



**REGIONAL NIAGARA BICYCLING COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES**

**Thursday, August 9, 2007
Committee Room #4
7:00 p.m.**

Present:	Brian Baty	-	Regional Councillor (Chair)
	Ken Forgeron	-	Regional Planning Department
	Dianne Coppola	-	Regional Public Health Department
	Paul Pattison	-	Public-at-Large
	David Hunt	-	Public-at-Large/Cycling Ontario Alliance
	Bob Romanuk	-	Public-at-Large
	Eric Flora	-	Regional Public Works Department
	Jan Somerwil	-	Public-at-Large
	John Swartz	-	Niagara Freewheelers/St. Catharines Standard
	Peter Davies	-	Public-at-Large/Niagara Freewheelers
	Ted Higgins	-	Guest
	Connie Mancuso-Redman	-	Regional Public Works Department (meeting notes recorder)
Regrets:	Frank Pravitz	-	MTO
	John Reep	-	Public-at-Large
	Tim Whittle	-	Niagara Regional Police Service

1) Adoption of Agenda

- Additional items were included:
 - i) RNBC website

Motion:

To accept the Agenda of August 9, 2007, as revised

Moved By: Dave Hunt

Seconded By: Jan Somerwil

Carried

2) **Review of June 28, 2007 Meeting Notes**

- i) Ken Forgeron was not noted as being in attendance.
- ii) **Under 4 b)** – bullet point 6 – add – *"RNBC members to send names of individuals who might provide an informed response to the draft to Dianne Coppola."*
Councillor Baty to determine if draft plan can be vetted externally before going forward to Committee and Council.
- iii) **Under 4 c)** – consensus of committee members was that these events were heavily reliant on volunteers and not always effective venues for promoting cycling. Decision was made not to pursue promotion at local markets at this time.

Motion:

To accept and approve the Meeting Notes of June 28, 2007 as revised.

Moved by: Jan Somerwil

Seconded by: Dave Hunt

Carried

3) **Business Arising**

- (a) No new items to report on at this time.

4) **Items for Consideration**

(a) **Finalizing Strategic Plan**

- Councillor Baty will meet with staff to determine next steps for finalizing the draft Strategic Plan.
- Dianne Coppola reported that she received no further comments from committee members regarding the draft report.
- This topic will be back on the September's Agenda.

(b) **RNBC Website**

- Corporate Communications have inquired about bringing the RNBC website under the corporate umbrella (i.e. onto the Regional website).
- Eric Flora had discussions with Kimberlee Lambe (Corporate Communications) and Paul Taylor (Information Systems) concerning the need to have the RNBC website stand alone. Some members of this committee believe that there may be fewer opportunities to incorporate meaningful information for cyclists if it is put on the corporate site.

(c) **Ted Higgins (Guest) – Speaking on the Need for More Promotion of the Niagara Region for Cycling Through the Business Community**

- Ted Higgins was in attendance at this meeting to discuss the need and to obtain information and comments from this committee about the need for more promotion (possibly through the business community) to attract cyclists to this area from all parts of the world.
- He noted that the Niagara region has much to offer cyclists and that the Niagara area has potential to be a prime cycling destination.
- Many cyclists look for vacation spots and Ted feels that there is insufficient promotion for the Niagara area to attract these individuals.
- "Avid" cyclists have money to spend and so this would benefit the whole community.
- Ted explained the need to obtain support from the business community, local Chambers of Commerce, hotel associations, etc. (get entrepreneurs interested in cycling for the dollars it will generate in the community).
- He believes the RNBC's strategic plan should involve the business community.
- Eric Flora explained the Region's 'Master Plan' for cycling in Niagara and that Ted's concerns and issues have been studied by this committee.
- Paul Pattison explained that not all of the 12 municipalities within the Region are ready to promote and build bike lanes.
- Ken Forgeron offered to meet with Ted Higgins before the committee's next meeting to discuss the history and purpose of the RNBC.
- Contact information was exchanged by members and Mr. Higgins.
- Dave Hunt asked if Ted Higgins could return to the next meeting prepared with a written plan of action to present to this committee and NEDCorp.
- Ted's final remarks centered on the fact that marketing is the key and that the RNBC's website should not lose its identity by becoming part of the corporate website.

Action Item:

This Committee has recommended that a representative from NEDCorp (Niagara Economic Development Corporation) be present at our next meeting (September 20th) and prepare a presentation on what their corporation is doing to promote cycling in the Niagara Region. Connie Mancuso-Redman will contact Patrick Gedge, CEO, to request a representative be present at this meeting.

5. Task Force Reports

Engineering Task Force

McLeod Road Transportation Study:

- An EA may be initiated this fall, subject to budget approval.
- The MTO is still adamant in using a shared-use wide bike lane across the structure.
- The MTO is not in agreement with a separated clear zone for bicycles.
- The Region is trying to obtain a 1.5 m bike lane for the Dorchester to Drummond area.

St. David's Road Pedestrian and Cycling Study:

- The City of St. Catharines will be filing the EA within the next few months (approx.).

Lake Street Reconstruction in Grimsby:

- The Region has asked for an update from the Town Engineer, but as yet, have not heard back.
- Region is looking for a speed reduction, signage and bike lanes through this area and will be taking a report PPWC requesting Council approve the on-road bike lanes (as per approved policy).

Transportation Services Sustainability Review:

- The road jurisdiction issue of which roads shall remain Regional and which may go back to the municipalities will be part of this assignment.
- The issue of the existing funding policy for bike lanes on local streets (that are part of the approved network) will be reviewed.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Municipal Green Fund Applications:

- 6 municipalities are putting in their joint submission by next Wednesday.
- Councillor Baty has sent a letter to Nancy Sutton of Opportunities Niagara showing support for this undertaking.
- Eric Flora has information from MTO on bike racks. Buses equipped with bike racks now will be able to cross from one jurisdiction to another via a special vehicle configuration permit issued by the Ministry of Transportation.

Regional Road Allowance Policy

- The Regional road allowance policy is now approved. The Region did not have one in place previously. OMB approval of the Regional policy has now been given.

- There will be an amendment to this policy with regard to including Rice Road and giving back Pelham Road/South Pelham Road to the Town of Pelham/City of Welland.

Portage Road Now Regional Road:

- An 'Order in Council' confirmation has been received by Regional Council that Portage Road is now a Regional Road. Council is in the process of designating a Regional Road number.
- The Niagara Parks Commission will be providing more property for accommodating future bike facilities.
- A Policy Plan Amendment to the Road Allowance Policy will be required.

O'Reilly's Bridge:

- This topic (i.e. EA on bridge rehabilitation) has been deferred.
- Regional Transportation Department has to submit report and go back to Council with this. Heritage issues will be discussed.
- There are no concerns about bike lanes over the bridge.

Mountain Road from Taylor to Mewburn:

- Filing EA study on August 29, 2007.
- Paved shoulders 1.5 m. wide to be provided.
- Clear zone designated with bike lanes over QEW acceptable to Region/MTO

Niagara to GTA Corridor EA:

- Province released the Study Plan, Overview of Transportation & Socio-Economic Conditions report and Overview of Environmental Conditions report on their website
- They are looking for comments back.
- Dave Hunt was asked if he would like to prepare a response on behalf of the RNBC. He agreed to do so.

Action Item:

Dave Hunt to prepare a response on behalf of the RNBC to the Province, regarding the Niagara GTA Corridor study plan.

Fly Road/Campden Road:

- Ken Forgeron attended a meeting with Totten Sims Hubicki and Regional Public Works on a study of different options for accommodating cycling. Both on-road, as well as off-road facilities on parallel trail systems will be evaluated.

- TSH is supporting the idea of keeping on-road bike lanes. The RNBC support the use of on-road bike lanes as well, since it is on the Regional Bikeways Network.

Lakeshore Road (Niagara-On-The-Lake):

- Ken Forgeron attended a meeting with Delcan Corporation concerning the provision of bicycling facilities along Lakeshore Road (between Four Mile Creek Road and East-West Line), which is quite narrow.
- The consultants are going to examine alternatives for off-road/on-road facilities. The study may examine alternative engineering standards, including paving over culverts for cycling. It will look at the cost factors, as well.

Niagara-On-The-Lake Bike Parking:

- Jan Somerwil commented on the poor condition of most of the bike racks situated in Niagara-On-The-Lake. These racks are owned by private businesses; therefore, Ken Forgeron suggested that complaints and suggestions for improvements should be forwarded to the local businesses.

Education and Enforcement Task Force

- Report deferred in Tim Whittle's absence.

Encouragement Task Force

- Dianne Coppola reported on the 'Bike to Get There' Campaign.
- Media coverage for this event has been good.
- The return of passports has not been as well as expected.
- The 2 displays at headquarters have been well received with materials being well distributed.
- Judging for 'Bike Friendly Awards' is scheduled for September 17, 2007 from 3:00 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the Campbell East Room #207. If any other committee members want to help with judging the applications, please let Dianne Coppola know.

Policy Task Force

- Ken Forgeron informed the committee that, like the Town of Niagara-On-The-Lake, the Town of Lincoln will be asked to introduce new bike standards in their Zoning By-law.

6. Items for Information and Distribution

Distribution Items:

- i. Letter to Nancy Sutton (Opportunities Niagara) regarding Regional Niagara Bicycling Committee (RNBC) Support for a Niagara Inter-Municipal Transit Service

- ii. Waterfront Regeneration Trust – Waterfront Conference and Trail Ride – September 19 & 20, 2007 – Palais Royale, Toronto, ON
- iii. Niagara Falls Review Article (August 9, 2007) – "Father, Son Committed to Bike Campaign"
- iv. "A Transport of Delight – Segways for Disabled Users on Municipal Sidewalks"
- vi. "Cycling Niagara – Scenic Ride" (Via Destinations Guide – by Peter D. A. Warwick)
- vii. Toronto Star Article (July 12, 2007) – "Wheeler-dealer gets a Niagara Bike Train"

Information Item:

Ken Forgeron is looking for someone to attend the **Waterfront Regeneration Trust Conference** on September 19 and 20, 2007 at the Palais Royale in Toronto. Ken will be attending to facilitate one of the workshop sessions on behalf of the Regional Planning Department. Eric Flora is scheduled to attend, but is looking for an alternate to take his place at the conference. If there are any interested members able to attend, please contact Eric or Ken.

7. Items for Next Agenda

- i) **Topic of Discussion: Promotion of Cycling in Niagara by Ted Higgins**
In attendance will be *Betsy Foster, Media & Marketing Coordinator* and *Renato Romanin, Senior Business Development Officer* from **Niagara Economic Development Corporation (NEDC)**.
- ii) **Next Steps on Formalizing Strategic Plan**

8. Date of Next Meeting –

Thursday, September 20, 2007
7:00 p.m.
Committee Room #4

9. Motion to Adjourn:

Motion:

That the August 9, 2007 meeting of the Regional Niagara Bicycling Committee be adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Moved by: Bob Romanuk
Seconded by: Dave Hunt

Carried

Meeting Notes prepared by:

Connie Mancuso-Redman, Regional Niagara Public Works Department

Reviewed by:

Ken Forgeron, Senior Planner, Regional Planning Department

Eric Flora, Associate Director, Transportation Systems, Regional Public Works Department

Dianne Coppola, Manager, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Regional Public Health Department