

# REGIONAL NIAGARA BICYCLING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES



Meeting of Thursday, September 11, 2003  
Committee Room #4  
7:00 p.m.

## Present:

Rob Gabriel	- Regional Councillor (Chair)
Bob Romanuk	- Niagara Falls Trails and Bikeways Committee
Paul Pattison	- Public at Large
Peter Davies	- Niagara Freewheelers
Frank Pravitz	- Ministry of Transportation
Tim Whittle	- Regional Niagara Police Service
Bill Crux	- Public at Large
Dwight Alguire	- Public at Large
Marian Landry	- Regional Niagara Public Health
Ken Forgeron	- Regional Niagara Planning
Bob Johnson (Transportation)	- Regional Niagara Public Works
Phil Bergen	- Regional Niagara Public Works (Transportation)
Julie Bittner	- Regional Niagara Public Works (Transportation)

## Regrets:

Councillor Brian McMullan	- Chair
John Reep	- Public at Large
David Hunt	- Public at Large

## 1. Adoption of Agenda

P. Pattison requested to speak to the Committee about an issue with the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge. This item was added under Other Business. The agenda was adopted as revised.

***Motion:***

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

***Moved by: Bob Romanuk***

***Seconded by: Bill Crux***

***Carried***

## 2. Review of Meeting Notes of July 10, 2003

***Motion:***

***To adopt the RNBC Meeting Notes of July 10, 2003.***

***Moved by: Bill Crux***

***Seconded by: Paul Pattison***

***Carried***

### **3. Business Arising**

K. Forgeron reported that the balance of the RNBC budget had been released which will allow for the reprinting of various RNBC information brochures that are nearly exhausted.

### **4. Bicycle Master Plan – Next Steps**

The Bicycle Master Plan went to the Transportation Strategy Steering Committee on Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>. The TSSC requested that a breakdown of the cost by each municipality be provided. Once this information is provided the Bicycle Master Plan should be finalized. B. Johnson reported that the cost breakdown by municipality will be done by P. Bergen, if his workload permits, or else by our consultants (**Action Item**). Other than the breakdown request by the TSSC, no other changes will be made to the Bicycle Master Plan. T. Whittle asked why there is a concern by the municipalities regarding the cost if it is a Regional plan. B. Johnson responded that in the 1995 plan it was stated that if the network were to occur on a regional road then the Region would be responsible for the cost, however, if it was a municipal road, then the municipality would be responsible for the cost of implementing the network. However, municipalities can look into partnerships to help with funding the project (example, SuperBuild).

B. Johnson reported that once the breakdown is completed the Plan would go back to the TSSC and once finalized it will go to Regional Council.

R. Gabriel asked what percentage of the \$71 million cost of the Plan was Regional and what percentage was municipal. P. Bergen said he would provide that information as well (**Action Item**).

F. Pravitz asked what the Regional policy would be in regards to signage through the municipalities. B. Johnson reported that he had created a Municipal Traffic Committee, comprised of Regional and local staff members, and the issue of signage should be addressed at this committee. The Committee will be meeting on September 25, and the question regarding Regional policy on signage will be added to the agenda. B. Johnson recommended, that after the municipal elections, arrangements will be made to have the Municipal Traffic Committee report to the Public Works Committee. Signage policies will therefore be dealt with on a Region wide basis regardless of jurisdiction.

### **5. Future Role of RNBC: Bicycle Master Plan Recommendations**

K. Forgeron said that there are proposed recommendations in the Bicycle Master Plan to revise the mandate of the RNBC. At the next meeting, he would like to have

a discussion about what future role the RNBC will have. B. Johnson said that a copy of the mandate would be provided to Committee members. **(Action Item)**

F. Pravitz recalled that the consultants said that the existing RNBC mandate is consistent with other bicycling advisory committees and the consultants did not seem to be recommending a fundamental change other than the creation of the Sustainable Transportation Coordinator position.

## **6. Signing the Regional Bicycling Network – Program Development**

F. Pravitz said that he felt that, apart from the actual infrastructure, signage would be very important. Some of the issues that will need to be decided are: how to implement signage across the network, the need for directional information, how to phase it in, what will the process be, cost sharing and at one point would the signing commence – as soon as the road is designated? At 25% completion? At 50% completion, etc. Suggestions have been provided to the consultants regarding routes we could experiment with or prototype in regards to signage. B. Johnson said that we should not have any problem with this as long as the road has paved shoulders and the signage was appropriate.

B. Johnson reported that a sign policy had been developed. He suggested that an RNBC Task Force should be created to look at the Regional Bicycling Network and make suggestions where signage could be implemented. This small sub-committee would report back to the RNBC.

R. Gabriel suggested that the formation of the sub-committee be delayed until after the new term of Council, and the RNBC, has commenced.

## **7. Release of New Bicycle Map**

B. Johnson thanked P. Bergen, F. Pravitz, K. Forgeron and P. Pattison for their tremendous efforts in putting together the new Bicycle Map. B. Johnson told the Committee that it is critical for the map to be approved and released quickly. If any more changes need to be made to the map, they can be done for the next printing.

P. Bergen said that the map is now at the stage where it can be sent to the printer, however, one decision regarding the Port Colborne advertising panel needs to be made. It was explained that when the map is folded the Port Colborne panel will be on the back of the map, but it will be upside down. One problem with having the panel right side is that when the backside of the map is spread open, the Port Colborne panel would be upside down. The Committee determined that it would be best if the Port Colborne panel remained upside down when the map was folded in order for the panel to remain right side up when the back of the map is spread open.

P. Bergen reported that the printer will send him and he will send a proof of the map back to be reviewed before the final print. Approximately \$10,000 was raised from

the sale of advertising space and from that money 25,000 copies of the map will be printed. The printer should have the printing of the maps completed in two weeks. B. Johnson said that the RNBC would have to rely on Public Works staff to distribute the map within the next month. P. Davies offered the help of the Freewheelers in distributing the maps to the various bike shops if someone could supply the maps to them.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the price the map would be sold for. F. Pravitz said that some concern was expressed by NETC regarding the \$2.00 retail value being printed on the map. B. Johnson also was concerned that since the Region is a non-profit organization it should distribute promotional material free of charge. He would like to speak to the Region's solicitor about this issue.

F. Pravitz responded that we would have liked to give the map away free of charge. However, it was decided at the last RNBC meeting that since, at that time, we had not received the sponsorship we had anticipated, that we would charge \$2.00 for the map in order to raise funds to for another print run.

P. Bergen told the Committee that, according to DMTI (i.e. the company who owns the digital base layer), when we start making a profit on the map we will have to pay them royalties. The map will be available on the web for people to download free of charge. However, the \$2.00 fee is meant only to recoup some costs to assist in its reprinting.

It was decided to print "Suggested Retail Price - \$2.00" on the map and set aside further discussion on this issue until the October RNBC meeting.

***Motion:***

***To approve the Bicycle Map and to defer the issue of charging \$2.00 for the map until the October meeting.***

***Moved by: Paul Pattison***

***Seconded by: Dwight Alguire***

***Carried***

Since the September 11<sup>th</sup> RNBC meeting, B. Johnson had further discussions with Regional staff and Councillor McMullan and it was decided to take the wording of "Suggested Retail Price - \$2.00" off the printing of the map.

**8. Status of Tunnels for Bicycling Under the Welland Canal**

P. Pattison reported on the status of the tunnels at Main Street in Welland, Townline Road in Welland and Thorold Road in Thorold. He reported that in Welland, at both ends of the Main Street tunnel, signs are installed indicating that bicycles are not permitted through the tunnel. The barricades are there, but they do not pose a problem for access. The tunnel is also relatively clean. B. Johnson reported that cyclists must get off their bikes and walk through the tunnel. The sign indicating that

cyclists are not permitted is intended to prevent snowmobiles from going through the tunnel. This gives the wrong message.

The Townline Road tunnel had no signage or barricades, but there was a lot of grit in the tunnel.

The Thorold Road tunnel contained a lot of litter also and there was no signage. The only barricade was the one which had been originally installed.

B. Johnson said that he will write to the Ministry of Transportation requesting that signage be revised indicating that cyclists should walk their bikes through the Main Street tunnel in Welland. He will also include in his request to the Ministry that maintenance, in terms of the clean-up of litter and grit, needs to be done in all of the tunnels. Also, at the request of T. Whittle, B. Johnson will ask the Ministry to repair the bent guide rails in the Thorold Tunnel as they are intruding upon the sidewalk. **(Action Items)**

#### **9. RNBC Participation at World Cycling Championships**

K. Forgeron reported that the NETC has agreed to set-up, remove and pay for the cost of renting a tent, booth, table and chairs for the World Cycling Championships in October. However, the RNBC will need to arrange for volunteers to staff the booth during the course of the event. K. Forgeron explained that 15 time slots will need to be filled, ideally with two volunteers for each time slot. A meeting has been scheduled for October 1 at 7:00 p.m, in Committee Room #3 at Regional Headquarters to discuss the logistics of staffing and setting up the display, as well as and transportation to and from the event.

#### **10. Safety of Off-Shore Workers – Nighttime Riding**

T. Whittle reported that the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Policing Committee will be looking into this issue. The Committee works with a number of organizations in the Niagara-on-the-Lake area. T. Whittle requested that this item be added to the October RNBC agenda. **(Action Items)**

B. Johnson said that a transportation strategy is being prepared for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. If possible, he would like to have someone from the Niagara Regional Police sit on the committee looking after this issue.

#### **11. Task Force Reports**

Encouragement Task Force

M. Landry suggested that the Bicycle Friendly Awards be presented to the winners at the November 6, 2003 Regional Council meeting.

M. Landry will submit a request to make a ten minute presentation at the November 6<sup>th</sup> Regional Council meeting and R. Gabriel will follow-up on the request.  
**(Action Item)**

M. Landry reported that the deadline for the nominations has been extended until October 15. After October 15<sup>th</sup> the judging process will begin. M. Landry asked for volunteers to assist in the process. K. Forgeron volunteered and will ask Drew Semple from the Planning Department to assist again this year. Councillor Gabriel also may participate.

A discussion was held regarding changing the name of Bike Week. The idea is to have the entire month of May as bicycle month; however, a new theme needs to be created. B. Johnson suggested "Cycling Rules!" M. Landry said that his suggestion might be a way to get into the highschoools. She also said that the arrangements need to be made with the schools now to do a bike promotion in May. If it is not done now it will be lost for another year.

#### Education and Enforcement

T. Whittle said that at the October RNBC meeting he would provide the Committee with a full report regarding collisions involving cyclists. T. Whittle was able to report to the Committee that after having a relatively quiet spring the number of collisions within the last month have been on the upswing. Also, no cycling fatalities have occurred so far this year.

A task force has been established by the Chief of Police to look into the high number of vehicle collisions occurring in the Region, will be holding a meeting on September 16. B. Johnson reported that he has been asked to sit on the task force. T. Whittle recalled that the RNBC had communicated to the Chief that we would like to have a representative from the cycling community sit on the task force and that Paul Pattison's name was put forward at that time. B. Johnson invited P. Pattison to attend the meeting on Tuesday. B. Johnson will provide P. Pattison with the details regarding the Tuesday meeting. **(Action Item)**

P. Davies questioned what the mandate of the RNBC is and whether it should focus more on safety. He suggested that perhaps we should have a database of what other municipalities and groups are doing in terms of safety. The Region and local municipalities could push the government to provide more education for drivers and cyclists. B. Johnson suggested that P. Davies should get together with P. Pattison to bring these ideas forward to the Chief's Task Force.

#### Engineering

F. Pravitz reported that he was trying to contact John Rizzo, Project Manager from the Public Works Department, to see if there was a "B" list of roads that would be resurfaced this year if money became available. Previously, John Rizzo had provided an "A" list, which consisted of roads that were to be resurfaced this summer. F. Pravitz reported that the roads identified in the "A" list had been included on the new Bicycle Map.

K. Forgeron reported to the Committee that Walker Brothers was in the process of preparing an Environmental Assessment for a proposed expansion of their landfill. One of the issues relates to a possible new entrance to the quarry and its impact on cycling. One proposed option is to close the north and south entrances of the landfill and have a T intersection on Taylor/Mountain Road as Walker's new main entrance. K. Forgeron said that he had raised a concern regarding a proposed new entrance because Mountain Road is included on the Bicycling Network and a new entrance here would increase the amount of truck traffic on the road. Representatives from Walker's Brothers have made a request to make a presentation at the October RNBC meeting in regards to their proposed expansion. The Committee agreed to allow Walker's Brothers to make their presentation.

K. Forgeron reported that Jordan Road between Fourth Avenue and the North Service Road in Lincoln was a Waterfront Trail/SuperBuild project and that the resurfacing and signage should be completed within the next two weeks.

K. Forgeron also reported that SuperBuild funding had been received for Councillor House's proposed trail in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The trail building exercise was moving forward, however, the route the trail would be taking is uncertain.

B. Johnson said that diamond lanes would be included on Carleton Street along with a sign on the roadway indicating that the diamond lane is a designated bicycle lane. The bicycle symbol, which had previously been painted in the diamond lanes, will no longer be included due to difficulties associated with painting the symbol.

## **12. Information Items for Distribution**

K. Forgeron distributed the following items:

- Article from the St. Catharines Standard supporting the Region's plan to develop a comprehensive bicycle network across Niagara.
- Information from the City of Hamilton on the 2003 Road World Cycling Championships.
- Article from the St. Catharines Standard regarding the 2003 World Road Cycling Championships and races in Thorold/Pelham for competitors in the juniors and under-23 on October 5<sup>th</sup>
- Article from the St. Catharines Standard titled, "A Sneak Preview of the Greater Niagara Circle Route"

- Toronto Star article regarding the Seaway Way Trail and Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail titled "Wheeling along Seaway Trail"
- Transportation Strategy Steering Committee report titled, "Regional Niagara Bikeways Master Plan Final Report." This report was submitted to the TSSC on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2003

### **13. Other Business**

#### Queenston-Lewiston Bridge

P. Pattison spoke to the Committee regarding some concerns he had about the proposed overhaul for the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge. P. Pattison reported that the proposed changes to the bridge include taking out the sidewalk. It was his impression that the bridge would be very restricted in terms of accessibility and he was concerned about the possibility of cyclists being banned altogether. He wondered if any public meetings would be held. B. Johnson said that it was his understanding that the work being undertaken will have an exclusive fifth lane for truck traffic only. In order to build this lane, the sidewalk needs to be removed. B. Johnson requested that this item be put on the agenda for the October meeting. In the meantime he will gather some more information to provide to the Committee.  
**(Action Item)**

### **14. Next RNBC Meeting**

The next RNBC meeting will take place on Thursday, October 9<sup>th</sup> in Committee Room #4.

Meeting Notes Taken by:

Julie Bittner

Reviewed by Ken Forgeron, MCIP, RPP, Senior Planner