

**REGIONAL NIAGARA BICYCLING COMMITTEE**  
**Regional Headquarters -Committee Room 4**

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 8, 2009 - MEETING NOTES**

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**ATTENDANCE**

Brian Baty	Regional Councillor (Chair)
Phil Bergen	Niagara Region Public Works
Ken Forgeron	Niagara Region Integrated Community Planning
Dianne Coppola	Niagara Region Public Health/ICP
Dave Hunt	Public-at-Large
Bob Romanuk	Public-at-Large/N.F.Trails & Bikeways Committee
Pat Maloney	Public-at-Large
Paul Pattison	Public-at-Large
Scott Elliott	Niagara Region Police Service
Dave Evans	Public-at-Large
Penny Pitt	Administrative Assistant

Regrets – Peter Davies, Frank Pravitz, Eric Flora

**1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

The agenda was adopted with the additions of with the addition of two items under Items for Information – Waterfront Trail Projects and an article on Bike Lanes.

**2. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MEETING NOTES OF DECEMBER 11, 2008**

***Motion:***

***To approve RNBC Meeting Notes of December 11, 2008 as revised.***

***Moved By: Dave Hunt***

***Seconded By: Paul Pattison***

***Carried***

**3. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS**

**ACTION ITEM 3**

Trail development and signage for the Thorold-Fonthill Spur linking the Town of Pelham to the Welland Canal Parkway in Thorold and Waterfront Trail, part of the Greater Niagara Circle Route. Most of the right-of-way is in municipal ownership. Preliminary costs estimates to pave the trail, including bridge Improvements, total about \$1.3 million.

**ACTION ITEM 9**

Strategic Plan frameworks for prioritization were completed and removed.

ACTION ITEM 24

Ken Forgeron to contact P. Davies to get an update on the status of the development of the two routes **(ACTION ITEM)**

ACTION ITEM 28

The lamination of bicycle maps for broad distribution will be part of the discussion by Councillor Baty with Mike Trojan regarding a budget for the RNBC in 2009. **(ACTION ITEM)**

ACTION ITEM 32

Due to E. Flora's absence an update will be made in February. **(ACTION ITEM)**

ACTION ITEM 34

Ken Forgeron provided a list of potential "shovel ready" projects, with two in particular noted that could be considered under Waterfront Investment Project Phase II funding if and when the Federal and Provincial governments announce a new infrastructure program. The committee was asked to provide comments. **(ACTION ITEM)**

ACTION ITEM 35

Dave Hunt provided the committee with copies of a Proposed Policy Plan Amendment for Regional Bicycle Policies and Mapping. A review was undertaken in terms of model and a few changes in wording will be made. A third draft will be provided at the next meeting. Committee members should provide any other comments within the next two weeks. **(ACTION ITEM)**

ACTION ITEM 36

Ken Forgeron apprised the committee that the fact sheets would be produced "in house", 500 – 1000 copies for the Bike Show and Ontario Bicycle Tourism Forum. **(ACTION ITEM)**

NEW ACTION ITEM 38

Chair Baty to meet with CAO and key members of CMT to discuss budgetary concerns in support of RNBC initiatives and to discuss option of external, private sector sponsors and external funding sources for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Bicycling Map anticipated in 2010. **(ACTION ITEM)**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING**

None to report.

## 5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

### Comments on RNBC Strategic Plan – Priority Actions

#### Objective 1

Item 1 - Phil Bergen commented that 25 kilometres had been completed in 2008 under “continued implementation of Regional Niagara Bikeways Master Plan Network”.

Item 3 – Eric Flora planning budget. January 15<sup>th</sup> meeting with GCAST.

Item 5 – There are 8-9 thousand maps left with 1500 of them reserved for a 2009 National/Provincial Planning Conference in Niagara Falls. We will probably run out of maps by the end of 2009 and therefore need to focus on Edition 3. Chair Baty expressed the need talk to local people and local planners about what roads need improvement.

Dianne Coppola suggested there was merit to identifying an actual timeframe rather than leaving items as “ongoing” to better identify resource needs at the task force level in order to move forward and to help prioritize the work of the RNBC overall when reviewing the priorities of all three task force groups.

#### Objective 2

Dave Hunt reported to the committee the status of the strategic actions of Objective 2. The actions with Priority Ranking 3 will be identified as 3 (a) and 3 (b). Under the “estimate budget required” in Action #5, the budget amount reported will be removed.

#### Objective 3

Dianne Coppola shared the work done on Objective 3 strategic actions and indicated the group is looking for additional input from the RNBC on some of the strategic actions listed. Chair Baty offered to assist this working group to finalize the prioritization work and convert the information to a format similar to Objectives 1 and 2.

Discussion will occur on February 19, 2009 to finalize these works which will guide the RNBC in its future work. Recruitment of additional RNBC volunteers should occur after this step.

### Comments on Proposed Policy Plan Amendments

Dave Hunt reviewed the draft Regional Bicycling Policies by each section with the committee. Comments were made and some minor wording changes were to be made. The 3<sup>rd</sup> draft will be ready for the next meeting. Eric Flora will be asked to comment on Policy 9.F.11 which is a new policy from the Master Plan. A meeting with the Policy Task Force will be held soon if required. Ken indicated that a new network map will be included with this amendment package.

#### Wine Country Policies

The Wine Country Policies will be resent to the RNBC members. It was initially sent on Nov. 28, 2008 for review and comment. **(ACTION ITEM 33)**

#### Strategic Points: Ontario Bicycle Tourism Forum

On January 22, 2009 Councillor Baty will be participating on a panel at the Ontario Bicycle Tourism forum in Toronto on the topic of "Routes, Signage, Maps and Information: What are the challenges and opportunities in developing the cycle tourism market in Ontario?" Ken Forgeron provided the committee with a copy of the focus questions and some suggested issues to include. He asked the committee for any comments. It will also be sent out in an email to the RNBC members for comment.  
**(ACTION ITEM 2)**

#### Upcoming Meeting with St. Catharines on Bicycling

Paul Pattison informed the committee that a joint meeting with the Region of Niagara, RNBC, Garden City Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (GCAST) and the City of St. Catharines, will be held at City Hall on Thursday, January 15, 2009. Councillor Baty, Eric Flora, Paul Pattison and Ken Forgeron will attend.

#### Possible Revisions to Regional Bicycle Network

This topic was discussed previously. (Note: Frank Pravitz has some suggestions for possible changes to the network. These may need to be included in the Proposed Policy Plan Amendments discussed above.)

## **6. TASK FORCE REPORTS**

#### Engineering Task Force

Phil Bergen reported the new Bikeways Master Plan GIS layer will allow the integration of the Bikeways Master Plan Implementation data with other road attribute information. This will help to expedite the Bikeways Master Plan update process with greater accuracy. Road attribute data for transportation infrastructure management and various other studies and internal processes will also be enhanced by enabling much quicker data access, comparisons and analysis.

#### Education and Enforcement Task Force

Nothing to report to date.

#### Encouragement Task Force

Nothing to report to date.

#### Policy Task Force

Reported under "Comments on Proposed Policy Plan Amendments – Bicycling Policies and Mapping" and "Wine Country Policies".

## 7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

### Ontario Bicycle Route

Dave Hunt provided a status update for the Ontario Bicycling Route (OBR) since the demise of the Cycle Ontario Alliance. The 7500 km on-road cycle network is still being maintained by a small group of volunteers. Issues being addressed include MTO bicycle prohibitions affecting 4 sections of the OBR. For example, two key OBR links to northern Ontario (Hwy 400/69 from Waubauskene to Sudbury, and Hwy 11 from Huntsville to North Bay) no longer allow cycling touring access due to highway cycling prohibitions with no feasible other road access alternatives. This will require route modifications to the network, while other route changes have been incorporated as improvements due to lower traffic volume options. The Share the Road Cycling Coalition is also considering ways to be a support organization for the OBR. Consideration is being given to forming a support group task force made up of the Ontario Cycling Association, Ontario Trails Council, Waterfront Regeneration Trust and the International Mountain Bike Association. Ken Forgeron asked about the MTO Bicycle Policy Review and wondered if that project could not give consideration to supporting the OBR.

### Public Health Summit – Highlights

Dianne Coppola stated that the Public Health Summit – “Making Healthy Communities Count”, held from October 26-29, 2008 was well received and well attended. Dianne provided the committee a synopsis of the conference that included the conference goal, objectives and key themes. It will be included with the meeting notes. All conference information including copies of the presentations can be accessed at: [www.publichealthsummit.com](http://www.publichealthsummit.com)

### RNBC Website: Statistics and Highlights

Bob Romanuk apprised the committee that hits on the website have leveled off and were down from 2007 statistics. There has been no growth to the site. Mr. Romanuk provided the following chart for comparison to previous years. Mapping is one of the most popular sites.

(chart on next page)

Website Summary				
	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Hits</b>				
Total Hits	109,267	161,111	197,704	166004
Average Hits per Day	298	440	540	452
Average Hits per Visitor	3.62	3.69	3.51	3.2
Cached Requests	10,894	21,052	21,161	22162
Failed Requests	11,018	25,555	28,704	27303
<b>Page Views</b>				
Total Page Views	40,754	57,209	58,719	66284
Average Page Views per Day	111	156	160	180
Average Page Views per Visitor	1.35	1.31	1.04	1.28
<b>Visitors</b>				
Total Visitors	30,148	43,647	56,322	51812
Average Visitors per Day	82	119	153	141
Total Unique IPs	8,900	11,021	12,335	12014
<b>Bandwidth</b>				
Total Bandwidth	4.52 GB	5.62 GB	7.75 GB	8.32 GB
Average Bandwidth per Day	12.65 MB	15.71 MB	21.69 MB	23.22 MB
Average Bandwidth per Hit	43.39 KB	36.55 KB	41.13 KB	52.57 KB
Average Bandwidth per Visitor	157.26 KB	134.91 KB	144.36 KB	168.44 KB

*Statistics generated by WebLog Expert (free version)*

Significant discussion occurred on the importance of the gathering of bicycle accident statistics. Scott Elliott will check on availability and possible future program to monitor this. **(ACTION ITEM 39)**

Toronto International Bicycle Show – March 13-15, 2009

Volunteers were requested to assist at the RNBC booth at the Bicycle Show. Through discussions with the committee, it was decided that the display previously used was tired and stale. A new display showcasing the new library of scenic routes website should be included with the use of a lap top computer. Dave Evans suggested in planning next year's bike show, that actual footage of routes is demonstrated and he will review the footage he has now. **(ACTION ITEM 40)**

**INFORMATION FOR DISTRIBUTION**

The following items were distributed:

- Email from Cynthia L. Hoyle, Transportation Planning Consultant, Urbana Illinois, on the issue of bicycle facilities in downtowns.
- Regional Niagara Bikeways Master Plan Map
- Correspondence from NGTA Project Team – RE: Niagara to GTA Corridor Planning and EA Study
- Letter to Niagara area Waterfront Trail partners from Ken Forgeron outlining possible infrastructure funding projects to fill the gaps in Niagara's Waterfront Trail.

**8. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

- Final comments on pending Regional Policy Plan Amendments: Bicycle Policies and Wine Country Policies

**9. OTHER BUSINESS**

Ken Forgeron has received a request from the Francophone community in Niagara (Venture Niagara) to comment from the RNBC perspective on a proposed scenic bicycle route map they have developed for presentation at various trade shows in Quebec. Given the shortness of time to respond, Ken offered to provide comments on the committee's behalf. (**ACTION ITEM 41**)

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday, February 19, 2009  
Regional Niagara Headquarters - Committee Room 4

Meeting Adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

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Brian Baty  
Chair

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Penny Pitt  
Administrative Assistant  
Clerk's Department