

REGIONAL NIAGARA BICYCLING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES



Meeting of Thursday, February 23, 2006
Committee Room #4
7:00 p.m.

Present:

Ron Leavens	- Regional Councillor (Chair)
Brian Baty	- Regional Councillor
Bob Romanuk	- Public at Large & Niagara Falls Trails & Bikeways Committee
Paul Pattison	- Public at Large
Dave Hunt	- Public at Large/Cycle Ontario Alliance
Jan Somerwil	- Public at Large
Gregg Dame	- Public at Large & Port Colborne Trails & Bikeways Committee
Tim Whittle	- Niagara Regional Police Services
Dianne Coppola	- Regional Niagara Public Health
Ken Forgeron	- Regional Niagara Planning
Eric Flora	- Regional Niagara Public Works (Transportation)
Julie Bittner	- Regional Niagara Public Works (Transportation)

Regrets:

Frank Pravitz - Ministry of 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.

- Progress on Lakeshore Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake (Eric Flora)
- Paved shoulders on East/West Line in Niagara-on-the-Lake (Eric Flora)
- Regional Road 3 in Fort Erie, Environmental Assessment Addendum (Eric Flora)
- Merritt Street bridge (Paul Pattison)
- Item for distribution regarding Cycle Ontario Alliance Annual General Meeting (Dave Hunt)

Motion:

To accept the agenda of February 23, 2006 as revised.

Moved by: Jan Somerwil

Seconded by: Gregg Dame

Carried

2. Review of Previous Meeting Notes (January 12th, 2006)

Motion:

To accept and approve the meeting notes of January 12th.

Moved by: Dave Hunt

Seconded by: Paul Pattison

Carried

3. Business Arising

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

- Mr. Pattison provided Mr. Forgeron with the technical guide for the RNBC reference library for Mr. Forgeron to catalogue. **(Action Item)**
- Mr. Flora read an excerpt from the August 2001 RNBC meeting notes pertaining to the issue of a possible new entrance for Walker Bros. onto Mountain at Beechwood (now Taylor). At that meeting Mr. Forgeron explained the proposed changes to Mountain Road. The RNBC passed a motion that due to the concerns of a potential increase of truck traffic and high speeds due to the Mountain Rd. re-alignment, support not be given to an amendment to Walkers' quarry license site plan to allow a new entrance to the quarry and to not support a regional entrance/exit permit onto Taylor Road near Mountain Rd. This motion was carried. Mr. Flora further reported that at the August 16th, 2001 Regional Council meeting, PWA report 159-2001 on Mountain Rd., was being considered. At that time, Councillor and then RNBC Chair Brian McMullan made a motion requesting, "That, at the issuance of a future entrance/exit permit or quarry license, site plan amendments not be permitted at a realigned Mountain Rd. and Taylor Rd." This motion was carried by Regional Council at the August 16th, 2001 meeting. However, Mr. Flora said that Walkers proposed new entrance is actually south on Taylor Road and Mountain Rd intersection and has been developed in context of the overall EA for the Walkers landfill expansion project.
- Ms. Coppola reported that she had not received notification of any Bike Month activities. Mr. Whittle said that he would forward information to her regarding some events that would be taking place. Mr. Romanuk requested notification as well of any events which will take place so he can post them on the RNBC website.
- Mr. Flora reported that an Ontario Community Transportation Association (OCTA) meeting was recently held to discuss lobbying the provincial government to change legislation which currently does not allow public transit buses to transport bicycles from one municipality to another. Mr. Flora attended on behalf of the RNBC and said that he obtained information from the meeting regarding which transit systems use bike racks, the installation costs and which systems are considering this initiative. There was a video shown on a specific manufacturer's type of bike rack and if requested by the RNBC, Mr. Flora will look into obtaining a copy. Mr. Forgeron suggested that the RNBC lobby the City of St. Catharines to initiate a "bike racks on St. Catharines transit" pilot project; perhaps using a route from

downtown St. Catharines to Brock University. Mr. Hunt suggested contacting the City of Ottawa/Carleton for more information, with this initiative. **(Action Item)**

- Mr. Flora said that he had no new information to provide at this time in regards pedestrian and cyclist needs when crossing the QEW at the Glendale Avenue interchange in NOTL. He did report that he had spoken to Mr. Brian Hughes about the reinstatement of pavement markings on York Road. Mr. Hughes will review and report back to Mr. Flora. **(Action Item)**
- Mr. Forgeron suggested that a sub-committee be formed to create a “Made in Niagara” brochure on the proper use of bicycle lanes. He sent a copy of Toronto’s brochure to Mr. Whittle. **(Action Item)**
- Mr. Whittle distributed the Year 2005 Bicycle Collision Statistics, but said that the statistics were incomplete as they do not reflect collisions which may have occurred in Niagara Falls. He currently has a student working on updating these statistics. From the statistics we do have, he was able to report that half the bicycle collisions resulted in injuries. As well, there was an increase in collisions involving children between the ages of 10-15. He also noted that there were 12 incidents where a cyclist was hit and the vehicle driver left the scene of the accident. This is a very trouble-some statistic. Mr. Whittle said that he believes that once the final 2005 statistics are completed, they will be in line with previous years. Ms. Coppola said that a media campaign would be initiated for Bike to Work Week. One idea is have an article and quiz educating people on proper cycling technique. She suggested that perhaps the problem with drivers failing to remain could be incorporated into the article and quiz. Mr. Whittle offered to assist Ms. Coppola with this. **(Action Item)**
- Mr. Forgeron reported that the Niagara-on-the-Lake zoning by-law is still in the preliminary stages. It will probably be a few months before the by-law is approved. However, the Town has introduced requirements in the by-law for bicycle parking spaces at various locations. Someone suggested that the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake be nominated for a Bicycle Friendly Award in the Institution category. Please keep this in mind for the next award program.
- Mr. Forgeron reported that the Upper Canada Trail in Niagara-on-the-Lake is owned by the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Mr. Somerwil reported that this trail is currently very messy as people have been riding their horses on the trail. He suggests splitting the trail and designating one side for cyclists and the other for horses. As well, he repeated his concern regarding farmers encroaching on the trail right-of-way. Mr. Forgeron suggested that a motion be passed recommending to the Town that the Heritage Rail be maintained for public access.

MOTION: That the Upper Canada Heritage Trail in Niagara-on-the-Lake from East/West Line to York Road be maintained as a public access for trail users and that encroachment on the right-of-way by adjacent landowners be prevented.

Moved by: Dave Hunt

Mr. Flora said that a staff report on the Niagara-on-the-Lake Master Plan would be moving forward in April and that RNBC comments on this issue would be reinforced in the staff report. **(Action Item)**

4. RNBC Comments on Walker Environmental Assessment for a Proposed Landfill Expansion

Mr. Whittle said that he would meet with Mr. Davies and Mr. Somerwil and review the draft EA traffic report. They will compile a list of comments and concerns and bring this information to the April 6th RNBC meeting for our approval. However, since comments on the Walker EA need to be submitted by April 7. The comments will be submitted indicating that while they have been approved by the RNBC, they have not been approved yet by the Planning and Public Works Committee or by Regional Council.

5. Completion of RNBC Bicycle Map: 2nd Edition (Next Steps)

Mr. Forgeron announced that the 2nd edition of the bike map has been completed. The map will be unveiled for the Regional Councillors at the March 2nd Regional Council meeting. The RNBC will have 50,000 copies of the map printed which includes Heart Niagara's request for an additional 10,000 copies of the map which will be included in kits they are developing as part of the Active 2010 grant they received. The 10,000 maps will be purchased with their own funds.

A \$2.00 donation amount will be shown on the map in the hope of generating funds for future reprinting. The Region's Corporate Communications office is working on the development of the media release.

Mr. Forgeron distributed a memo from Gary Hardy of the Niagara Economic Development Corporation regarding both the distribution and marketing of the bicycle map. Mr. Hardy has suggested a strategy whereby a possible \$30,000 would be generated from donations collected on 15,000 maps allocated for retail stores, some sponsors, bike shows, public requests and events.

Mr. Forgeron requested that a sub-committee be formed to help in the distribution of the map to local retail stores (wineries, bike shops). Also, in terms of distribution, Mr. Pravitz would like to approach the organizers of both the Squeezer and the Lake to Lake ride regarding the inclusion of the map in the give away bags usually distributed to cyclists at these events. He would like to request a \$1.00 donation for each map instead of the \$2.00 we are requesting. **(Action Item)**

6. Toronto International Bike Show

Mr. Forgeron was happy to report that most spots (about 25) have been filled in terms of volunteers needed to staff the RNBC display. As well, volunteers have offered to both set-up and take down the display. The RNBC display has been enhanced for this year's bike show. The new map will be distributed along with a hand out bag (ie tourism information) being put together by Tourism Niagara.

7. RNBC Strategic Planning Session

Ms. Coppola said that she had not sent out the e-mail listing of the names of all the facilitators who were contacted as other options were being pursued at the time and she wanted to send out a consolidated list. Once she does have the list completed, she will send it out to the RNBC. Councillor Leavens said that they would put together a short list of facilitators who we may be able to hire at a reasonable price. **(Action Items)**

8. 2006 RNBC Budget

Councillor Leavens said that due to the current Regional budget set-up, there is some confusion as to how much money the RNBC has on an annual basis. Councillor Leavens has spoken to Joe Cousins, Director Transportation Services Division, about having the RNBC submit an annual budget to him. Mr. Cousins agreed with this suggestion. Councillor Leavens requested that at the April 6th meeting the RNBC create a budget for the remainder of 2006. The budget would include what we need to spend on a strategic planning session including expenditures for a facilitator. The budget will be submitted to the Planning and Public Works Committee for approval.

It was suggested that a list of priority items, which RNBC members think should be included in the 2006 budget, be developed before the next meeting. Mr. Forgeron suggested that everyone send any items to Frank Pravitz who will be asked to put together the list. **(Action Item)**

9. Membership Renewal: Association of Pedestrian & Bicycle Professionals

Mr. Forgeron discussed whether we should renew our membership with the Association of Pedestrian & Bicycle Professionals. As the RNBC contact person he receives daily e-mails and a list service from the Association. The ideas are very interesting, however, due to planning work load issues, he is unable to fully use the service to its potential. Mr. Romanuk and Mr. Forgeron will discuss some ideas in terms of managing the large volume of e-mails Mr. Forgeron receives. **(Action Item)** Ms. Coppola requested that e-mails dealing with healthy living, physical activity be forwarded to her attention.

10. Update on Proposed Amendment for Regional Road Allowances (Bicycle Network)

Mr. Flora said that a joint Planning and Public Works report was submitted to the Planning and Public Works Committee on February 1st. Some of the concerns expressed by the elected officials and public were in regards to compensation, having roads designated as heritage roads and having roads too close to their home. A report will be brought back to the Planning and Public Works Committee addressing both the public's and Committee's concerns.

11. St. David's Road Pedestrian and Cycling Needs Study

Mr. Flora reported that the limits for the EA will be between Merrittville Highway and Burleigh Hill/Collier Road. He asked that a member of the RNBC fill out the fax back form. Mr. Pattison agreed to do so. **(Action Item)** Currently the study is in the data collection stage. There will be no public information centres until, at least, mid to late April.

12. Community Forums on Obesity Strategy: Community Design (March 6)

Mr. Forgeron requested two volunteers for the March 6th strategy forum on community design initiatives. Some of the items to be discussed include trail development, bike lanes and sidewalks. Councillor Baty volunteered and either Mr. Whittle or Mr. Hunt will try to attend as well.

13. Task Force Reports

Policy

No report.

Enforcement and Education

2005 Bicycle Collision statistics were reported earlier under Action Items.

Engineering

Merritt St. Bridge

Mr. Flora reported that a Notice of Study Completion has been filed. Copies can be found at both St. Catharines City Hall and at the library located on Hartzel Road. Mr. Pattison reported that there would be a 1.5 metre buffer zone on both sides of the road. There would also be painted lines and this area could be used by cyclists.

Information provided by the City of St. Catharines after the February 23rd RNBC meeting indicated that the bike symbol would not be painted on the lane at this time.

East/West Line

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake will be rehabilitating and resurfacing a portion of East/West Line between Lakeshore Rd. and Niagara River Parkway and has asked the Region to pay for the cost of including bikeways facilities on the road. Although it is not a Regional road, it is included on the Region's Bikeways Master Plan. The issue of cost sharing is included in Policy 9.F.3 of the Region's Policy Plan. Mr. Flora will bring the Town's request forward to the Planning and Public Works Committee and Regional Council for approval. Tentatively, Public Works' staff will be recommending support for cost sharing. He will also find out which part of East/West Line will be completed this upcoming year.

Garrison Road Environmental Assessment

Mr. Flora reported that the EA Addendum has been completed. The current cross section will be resurfaced and turn lanes will be added. There will be wider sidewalks and boulevards.

Lakeshore Road Bikeway Facilities

The Region and the Town of Niagara-on-the-lake will be meeting to discuss what course of action to take with respect to providing new bike lanes along Lakeshore Road, east of Townline Road.

Encouragement

Bicycle Friendly Awards

Suggestions have been made to revamp the awards criteria in order to simplify the award process. As well, it was suggested that the timing of the awards be moved to coincide with Bike Month in the Spring of 2007. Ms. Coppola requested that the RNBC agree to suspend the awarding of the Bicycle Friendly Awards for 2006. This would provide the Bicycle Friendly Award organizers the opportunity to work on the awards criteria form over the summer and early fall.

MOTION:

That the 2006 Bicycle Friendly Awards be suspended conditional upon the award criteria being revamped and the date the awards are presented changed to coincide with Bike-To-Work Week in 2007.

Moved by: Gregg Dame

Seconded by: Brian Baty

Carried

Bike-to-Work Week

Ms. Coppola will bring the proposed budget forward at the next meeting. The budget to date for Bike-to-Work Week (BTWW) activities is roughly \$2,700. This amount is inclusive of the purchasing of prizes and soliciting donated prizes. The tentative launch date for BTWW is May, which is also the first day of Bike Month. She reported that Marian Landry is looking for volunteers to help plan both the launch and the follow-up to BTWW. Orientation dates for BTWW will be held at the end of April.

Ms. Coppola mentioned that Parks and Recreation Ontario is hosting their annual forum in Niagara Falls from April 9 – 12th. She suggested having the 2nd Edition Bike Map included in the delegate packages which will be distributed to forum participants.

Ms. Coppola also said that she had information available on the forum if the RNBC was interested in setting up a display table.

Ms. Coppola reported on the Active 2010 – Niagara-on-the-Move campaign. If anyone is interested in being involved in the planning part of this campaign please let her know. She said that Marian Landry had spoken to John Docker, who worked on the 2nd Edition

of the RNBC map, regarding the development of a map similar to the 2nd Edition Bike Map, but more focused on recreation trails within Niagara.

14. New Business

Mr. Hunt distributed a copy of the Cycle Ontario Alliance home page which highlights the rescheduling of the Annual General meeting to March 25th in Toronto.

15. Items for Distribution

- Reply to George Nicholson from the City of Thorold regarding comments/suggestions to improve the Greater Niagara Circle Route.
- Response from Brian Hughes regarding the reconstruction of Regional Road 20 at Highway 406. Mr. Hughes' notes that there is sufficient space in the clear zone next to the barrier wall for bicycle use.
- St. Catharines Standard article dated February 16th on the role the environment plays in health.
- Niagara This Week article dated February 17th, 2006 regarding the completion of the Greater Niagara Circle Route.

16. Items for Next Agenda

- 2006 RNBC budget

17. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on April 6 in Committee Room #4.

MOTION:

To adjourn the February 23, 2006 RNBC meeting.

Moved by: Dave Hunt

Seconded by: Paul Pattison

Carried

Meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Meeting Notes Taken by:
Julie Bittner
RNBC Recording Secretary

Reviewed by:
Ken Forgeron, MCIP, RPP
Senior Planner
and
Eric Flora, P.Eng., CET
Acting Associate Director Transportation Systems