

REGIONAL NIAGARA BICYCLING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES



Meeting of Thursday, January 9, 2003
Committee Room #4
7:00 p.m.

Present:

Brian McMullan	- Regional Councillor (Chair)
Rob Gabriel	- Regional Councillor
John Reep	- Public at Large
Bob Romanuk	- Public at Large
David Hunt	- Public at Large
John Helm	- Niagara Freewheelers
Peter Davies	- Niagara Freewheelers (new representative)
Jan Somerwil	- Public at Large
Bill Crux	- Public at Large
Paul Pattison	- Public at Large
Tim Whittle	- Niagara Regional Police Service
Marian Landry	- Regional Niagara Public Health
Ken Forgeron	- Regional Niagara Planning
Bob Johnson (Transportation)	- Regional Niagara Public Works
Julie Bittner	- Regional Niagara Public Works (Transportation)

Regrets:

Hank Bauer - Public at Large

1. Adoption of Agenda

K. Forgeron said that he had some information items to be added to the end of the agenda.

Motion:

To accept the agenda as amended.

Moved by: Jan Somerwil

Seconded by: Dave Hunt

Carried

2. Review of Meeting Notes of December 12, 2002

K. Forgeron advised that the members of the RNBC had just received a copy of the last meeting minutes this evening. He asked for a few minutes at this time to allow members to read them over as there are a couple of motions near the end of the minutes.

K. Forgeron said that he thought one of the motions in the last set of meeting notes was to defer approving the Bicycle Master Plan Study to a later date. Councillor McMullan said that we did have a motion to approve the Master Plan Study in principle only. **Therefore, previous meeting notes should be amended to reflect that action.**

J. Helm said that he did not see his comments regarding his concerns with Regional Road 24 from north to south. He had provided his comments to F. Pravitz at a meeting previous to the December 12th meeting with the consultants from MMM. Later in the meeting, Eric Flora indicated that RR 24 has been recognized as a major truck route. The trucking industry has expressed concerns unless >1.5 m paved shoulders can be provided.

Councillor McMullan assured J. Helm that his concerns would be passed on to the consultants. **(Action Item: Eric Flora)**

M. Landry said that it should be reflected in the meeting notes that comments regarding the Bicycle Master Plan were submitted to the consultants and that there was a pre-meeting held with the four Task Force chairs to discuss those comments before the regularly scheduled December 12 meeting.

Motion:

To accept RNBC Meeting Notes of December 12, 2002 as amended above.

Moved by: Jan Somerwil

Seconded by: Bill Crux

Carried

3. Overview of Arterial Roads Study and Impact on Bicycling Master Plan

E. Flora gave a PowerPoint presentation to the members of the RNBC (copy of presentation attached) of the study being carried out by McCormack-Rankin.

E. Flora provided a background and what the study objectives are. For example one objective is to establish what the attainable road rights-of-way might be. A Regional Policy Plan amendment will be needed to establish r-o-w.

E. Flora discussed the integration with other components of the Regional Transportation Strategy. (eg. the Road Closure Action Plan) If there was an emergency road closure, where would the traffic be re-routed?

A complete status of the work program was provided.

The Commercial Vehicle Routing Plan (CVRP) was discussed and a workshop was held in 2002 on the Plan. Some comments addressed how bicycles with trucks should interact. It was suggested not to consider Regional Road 24 due to the large volume of truck traffic. Jordan Rd. from the QEW to Jordan is to have marked bike lanes.

A map of the proposed CVRP was provided as well as a number of consultant recommendations. The consultants recommended that both Grimsby and St. Catharines develop Transportation Demand Management because of their downtown districts.

Maps of the Preferred Regional Road Network and the Preferred Arterial Road Network Improvement Strategy were shown to the Committee.

A list of Next Steps was provided. The draft final report will go to the TSSC on January 14th and a final report will be completed after comments are received from the TSSC. The report and presentation will be going to the Public Works Committee.

Jan Somerwil emphasized that the arterial roads study and bicycle study should pay attention to the needs of utilitarian cyclists. The principles of Smart Growth should be supported in order to allow people to live, shop and work in areas that can be accessed by people on bikes. This means changes to land use plans and roadways plan.

Tim Whittle emphasized the importance of accomodating bicyclists over the Allanburg Bridge, a strategic crossing of the Canal.

(Action Item: Eric Flora to inform the consultants of these points.)

4. Task Force Reports

Encouragement:

- Marion Landry distributed a copy of the final comments from her Task Force.
- Marian reported on 2003 Bike Week planning activities now underway (Bike Week is May 31 – June 8). Activities will be similar to those of last year. In addition, the Bike Friendly Awards will be promoted. Other suggestions for activities included participation in the “Commuter Challenge,” designating a “car free day” and encouraging schools and municipal employees to ride in.

Education and Enforcement:

- Tim Whittle reported that there has been 18 fatalities (cyclists) on Niagara Roads since 1985.
- Bob Johnson will be meeting with Constable Brennan to discuss better methods of gathering and analyzing accident statistics.
- Jan Somerwil asked whether any cyclists have been killed at intersections by trucks turning right? This has happened in Toronto. In Europe, trucks are adapted with . special covers/side rails to prevent this from happening.

5. Toronto International Bike Show

K. Forgeron circulated a volunteer schedule for the Toronto International Bike Show. The RNBC needs volunteers to staff the booth from February 28 to March 2. Ideally we need to have two or three volunteers during each of the scheduled shift times.

NETC will be assembling the printed material in the hand out bags, but we will need to print out additional maps to be included in the bags.

It was suggested that we only print 5,000 additional off-road maps since we will only need them for the Bike Show. There are plenty of scenic on-road maps. The Committee is planning on preparing a new map in the future.

Along with the hand out bags there will also be material displayed on a table.

Motion:

To approve the printing of 5,000 off-road maps to be distributed at the Toronto International Bike Show

Moved by: Jan Somerwil

Seconded by: Bill Crux

Carried

K. Forgeron asked if anyone had any new ideas on what our display should include. Some suggestions were:

- a laminated copy of the proposed Bicycle Network to give people an idea of where we are headed.
- pictures of wineries to give people an idea of what is around the area.
- have a large map and show pictures of the areas to try and encourage people to travel through the rural areas.
- a map which shows a basic link between the communities.

B. Johnson suggested that we downplay the regional network and suggested that we should start with a map of the Golden Horseshoe and then have blowups of different destinations.

K. Forgeron requested that people send him pictures of scenic areas that could be featured on the maps.

T. Whittle suggested having a Golden Horseshoe map which would have access points and recommended areas to travel.

B. Johnson said that the Ontario Cycling Association has a Golden Horseshoe cycling map. Perhaps this map could be laminated and hung on the display.

T. Whittle asked if the map is detailed enough to show secondary roads.

B. Johnson said that we should ask our friends in Buffalo if they would like to provide some information to be included at our display.

(Action Item: T. Whittle will speak to Hank Bauer about filling the 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. time slot on the Friday of the Bike Show.)

6. Mapping Proposals for World Cycling Championships – Hamilton (October 2003)

T. Whittle suggested that many of the people attending the event will be bringing bikes with them when they visit and many will be staying within the Golden Horseshoe. He suggested that maybe we should have a joint map with Hamilton and Burlington. Each area would have a suggested bike ride route on the map. We will need to come up with a consensus of what we would like to do with the map by the spring joint meeting of committees.

E. Flora said that at the Transportation Strategy Steering Committee it was suggested that NETC be asked to participate in producing a new bicycle map. Councillor McMullan said that he had approached NETC and was hoping to hear back from them shortly with ideas and suggestions.

K. Forgeron suggested that if we are going to go ahead with a map project for the Hamilton event a task group should be formed to discuss the concept and to coordinate efforts with Hamilton and Burlington.

B. Johnson said that E. Flora will be attending the next Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council meeting and he will speak to them about getting some pamphlets for the Toronto International Bike Show and the upcoming World Cycling Championships. He will invite a representative to come and speak to the RNBC.

7. Information Items Distributed

K. Forgeron distributed the following items:

- E-mail from Doug Hoffman regarding the Environmental Assessment for Highway 406 Twinning. Port Robinson Road will remain as an “at grade crossing” of Highway 406 for the immediate future. The highway is planned to overpass Port Robinson Road in the future with no connecting ramps.
- Excerpt from the Niagara Falls Trails and Bikeway Committee notes from their December 5, 2002 meeting. Issues highlighted include Beaverdams Road and the value of having bike lanes for traffic calming purposes. Other discussions include sidewalk cycling and comments about the Regional Bicycle Master Plan, which we had previously discussed. The City of Niagara Falls is concerned about the lack of bike facilities being provided by their Engineering Department.
- Newsletter from Britain, which talks about the importance of providing secure, safe and well lit covered bike storage. The article also writes about what is being done in Europe to provide these facilities at workplaces and schools.
- E-mail from Dave Hunt regarding the next VeloOntario meeting: January 18. Velo Ontario is now recognized as a non-profit organization and this is their first meeting

under that umbrella. This is a founding general meeting and the Board of Directors will be elected.

8. Other Business

- Councillor McMullan indicated that the preparation of a new map is very exciting and a major project. He volunteered to Chair a task force to look at who the partners might be when undertaking to revise the existing maps. Councillor McMullan has approached Niagara College as a partner as they had done a presentation on virtual reality, which may be of interest to us. Niagara College has offered to host a meeting at their site and show us the technology. Councillor McMullan would also like to look into tourism and the possibility of generating revenue in regards to the map.

Councillor McMullan approached Niagara Falls Tourism in regards to partnership and revenue opportunities for our committee. He has also approached NETC and is waiting to hear back from them. Councillor McMullan suggested that we should approach other private sector partners to see if they would be willing to participate. He said that the time frame for the map project is June. However, this is a very ambitious project and the time frame for the project is very tight. It will need to be pursued aggressively. Councillor McMullan suggests that we partner with someone with marketing experience. This person would be the one to get us partners as they would already have established contacts.

B. Johnson suggested that it would seem logical for NETC to be involved with this project. Councillor McMullan wanted to ensure that any revenue would be directed to the RNBC.

This project would be conducted by both a student and a consultant. Niagara College will be paid for some of the work that they do for us. However, they will show us how they can be paid, for example, through federal funding.

B. Johnson stated that for the actual map we need to start with a good roads base. Then a layer of the proposed network, destinations, and pictures could be overlain.

D. Hunt asked what Councillor McMullan meant when he said "revenue potential." Does this mean revenue from the sale of the map or from the people who put their name on the map? Councillor McMullan said he meant both as this map may be costly to produce.

J. Helm suggested putting the map on the web as well.

Councillor Gabriel said that it will be important to keep things current as new information becomes available. Councillor Gabriel asked about the time frame for wrapping up negotiations with businesses and getting Niagara College to work on

the equipment. Councillor McMullan said that we should start working with Niagara College now, but we have to be clear on what we want. We need to establish a task force.

Motion:

To set up a task force to determine an appropriate base map and bicycle tourism map in conjunction with partnership opportunities involving Niagara College. This task force will report back to the RNBC for their input and approval of the base map and cycling tourism information.

Moved by: Councillor Gabriel

Seconded by: Paul Pattison

Carried

- J. Helm questioned whether a recent conviction for a cyclist being struck and killed on Thorold Stone Rd. was harsh enough and suggested that the RNBC should get involved by sending a letter to the provincial government asking for increased penalties. In this particular case the penalty was \$1,000 and six months of loss of driving privileges. After a discussion it was decided that the Committee would not take formal action on this matter. The motorist will have very high insurance premiums in the future. It was important that conviction was made to allow for possible future civil action.
- M. Landry said that Christina Bradley is back from maternity leave and that she had given C. Bradley a copy of the MasterPlan to review and told her to give any comments she has to E. Flora and T. Whittle. M. Landry asked if anyone minded if C. Bradley bypassed the comment review process and just passed on her comments to Eric Flora and the consultants.

T. Whittle said that if she is interested in returning to the Education and Enforcement Task Force then she should draft a letter indicating her interest in returning.

Councillor McMullan said that any constructive comments on the study are welcome.

9. Next RNBC Meeting

Thursday, February 13, 2003
Regional Headquarters – Committee Room 4 – 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Notes Taken by:

Julie Bittner

Reviewed & Revised by Ken Forgeron, MCIP, RPP, Senior Planner

