



**ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
JUNE 15, 2017**

PRESENT: Ben Buckwold, Chair
Kelsey Lane, Vice Chair
Councillor Sam Austin
Ella Dodson
Eliza Jackson
Lindsay Slade
Ian Watt
David Jackson
Elizabeth Pugh
James McMillin

REGRETS: Councillor Tim Outhit
Maggie Lucas
Councillor Lindell Smith

STAFF: Leslie Neate, Legislative Support
Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant
David MacIsaac, Active Transportation Program Supervisor
Siobhan Witherbee, Active Transportation Planner

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated are online at halifax.ca.

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. and adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

- Community Announcements

Kelsey Lane mentioned that the bicycle corrals are now installed in five locations in HRM.

- Agricola Street
- Bower Street
- Spring Garden
- Ochterloney Street
- Portland Street

Great feedback has been received for all.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 18, 2017

MOVED by Ella Dodson, seconded by David Jackson

THAT the minutes of May 18, 2017, be approved as amended to include comments related to Jubilee Road as a possible alternative drop-off area to the LeMarchant St. Thomas Elementary School.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

The Chair advised that he had an update relating to HRM Ferries' Policy for access to bicycles to add to the agenda.

Eliza Jackson requested to add an item relating to Halifax Road Safety Strategy Plan.

MOVED by Kelsey Lane, seconded by James McMillan

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

6.1 LeMarchant St. Thomas Drop-off Loop (Deferred from the May 18, 2017, meeting)

With regard to the presentation received at the May 18, 2017, Active Transportation Meeting, the committee continued its discussion relating to a possible motion to the Transportation Standing Committee. The following motion was agreed upon:

MOVED BY James McMillan, seconded by Eliza Jackson

That the Active Transportation Advisory Committee recommends the Transportation Standing Committee review the presentation by the Ecology Action Centre regarding the LeMarchant-St. Thomas Elementary School proposed drop-off loop. The Active Transportation Advisory Committee is concerned that the proposed drop-off loop reduces the potential for students to safely access the school through active transit modes.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence – None

7.2 Petitions – None

7.3 Presentations

7.3.1 Winter Cycling Congress Presentation – Kelsey Lane and Eliza Jackson

A presentation titled, “All-Season Cycling” was presented by Kelsey Lane, Halifax Cycling Coalition, and Eliza Jackson, Ecology Action Centre. The purpose of this presentation was to provide an update relating to Winter Bike Week 2017; to share lessons learned from the Winter Cycling Congress, in Montreal, Quebec; and to solicit feedback and next steps from the Active Transportation Committee.

The Halifax Bike Week events were affected by three winter storm days through the February 10 to 18 time period. Metrics for the week showed 21 businesses engaged, five of the eight events were hosted, engaged over 3000 people, including by Facebook. There were 25 participants for Frost Bike Ride, which is on par with some of the summer bike ride events.

The Winter Cycling Congress 2017, hosted in Montreal, Quebec, had three main themes:

- Maintenance
- Make the right choice, the easy choice
- Share the experience.

Winter maintenance options for a variety of cities around the world were discussed. There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach. The key to maintenance starts with design. A good design allows for good maintenance all year round. The design needs to include thoughts related to where the snow can go when lanes are being cleared.

“Make the right choice, the easy choice” looks to make cycling a viable year-round transportation mode and helps to keep cyclers engaged all year. Many cities are currently testing best practices for clearing bike lanes. For example, in Copenhagen, cycle tracks are prioritized for winter maintenance before roads. The focus needs to be making cycling the easy choice all year round and to include considerations for all ages, all abilities, all year.

Sharing the human experiences with positive and appropriate images is key and helps to entice people want to try winter cycling.

At the end of the presentation, the committee members shared their feedback and asked questions, as follows:

- How is cycling monitored and evaluated throughout the year in HRM? It is a challenge whereby counters are not in place throughout the year. It is, therefore, difficult to determine how weather impacts the level of cycling. The bridge commission is the best source for that kind of data.

- Has any thought been given to lighting? In the winter months, the commutes are often during dark hours. Yes, it was on one of the presentations from Calgary. It's about All Ages and Abilities, really thinking about the seasonal differences, and making sure the quality of infrastructure is there, including lighting and design.
- It was noted that all cities within the Winter Cycling Congress 2017 presentation have separate infrastructures, which does make it far more attractive. In HRM, bike lanes in the winter are cleared with the same equipment that clears our roads, and they are not the priority for winter maintenance.
- David MacIsaac advised that as they started to plan HRM's protected bike lanes these co-operations are part of the discussion and provide really good input. Even just the small stubs of protected bike lanes that we do have have been good learning opportunities (ie. Rainnie Drive for HRM folks and Dalhousie clears the University Avenue bike lanes). HRM also clears the paved greenway paths in the municipality, which are not a high priority, but they are cleared. As more protected bike lanes are created, HRM will need to look at the servicing of these areas, which will be a whole new category to clear.
- The Chair asked if it would be possible to do a pilot project around winter cycling in Halifax, whereby a few routes are selected for testing of different types of maintenance techniques and data gathering. It would be interesting to look at the different options used and track how they are working.
- The presenters advised that the next conference is in Russia.

8. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

8.1 COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES

Ella Dobson provided members with a document titled, "Short Synopsis of Accessibility Act (Adopted April 21, 2017)". Ella presented her overview, highlighting the following points:

- This document describes a new provincial act that was ratified in April .
- It will definitely impact active transportation and part of the focus is on infrastructure and transportation.
- It is a very broad act that will come in very quickly, which will insist that HRM come up with an accessibility policy in six identified areas, one includes transportation and infrastructure.
- Once the standards are set, an accessibility plan would have to be in place within one year's time.
- The regulations shall dictate which public and private entities may be responsible for enacting and implementing policies, laws, and regulations to achieve the accessibility standards.
- For Active Transportation, it is going to mean a need to address walk-ability in a more rigorous manner than is being done at this time.

David MacIsaac advised that this act is definitely on HRM's radar with regard to what the implications for many of the departments.

Elizabeth Pugh, who represents the Province of NS, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, advised that the department has just finalized the Bicycling Routes on Provincial Roads Policy. The policy objectives are to provide direction in determining when and how portions of a provincial road

can be designated as a bicycling route. The policy details are available on Province of NS website (novascotia.ca/tran).

8.2 STAFF UPDATES

David Maclsaac introduced Siobhan Witherbee to the committee, who is currently a planner in the Planning and Development Department and, beginning next Wednesday, will be working as an Active Transportation Planner.

Active Transportation project updates:

- Sackville Greenway is currently under construction.
- Staff attended a pre-tender meeting last week with regard to the Dunbrack Greenway.
- Windmill Rd. - HRM will be adding some greenway and sidewalks. A meeting was just held last week.
- Many different projects are under way with Community Trails Association groups.
- Almon Street – The municipality has received lots of public comments and is just finishing the report on that. The goal is to get a report to the Transportation Standing Committee the end of July concerning Almon St.
- Planning for the Cogswell Interchange re-development project is on-going.
- A lot of work continues for the Integrated Mobility Plan. This committee has asked for a staff report on a temporary-protected-bike lane on Hollis Street. This report depends on staff availability, existing conditions reports, and the Cogswell Inter-change re-development plans.
- Work on Forest Hills Active Transportation plan is just about finished.
- A Woodside Active Transportation connections walk around has occurred. There are some gaps.
- Dartmouth Harbour Front Greenway has some gaps.
- Bike week was last week. Really positive, encouraging, and motivating stories have been received.
- Point Pleasant Park is now open to bicycles on weekend and holidays. This is a request that started with this committee.
- The timing for the Integrated Mobility Plan is to get a report to the Transportation Standing Committee by the end of July and then possibly to Council in September.
- The Bikeway Connector report is due to the Transportation Standing Committee the end of July and to council for approval following that.

Ella Dodson asked if there is a report on the Cogswell Interchange available. The Chair advised he will request a presentation. David Maclsaac will follow up.

9. ADDED ITEMS

9.1 HRM FERRIES' POLICY FOR ACCESS TO BICYCLES

Councillor Austin provided an overview of the topic. Approximately a year ago, Halifax Transit banned bike trailers from the ferries. The decision was then reversed. However, Transit feels they have an on-going safety issue relating to too many bikes carrying multiple things onto the ferries. A report came to the Transportation Standing Committee which was a continuation of this issue with a recommendation that carry-on items are restricted to size, only standard size bikes would be allowed, and only as many bikes as there are racks to accommodate (currently there are 6), and potentially two trailers. Currently, there is no data report that relates to the number of cyclists that are using the ferries. A count has been requested of how many cyclists are on the ferry, per boat trip; and how many cyclists would have been left behind for the next ferry had the ban been in place. This will provide Council with actual data, that will be beneficial in making a decision. The information is due back to Council in late November.

The Chair asked if the Committee would be able to invite staff to come and present the current report submitted to the Transportation Standing Committee concerning this topic. This would allow discussion with staff and to understand their concerns and for the committee to provide feedback.

9.2 Halifax Road Safety Strategy Plan

Eliza Jackson advised the Committee that she attended the stakeholder-engagement session of the Halifax Road Safety Strategy Plan. This is HRM's strategy to reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries on its roadways. It was suggested that it would be beneficial to have someone working on the Plan to provide a presentation at a future meeting of the Committee.

David MacIsaac indicated that he would follow up on this.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – July 20, 2017

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Leslie Neate
Legislative Support