

# REGIONAL NIAGARA BICYCLING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES



Meeting of Thursday, February 10, 2005  
Committee Room #4  
7:00 p.m.

## Present:

Ron Leavens	- Regional Councillor (Chair)
Paul Pattison	- Public at Large
Bob Romanuk	- Public at Large
Jan Somerwil	- Public at Large
Peter Davies	- Niagara Freewheelers
Gregg Dame	- Port Colborne Trails and Bikeways Committee
Frank Pravitz	- Ministry of Transportation
Dave Hunt	- Public at Large and Ontario Cycling Alliance
Bill Dickson	- Guest
Marian Landry	- Regional Niagara Public Health
Tim Whittle	- Niagara Regional Police Service
Ken Forgeron	- Regional Niagara Planning
Phil Bergen	- Regional Niagara Public Works (Transportation)
Julie Bittner	- Regional Niagara Public Works (Transportation)

## Regrets:

Eric Flora	- Regional Niagara Public Works (Transportation)
Brian Baty	- Regional Councillor
Bill Rashleigh	- Public at Large

The meeting commenced at 7:05.

## 1. Adoption of Agenda

The order of the agenda was revised, and with the addition of the agenda items listed below the agenda was adopted.

### ***Motion:***

***To accept the agenda as amended.***

***Moved by: Jan Somerwil***

***Seconded by: Bob Romanuk***

***Carried***

Paul Pattison requested to speak on the following item:

- International Bridge Crossings

Ken Forgeron requested to speak on the following item:

- Proposed motion related to the Region's new office accommodations

Bob Romanuk requested to speak on the following item:

- Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals

Dave Hunt requested to speak on the following item:

- Velo Ontario Annual General Meeting reminder

Phil Bergen requested to speak on the follow item:

- TAC survey on bicycle pavement markings

## 2. Review of Previous Meeting Notes (January 11, 2005)

**Motion:**

**To accept and approve the meeting notes of January 11<sup>th</sup>.**

**Moved by: Jan Somerwil**

**Seconded by: Dave Hunt**

**Carried**

## 3. Business Arising

The Committee was provided updates on a number of "Action Items" which arose out of the January 2005 meeting notes:

- Mr. Flora has not yet spoken to Marshall Macklin Monaghan regarding the directional signage program. **(Action Item)**
- Mr. Watson (Regional Public Works) is preparing a response to the memo sent by the RNBC regarding sweeping and maintenance of Regional roadways on the bicycling network. **(Action Item)**
- Mr. Pattison reported that the letter to the City of St. Catharines regarding the possible extension of the Terry Fox Trail and the request for a pedestrian/bicycling crossing over or under the QEW was delivered to the City. To date, a response to the letter has not been received.
- Dave Hunt circulated a brochure produced by the City of Toronto on the proper use of bike lanes. Mr. Bergen will show the brochure to Mr. Flora as he had previously indicated that the Public Works Department was interested in designing and producing a similar cycling brochure with input from the RNBC. **(Action Item)**
- It was reported that Public Works staff are still looking into the type of signage that can be installed at the Queenston Heights traffic circle indicating to cyclists to "take the lane." **(Action Item)**
- It was decided that Action Items which arose out of the January meeting notes for the RNBC Terms of Reference 2003-2006, would be discussed under agenda item #5.
- Chair Leavens will schedule a meeting with Patrick Gedge of the NETC to discuss promotion strategies for trails and bikeways in Niagara. **(Action Item)**

- Mr. Bergen reported that the RNBC's budget for 2005 would be the same as 2004 (ie. \$10,000).
- It was reported that Mr. Dickson received a copy of the preliminary 2004 accident statistics.
- Mr. Pattison will report on the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge under the New Business part of the agenda.
- Mr. Bergen reported that he had brought the Glenridge Avenue drawings to the meeting for viewing as a question arose at the last meeting as to where the bike lanes are in relation to the commercial plaza. Mr. Bergen reported that the configuration for the shared use lane portion is the same as on Louth St. adjacent to Tim Horton's at Regional Road 81.
- Mr. Forgeron reported that the Bikeways Master Plan had been approved by Regional Council pending further consultation with the municipalities on any revisions to the network that they may have. Regional Public Works will be meeting with municipalities early in 2005. **(Action Item)**

#### **4. RNBC Presence at the Toronto International Bike Show**

Mr. Forgeron reported that the NETC has requested that the volunteers distribute all the information kits (500) which have been put together for the show. He also reported that there are only 1,000 bike maps as well as the NETC's Niagara Seasons magazine to be handed out as well. Also, Mr. Forgeron asked that if by the end of day on Saturday the volunteers notice that they are running out of materials such as the Niagara Season's magazine, to please let him know in order that more magazines can be picked up. Mr. Forgeron has made arrangements with the NETC for more stock if needed.

Mr. Forgeron reported that Councillor Timms had requested that the volunteers discuss the Greater Niagara Circle Route and their fund raising efforts.

Mr. Forgeron distributed bicycle tourism photos to the RNBC and requested that three photos be chosen. The three photos will be added to the RNBC display at the Toronto International Bike Show. The RNBC chose the following photos:

- Niagara Freewheelers at the end of their ride in Jordan
- Mountain bike photo in Short Hills Provincial Park
- Photo of bicycling along the Canal

#### **5. Revisions to Proposed Terms of Reference - RNBC**

##### Outstanding Issues

##### 1.0 Background

Mr. Hunt reported that he had been provided with the date that the Master Plan was approved by Council. Mr. Forgeron said that the Plan has not been approved in its entirety and suggested that wording be added indicating that the Plan was approved, "subject to further discussions with the local municipalities on the bicycling network mapping."

### 3.7.3 Record of Proceedings

In an e-mail from Mr. Flora to the RNBC dated February 9<sup>th</sup>, he stated that the RNBC meeting notes could be "received" at Public Works Committee and that the following wording should be added to the draft Terms of Reference, "That the minutes of the RNBC meeting of (date) be received and the recommendation therein be referred back to staff for comment."

While this approach might be appropriate for notes that only provide information, Chair Leavens suggested that items in the minutes which need to be dealt with in different way, other than by just having them received, should be flagged in order to draw the Public Works Committee's attention to them for specific action.

Mr. Forgeron suggested that RNBC Motions could be flagged with the either "Receive for Information, "Refer to Staff" or "Approve". This would be similar to the method used in the Planning Department for all of its sub-committees when their reports are sent to the Planning Services Committee. This approach was accepted by the RNBC.

Mr. Hunt contacted Marshall Macklin Monaghan regarding the inclusion of representatives from a Public Transit Authority, the insurance industry, the trucking industry and the CAA as members of the RNBC in the Terms of Reference. Marshall Macklin Monaghan said that the four interest groups did not need to be included, but instead could be invited as guests for specific agenda items, but not included in the membership list.

### 3.7.2 Quorum

It was determined that a quorum for RNBC meetings will be 50% of the voting members in attendance at the meeting plus one.

### 3.4 Membership

An invitation will be extended to various agencies to send a representative to sit on the RNBC. However, if no response is received by an agency then that agency will not be included as an RNBC member. The actual RNBC membership number will be determined once responses have been received from all invited agencies.

### 3.14 Conflict of Interest

It was determined that wording regarding conflict of interests would be added to the RNBC agenda. Any voting member with an interest which is pecuniary in nature would be expected to declare it at the beginning of every RNBC meeting.

## **6. Progress on Bike Week/Planning**

Marian Landry indicated that Bike Week will be held from May 9 – 15<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Landry distributed a cover letter and a package which provides an introduction to Bike to Work Week. Approximately 100 workplaces received the cover letter and the package. Once a workplace registers, the workplace will receive a separate Team Captain's kit. Bike Week's official launch will be April 1<sup>st</sup> in the cafeteria at Regional Headquarters. April 1<sup>st</sup> (8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.) was chosen as the launch date because it was recommended that the launch should be held six weeks before the start of Bike to Work Week.

It has been discovered that one reason why people do not bike to work is because of the perception that cycling is unsafe. Therefore, Four "Like to Bike" education courses are being offered to teach safe cycling strategies and help people become more comfortable while cycling in traffic. There is a \$10.00 course registration fee and prizes and refreshment are included in the cost. Mr. Forgeron indicated that this re-emphasizes the importance of providing paved shoulders and marked bike lanes.

## **7. Local Official Plans and Bicycling Policies**

Mr. Forgeron reported that the Planning Department is reviewing Fort Erie's Official Plan. However, there is very little detail in the Plan to support cycling. Although there is a local network, it does not dovetail with the Region's network. Mr. Forgeron has sent comments back requesting more support for cycling. As he reviews other municipalities' Official Plans, copies will be provided to the RNBC for comment.

Chair Leavens reported that the Town of Pelham's Official Plan is on "hold" pending the outcome of the Greenbelt legislation. The Town will be addressing this issue.

## **8. Progression on Bicycling Map Update Project**

Mr. Pravitz reported that he has been compiling a list of errors and updates which need to be corrected on the bicycle map. He requested staff's assistance in clarifying some of the information on the map. For example, addresses for the bike shops and wineries need to be verified. He would also like to incorporate scheduled construction plans for 2005 on the updated map. The Friendship Trail is to be extended another 12 kilometers this year. He would like to have this extension shown on the map. Gregg Dame has requested that the City of Port Colborne include supportive policies and mapping in the Official Plan update also.

The following people volunteered to assist Frank on an “as needed basis” to review map proposals and to verify the accuracy of information: Ken Forgeron, Bob Romanuk, Paul Pattison and Tim Whittle. **(Action Item)**

### Sponsors and Advertisers

As they did last year, the NETC will look after obtaining advertisers for the map. One approach Mr. Pravitz mentioned to the RNBC is to have various business cards around the edge on the reverse side of the map which will show the urban inset maps.

The plan for 2005 is to have inset maps of St. Catharines, Thorold, Welland, Fonthill and Niagara Falls. However, Mr. Whittle expressed concern that other cities and towns may be slighted if they are not included. It was suggested that perhaps the local Chambers of Commerce should be approached to see if they are interested in having an inset map of their town/city included on the map and whether they would pay for the cost. Mr. Forgeron expressed concern that there may not be enough space on the back of the map to include both advertising and urban insets from all the towns and cities.

Mr. Pravitz reported that once clarification is received on some of the details, the consultant should have the changes made quite quickly. The deadline for completion is May 2005 to allow time for printing and distribution in June.

## **9. Update on Regional Bicycle Master Plan Project**

Phil Bergen reported that Eric Flora intends to meet with the local municipal public works directors to discuss the proposed bicycling network as directed by Regional Council. Some local municipalities, like Thorold and Welland, would like to include some additional roadways on the regional network.

With the approval of the bicycle master plan, the actions can occur on developing revised policies for inclusion in the Regional Policy Plan under Bicycling. The Master Plan also sets out procedures for dealing with road maintenance, for example, sweeping on roadways that involve the regional network. However, the proposed sustainable transportation coordinator position has been put on hold due to budgetary considerations.

Approval of the Bicycle Master Plan and network, at this point, allows the RNBC to comment on environmental assessment projects at the local and regional level that may affect bicycling.

Councillor Leavens added that Council approval is a step forward in maintaining the current policy in the Regional Policy Plan for the possibility of funding projects on local roadways with Regional Council support.

## **10. Glenridge Ave. EA - Progress**

Phil Bergen reported on the final approved designs for Glenridge Ave. south of the CNR bridge. The roadway curbs and islands have been constructed according to the approved EA drawings. Where the roadway fronts onto access points at the commercial plaza, centre islands/boulevards have been constructed, thus necessitating the need to have 4.25 metre shared use lanes. In these few locations there will be a need to install "share the road" signs as suggested by Bob Romanuk.

## **11. 2005 RNBC Budget**

Phil Bergen reported that Regional Council has approved the Regional Public Works 2005 Transportation Studies account (Parent Project ID ZRE0503). Regional Public Works staff will allocate \$10,000 towards the 2005 RNBC budget under a line item to be titled "Bicycling Initiatives," similar to the process followed in 2004.

## **12. Task Force Reports**

### Enforcement

Tim Whittle reported that on May 1<sup>st</sup> the City of Niagara Falls will be hosting the Greater Niagara Circle Trek ride anchored at Fireman's Park. A bicycle rodeo will be organized, which will be patterned after the bicycling festival model. Passports will be provided to each participant who will move from stations-to-station for instruction and free lunches will be provided to all participants. Mr. Whittle requested volunteers to assist with the rodeo.

### Policy

Mr. Hunt indicated that with the approval of the Regional Bicycling Master Plan, there will be an opportunity in 2005 to initiate an amendment to the Regional Policy Plan to revise the current official plan policies on bicycling.

Mr. Hunt indicated that efforts of the Policy Task Force were now focused on the new RNBC Terms of Reference.

### Engineering

Paul Pattison and Frank Pravitz attended a PIC meeting on the EA for the QEW through St. Catharines. Lane space will be provided over the Lake St. bridge which will accommodate cyclists. There is a hope that when Geneva St. (under the QEW) is reconstructed that some space will be provided for cyclists. Mr. Pravitz advocated for the provision of bicycle lanes along the North Service Roads which will allow for east/west travel.

### **13. Niagara-GTA Corridor**

This item was identified by Dave Hunt, as a multi-model MTO Transportation Study from Niagara to the GTA. The MTO has drafted an Environmental Assessment (EA) Terms of Reference for the project and is requesting comments until April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005. A review of this document by Mr. Hunt resulted in seeing no inclusion of any reference to bicycles. Mr. Hunt urged that the RNBC consider some form of input into the Terms of Reference to ensure that the MTO incorporates considerations for bicycles.

### **14. Velo Ontario Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

Mr. Hunt reminded the RNBC that the AGM for Velo Ontario (Cycling Ontario Alliance is the enhanced name) is coming up on Saturday, February 19<sup>th</sup> in the main legislative building, Queens Park, in Toronto. The meeting will start at 8:45 a.m. with coffee and pancakes, and will include free draws for great prizes. Agenda topics and registration (you must register to be able to enter the Legislative building) can be obtained on the website at [www.cycleontario.ca](http://www.cycleontario.ca).

### **15. Queenston-Lewiston Bridge**

Mr. Pattison did further investigation on proposals for the bridge crossing both during and after reconstruction. The proposed lanes will be 12 feet wide during construction. During that time cyclists may have to be shuttled across the bridge during very busy times. After construction, the outer lane will be 12 feet wide with a two foot paved shoulder. The south side lane will be for trucks only. At that point cyclists may have to take the car lane which will be just to the left of the truck lane. More experienced cyclists probably should use the car lane.

On the Whirlpool Bridge no cyclists will be permitted even if they are able to receive NEXUS passes.

Mr. Pattison spoke to Arlene White of the Ministry of Tourism who is associated with the Bi-National Tourism Alliance. Mr. Pattison raised issues and concerns over the ability of cyclists and pedestrians to cross bridges like the Whirlpool Bridge. He suggested that more emphasis needs to be given providing NEXUS passes to cyclists. Ms. White may speak to Rob Nicholson, Conservative MP – Niagara Falls, who is the transportation critic for the Conservative Party. Finally, Mr. Pattison suggested that a letter should be sent to the Rob Nicholson, MPP, the Tourism Alliance and associations such as the Bruce Trail Association to solicit their support for maintaining access over international bridges.

## 16. Proposed Regional Office Accommodations

Mr. Forgeron advocated that the new centralized regional administration facility should accommodate employees and the public who may use alternate means of transportation, including more active transportation modes like cycling and walking.

Mr. Forgeron raised the issue of wellness and accessibility considerations as they apply to the new regional accommodations to be constructed at the regional headquarters site. Mr. Forgeron put forward the following motion:

***Motion:***

***“That the following items be considered for implementation through the current planning and design activities of the Accommodations Working Group and/or future regional building initiatives:***

- adequate bicycle parking facilities that are secured, sheltered from the elements and well lit.***
- modest change room and shower facilities for employees who cycle to work or exercise during the lunch hour period***
- sidewalks, pathways and transit (bus shelters, pull-over bays) that allow people to reach the new centralized regional facilities through alternative means of transportation.”***

***Moved by: Paul Pattison***

***Seconded by: Dave Hunt***

***Carried***

Councillor Leavens sits on the Accommodations Review Steering Committee and can speak to the above motions supported by the RNBC.

## 17. Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals

Mr. Romanuk spoke on and recommended that the RNBC become a member of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals. This organization promotes excellence in the emerging professional discipline of pedestrian and bicycle transportation. Members include engineers, planners, landscape architects, urban designers, safety and promotion professionals who specialize in improving conditions for bicycling and walking. The annual cost to be a member is \$95.00. There was a motion to join the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals.

***Motion:***

***That the RNBC join the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals.***

***Moved by: Bob Romanuk***

***Second by: Dave Hunt***

***Carried***

Mr. Forgeron agreed to send in the application. **(Action Item)**

**18. Transportation Association of Canada Survey on Bicycle Pavement Markings**

Mr. Bergen reported that Eric Flora would be completing the survey sent out by TAC, which was looking at best practices across the country. Niagara's practices will be provided to TAC. **(Action Item)**

**19. RNBC Website Availability to Others**

Mr. Romanuk reported that the RNBC website has a lot of space available to it on an annual basis. Any new information on bicycling should be provided to Mr. Romanuk for inclusion on the Regional website.

Mr. Romanuk requested that the Niagara Falls Trails and Bikeways Committee be provided access to the website to post information items. One example concerns the current debate on the Millennium Trail and its promotion. There was general support around the table that the Niagara Falls Trails and Bikeways Committee could be provided with space as long as the wording, which would be posted, would be reviewed and approved by the RNBC. Any issues that are divisive and politically sensitive should be considered carefully.

**20. Items for Distribution**

- DPD 8-2005 "Economic Benefits of Trails and Bikeways" prepared by the Regional Planning Department.
- E-mail article titled "The Future Isn't What it Used to Be: Changing Trends and Their Implications for Transportation Planning" and the importance of transportation system diversity ie. bicycling
- Article on 'Blue Bicycle' lending program in Buffalo patterned on programs in Toronto and Europe
- Copy of a map showing possible trail markers for "Shoreline Trail" in New York State
- Planning report on the Economic Benefits of Trails and Bikeways
- Information on the Toronto International Bicycle Show (floor plan attached to it) and booth location
- Volunteer list for the Toronto International Bicycle Show (March 4-6, 2005)
- ITE Journal article discussing nine design and safety myths about bicycle transportation
- E-mail from Frank Pravitz re: new bike map issues
- Article titled "Britain falls behind Europe in the cycling stakes"
- Hamilton Spectator article titled "City is creating more bike lanes"

**21. Next Meeting: March 10, 2005**

The next RNBC meeting will take place on Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in Committee Room #4 at Regional Headquarters.

***MOTION:***

***To adjourn the February 10, 2005 RNBC meeting.***

***Moved by: Dave Hunt***

***Seconded by: Paul Pattison***

***Carried***

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Meeting Notes Taken by:  
Julie Bittner

Reviewed by:  
Ken Forgeron, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Planner