 10 - year old cyclist tragically killed in a trolley bus collision
- Can-Bike Rodeo in Welland

Provincial and Federal Funding Programs

- FCM GMF Sustainable Transportation Application

On August 29, 2008, an Ontario TDM Municipal Grant Application in the amount of \$50,000 was submitted to the Ministry of Transportation by Alan Gummo, Associate Director, Comprehensive Community Planning.

Another application may be submitted to FCM to undertake a bicycling signage/wayfinding project. Frank Pravitz had prepared notes on how the project should proceed. He will send these to Eric and Dianne. **(ACTION ITEM)**

- Laminated Cycling Map

Bob Romanuk spoke to the committee regarding the lamination of the bicycling map with the possibility of posting in places such as provincial tourism offices, gateways, train stations, city hall, libraries, wineries, etc. A price for these maps needed to be determined with specific locations receiving them gratis i.e. provincial tourism offices. The first step would be to obtain a cost for the production of a smaller table top version of the laminated map. It was suggested that this could be a project to complement the FCM grant application previously discussed. In an effort to obtain funding for the maps correspondence to NEDC, Ministry of Tourism, and Conservation Authority will be drafted. **(ACTION ITEM)**

- 2009 RNBC Draft Meeting Schedule

A draft 2009 Meeting Schedule was distributed to the committee for their review.**(ACTION ITEM)**

- Items for Distribution

The following items were distributed at the meeting:

1. Fort Erie Times – “Librarian chooses her bike as ideal transportation”
2. Niagara News – “Thorold cyclist reaps benefits of active lifestyle”
3. Niagara This Week – “Permanent road safety signs to be erected”
4. St. Catharines Standard – “Police issue warning as manhole covers go missing in Thorold”
5. General background on “Bicycle Risks”

9. Items for Next Agenda

- Presentation - Kids Can Bike Project – Marion Landry
- Prioritizing action items of RNBC Strategic Plan

10. Announcements

▪ Ontario Cycling Tourism Forum January 22-23, 2009

Ken Forgeron noted that the upcoming conference will be of interest to many members of the RNBC. Ken has been asked to speak. The new library of Scenic Bicycle Ride will be featured.

▪ World Car Free Day, Monday, September 22, 2008

The committee was encouraged to celebrate World Car Free Day with the Garden City Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (GCAST) at the Niagara Artists Centre, 354 St. Paul St., St. Catharines.

6:30 p.m. Parking Meter Party

7:00 p.m. FREE Basic Bicycle Repair and Maintenance Workshop by Liberty Bikes

8:00 p.m. Speaker: Heather McDonald, Toronto Cyclists Union

Car Free Day is an annual event celebrated by more than 100 million people in more than 1,500 cities around the world in order to highlight the many problems caused by our dependence on the automobile, including air pollution, consumption of costly, non-renewable energy, global warming, stress, serious injuries and fatalities. Car Free Day events emphasize the need for more and better public transportation, bicycle-friendly streets, multi-use trails and sidewalks.

▪ What Has Been Happening In St. Catharines

Paul Pattison brought the committee good news from St. Catharines. Bike lanes are finally being rolled out. For the first time St. Catharines has striped some roads for bike lanes: Lakeport Road, Geneva Street, parts of Linwell, Port Weller East (off road trail funded by Region) as well as their very first one, the Merritt Street Bridge. Carlton Street will be having the whole length painted, Niagara – Geneva and Lake to Ontario.

Fortunately, the city's lack of any action up until a month ago, lead to the formation of an advocacy group – Garden City Alliance for Sustainable Transportation. The GCAST took Council on a bike tour, met with the mayor and senior staff and have set up contacts. The group also expect to have a meeting with the Ministry of Transportation regarding highway crossing issues.

11. Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

12. Date of Next Meeting:

- Thursday, October 30, 2008 in Committee Room 4, 7:00 p.m.

▪ **Meeting Notes Reviewed by:**

Eric Flora, Public Works, Ken Forgeron, Planning and Dianne Coppola, Public Health

▪ **Meeting Notes Recorded by:**

Penny Pitt, Clerk's Department