

# REGIONAL NIAGARA BICYCLING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES



Meeting of Thursday, June 10, 2004  
Niagara-on-the-Lake @ Smuggler's Cove Boat Club  
6:00 p.m.

## **Present:**

Ron Leavens	- Regional Councillor (Chair)
Paul Pattison	- Public at Large
John Reep	- Public at Large
Dave Hunt	- Public at Large & Velo Ontario
Brenda Sidlar	- Guest
Bob Romanuk	- Public at Large
Dwight Alguire	- Public at Large
Peter Davies	- Niagara Freewheelers
Tim Whittle	- Niagara Regional Police Service
Frank Pravitz	- Ministry of Transportation
Ken Forgeron	- Regional Niagara Planning
Eric Flora	- Regional Niagara Public Works (Transportation)
Julie Bittner	- Regional Niagara Public Works (Transportation)

## **Regrets:**

Rob Gabriel	- Regional Councillor
Brian Baty	- Regional Councillor
Jan Somerwil	- Public at Large
Greg Dame	- City of Port Colborne Trails & Bikeways Committee

## **1. Adoption of Agenda**

With the addition of the agenda items listed below, the agenda was adopted as revised.

- Update on Bikeways Master Plan
- QEW Widening through St. Catharines
- Dunnville Spur Line
- RNBC – Budget Item
- Peace Bridge Update
- Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18

There was a suggestion, which was widely supported, that the RNBC meeting should adjourn no later than 7:20 p.m.

## **2. Review of Meeting Notes of May 13, 2004**

Mr. Flora requested the following changes be made to the May 13<sup>th</sup> meeting notes:

- Item 5 (page 4), paragraph 5 the words, "... but now will be a contract position..." should be deleted and the wording "... but no decision will be made on this additional staff person until a later date," should be added.
- Item 16 (page 9), the first bullet point should read OTM Book 18 and not Book 7 as was written.

### **3. Business Arising**

It was reported that Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation was owed \$2,000 for approved work they had done on the Bike Map in 2003. Due to an oversight, this money had not been paid to them. The payment was authorized by former Councillor Brian McMullan and Public Works staff and will come out of the \$10,000 that the RNBC has in their 2004 budget allocation.

Dave Hunt said that Ottawa has expressed interest in duplicating the map. Marshall Macklin Monaghan was asked to contact Regional staff in order to get a better understanding of how the maps were produced.

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

- Eric Flora reported that he had contacted the Executive Director of the GBNTRC. He reported that the Buffalo Pedestrian and Cycling Coordinating Committee had been disbanded as it was found that dealing with issues on an individual basis worked better. Their Bicycle Master Plan Update Terms of Reference are on their website. Due to staffing issues, they are unable to send a representative to an RNBC meeting until the Fall. At that point they will also have a better understanding of where they are headed with their own master plan. They are currently updating their two-year bicycling map and once completed the RNBC will be provided copies.
- Councillor Ron Leavens reported that the Ad Hoc Committee met with Ralph Scholz from the Region and Delcan and a number of compromises were reached. As far as Regional Road 20 through the Town itself, there will be no bicycle lanes included. There will be a four lane configuration to Hurricane and a five lane configuration from Hurricane to Rice Road. A standard 0.5 metres of paved shoulder will be included in the final configuration.
- Mr. Flora reported that two copies of the Regional Police Service's Safety Task Force's Road Strategic Plan (2004-2008) were distributed to the Encouragement Task Force and the Education and Enforcement Task Force for their comments.
- An update on "Advocacy – Local Investment in Bicycle Facilities" was deferred as Mr. Pravitz was not at the meeting at this time.

- Mr. Forgeron reported that the two draft letters, which dealt with the Merritt St. Bridge and the QEW crossings, were revised and signed by Councillor Leavens and sent to the City of St. Catharines. Copies of the signed letters will be attached to the RNBC Meeting Minutes and sent to Public Works Committee. A copy of the Engineering Task Force comments on the Hartzell Road Neighbourhood Secondary Plan also will be attached. The Committee was reminded that any letter that is sent out from the RNBC must be signed by the RNBC Chair.
- The Glendale Avenue Environmental Assessment (EA) will be extended further to the west and will include the Domtar properties. Councillor Timms is interested in saving the existing spur line for possible future tourism use. The developer would like the spur line moved, but have a trail component built within the right-of-way. The Region is also interested in having the existing line removed due to safety reasons.
- The 2004 Strengthening and Resurfacing contracts have been awarded. Except for Point Abino Road, the list remains the same as the one distributed at the last meeting.
- Mr. Flora reported that had a copy of the signage plan is available for viewing. He also said that Niagara-on-the-Lake is going through a master plan update and they have been looking at cycling. Niagara-on-the-Lake has come up with some additional trails other than the ones that are included on the Regional network. The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake will also be having a second Public Information Centre on their master plan.
- Mr. Forgeron had previously distributed a list of possible activities for the RNBC Task Forces from 2003 to 2006. He requested that if anyone had any changes or additions to forward them to him. He will finalize the list and hand it out at the next meeting. **(Action Item)**

#### **4. Distribution of Maps**

It was reported that there are currently about 7,000 maps left in storage. So far approximately \$4,000 to \$5,000 is in the map reprinting account. Frank Pravitz will speak about this issue further at the July meeting.

#### **5. Highlights of May 15 Joint Meeting of Bicycling Committees**

Ken Forgeron distributed meeting notes from the May 15 Joint Meeting of Bicycling Committees. He reported that the meeting was very well attended and some of the topics discussed included roundabouts, the status of cycling committees, signage and cycling issues within the Hamilton – Burlington area. He

also reported that he had received numerous compliments on the new Niagara Bicycling Map.

Members who were in attendance commented on how well the turn out was and that the discussions that took place were very beneficial and thought provoking.

**6. Road Sweeping/Maintenance (Priority Areas)**

In terms of the Fifteen Mile Creek area, Mr. Forgeron said that due to the unique environmental situation special efforts were made to deal with erosion in this area. The trail is on the outside with a little swale separating the multi-use trail from the roadway. Mr. Forgeron suggested that a motion be made requesting that the Public Works Department maintain the multi-use trail, at least, on this portion of Regional Road 81 once it is constructed. If debris is not cleaned it could pose a significant safety concern for down-bound cyclists.

***Motion: A memo be sent to the Regional Public Works Department requesting that roadways on the Regional Bikeways Network be given priority in terms of sweeping and maintenance, particularly in the Spring.***

***Moved by: Paul Pattison***

***Seconded by: Dwight Alguire***

***Carried***

**7. Highlights of "Walkable Communities in Niagara" Web-Cast Workshop**

Marian Landry reported that she had attended a web-cast workshop on Walkable Communities in Niagara. Ms. Landry reported that the web-cast was presented by the City Administrator and the Mayor of the City of Erlanger, Kentucky who spoke about what they did to make their community more walkable and bikeable as well as the associated health benefits. The main message of the presentation was "If you build it, they will come." Some important factors to consider include the need for compact, mixed land use, bike network connectivity, good street design, emphasis on safety and aesthetics.

A copy of the presentation was forwarded by e-mail to RNBC members earlier in the day and if anyone had any questions to please forward them to her via e-mail.

Mr. Forgeron suggested that a joint report be completed and submitted to the Public Works, Public Health and Planning Services Committees and asked for support from Public Health in preparing the report. Ms. Landry said she would speak with her manager and advise Mr. Forgeron. **(Action Item)**

**8. Photos for New RNBC Display**

Mr. Whittle suggested having a photo contest in order to get new photos for the RNBC display. The photos would focus on cycling and a prize could be given to the winners.

Mr. Forgeron explained that the Regional website has a photo gallery whereby people submit pictures to be displayed on the Region's opening page. The person's name is included with the photo and the photo becomes the property of Regional Niagara. He suggested that perhaps this may be a good start in developing a gallery of cycling photos.

**9. Attendance at Pro-Walk/Pro-Bike Conference**

Marian Landry reported that her presentation on the Bicycle Friendly Awards – encouraging events, supportive environments and the policies that support cycling, has been approved for a poster display at the Pro-Walk/Pro-Bike Conference in Victoria this September. She also mentioned that the presentation by Councillor Bruce Timms on the Greater Niagara Circle Route had also been approved. Ms. Landry provided a breakdown of what the cost of her trip to Victoria will be. Although the bulk of the cost would be paid for by the Public Health Department, Ms. Landry requested that the RNBC consider underwriting part of the cost of the trip.

Bob Romanuk offered to attend the Conference on the RNBC's behalf as he would be in the Victoria area on another matter during this time. The only cost to the RNBC would be for the conference registration. Mr. Romanuk could assist in showcasing the new bicycle map and speak on the work of the RNBC.

Ken Forgeron said that although there had been some discussions about attendance at the conference, there were no specific decisions made on how the RNBC budget money would be spent.

***Motion: To pay Bob Romanuk's \$555.00 registration for the Pro-Walk/Pro-Bike Conference and to contribute \$300.00 towards the cost of Marian Landry's registration.***

***Moved by: Paul Pattison  
Seconded by: Dave Hunt***

***Carried***

**10. Dunnville Spur**

Mr. Flora reported on the Dunnville Spur which is an abandoned CPR railway corridor that goes through the Township of West Lincoln. It was reported that the

Township of West Lincoln is no longer interested in cost sharing on the purchase and trail construction of the abandoned rail line due to liability and maintenance issues. The corridor will now most likely be sold off to abutting landowners.

#### 11. **Bikeways Master Plan Update**

As discussed at previous RNBC meetings, Frank Pravitz volunteered to go to each municipality and make a presentation on the Bikeways Master Plan. He distributed a draft presentation at the May meeting for comments. Mr. Flora said that he had been directed that the municipalities would need to have further information on the financial component before any other advocacy presentations are made. He will be working with the Corporate Services Department to help them with this component as part of a multi-year strategic plan exercise.

Councillor Leavens reported that he had spoken to Commissioner Ian Neville and it was also suggested the RNBC should hold off on any presentations to the municipalities until we have very accurate costs for the municipalities on the Bikeways Master Plan.

Councillor Leavens reminded the RNBC that a number of municipalities are revising their Official Plans and suggested that it would be a good opportunity to contact the local municipalities and request the inclusion of bike lanes.

Mr. Forgeron emphasized that while costs are important the presentations and information to local municipalities should be balanced to include information on the social, economic and health benefits that bicycle tourism and utilitarian cycling provides.

#### 12. **QEW Widening**

Mr. Flora reported that a meeting would be held on June 15<sup>th</sup> involving the Region, the Ministry of Transportation and the City of St. Catharines to discuss various issues relating to the QEW widening. One item to be discussed is the issue of including cycling facilities on the Martindale Road and Lake St. structures. Mr. Flora will provide an update at the next meeting. **(Action Item)**

#### 13. **Peace Bridge**

Mr. Pattison said that he sent a letter on bicycle access on a redesigned Peace Bridge, but never received a reply. He was wondering what was happening with the expansion project. Mr. Flora requested that Mr. Pattison forward a copy of his letter to him and he will ask Phil Bergen to follow-up on his request. He also said that he had a meeting scheduled for June 17<sup>th</sup> and would discuss this with the Peace Bridge Authority representative. **(Action Item)**

**14. Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18**

Mr. Flora reported that the City of Toronto has not yet heard back from the Ministry of Transportation on this manual which applies to bicycle transportation planning and design issues.

**15. Task Force Reports**

No reports.

**16. Items for Distribution**

To be deferred to the next meeting. **(Action Item)**

**17. Possible Agenda Items for July 8<sup>th</sup> RNBC Meeting**

None presented.

**18. Next Meeting – Thursday, July 8, 2004**

Committee #4, Regional Niagara Headquarters building.

Meeting Notes Taken by:  
Julie Bittner

Reviewed by:  
Ken Forgeron, MCIP, RPP, Senior Planner