

MINUTES
SAANICH BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ROOM #2
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2009 AT NOON

Present: Chair: Councillor Judy Brownoff
Members: James Grayson, David DeShane, Neil Neate, John Smith, Don Stenton and Darrell Wick
Staff: Neil Findlow, Planning Supervisor; Steve Holroyd, Engineering Planner; Gerald Fleming, Park Planning and Design Manager; Cst. Petra Dornblut; Cst. Ian Ritchie and MaryAnn Greco, Senior Committee Clerk
Regrets: Judy Gaylord
Guest: Councillor Dean Murdock

MINUTES

MOVED by D. DeShane and Seconded by J. Grayson: "That the minutes of the meetings held January 19, 2009 be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED.

PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY

The Chair circulated a memorandum dated February 19, 2009 recommending the Planning Department report on how to develop a Saanich Pedestrian Policy and Design. The intent is to adopt policies and design guidelines to capture opportunities to make walking a legitimate non-motorized transportation choice for Saanich residents. The City of Calgary has recently drafted a Pedestrian Policy and Design Report that has a number of good policies that should be looked at. A pedestrian infrastructure policy needs to be developed that includes opportunities through the redevelopment of our urban villages to provide well designed and operated pedestrian routes and facilities.

Motion: MOVED by D. Wick and Seconded by J. Grayson: "That the Planning Department report back on the development of a Pedestrian Policy and Design Guidelines for Saanich."

CARRIED.

FUTURE SIDEWALK INVESTMENTS

Councillor Murdock stated that one of the priority items that came out of the municipal campaign trail and in recent citizen surveys was the need for sidewalk and cycling infrastructure. Saanich's current pedestrian infrastructure is inadequate, non-existent or in need of repair. He would like a long term plan for accelerating the installation and restoration of sidewalks in Saanich. The Director of Finance suggested this item be brought forward to this Committee for a recommendation.

The Chair stated that the new target for sidewalks has increased in Saanich's Strategic Plan to 1.8 km/year. Most of Saanich's new sidewalk investment is through development. The Finance Department should report back on how to address this over time and what funding opportunities are available. Major and collectors carry the most traffic and pedestrians are put at risk without adequate pedestrian facilities. The FCM's Green Municipal Fund is an avenue to pursue. This program supports municipal initiatives that benefit the environment, local economies and quality of life. Perhaps there is a way to capture some sidewalks through this fund and enhance them with environmental benefits.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Engineering Planning Designer stated:

- There is 55 KM of major and collector roads needing sidewalks at a cost of approximately \$17,000,000;
- This does not capture roads that have sidewalks that are in poor condition or need of replacement or upgrading.
- Major and collector roads are a priority in the Pedestrian Priority Implementation Plan document.
- New sidewalks are built in residential areas only if it is a safe route to school or included as part of a new development.
- The Engineering Department regularly applies for grants and these applications include sidewalks and cycling facilities.

The Senior Planner noted that under recent changes to the Local Government Act, municipalities can ask for cash in lieu of providing parking and this maybe another funding opportunity. Saanich has the ability through a bylaw to recover the cost with a parking variance and use the funds for infrastructure that encourages non-motorized modes of transportation.

Motion: MOVED by J. Smith and Seconded by D. DeShane: "That the Finance Department be asked to report back on the different grants and funding opportunities that are available to finance sidewalks and cycling on major and collector streets.

CARRIED.

Cst. Ritchie offered to provide accident statistics on major and collector streets to be included in the memorandum to the Finance Department.

ADMIRALS ROAD CONCEPT BRIDGE

The Engineering Designer stated that the Admirals Bridge near Colquitz Avenue will be replaced with a new structure in 2009. He circulated the concept plans and stated that discussions have taken place with the Federal Government on the clearance requirements needed for the new bridge. The under side of the bridge needs to be raised approximately 1.5 metres (5 feet) and includes a new centre pier. The approach roads and some driveways will need to be adjusted because of the height of the new bridge and this has expanded the scope of construction. There will be 2 m sidewalk on both sides with 1.5 m bicycle lanes, 3.5 m travel lanes in both direction and dedicated left turn lane.

The Committee noted the following:

- Area residents have expressed concern about transients living under the bridge and if lighting was going to be added.
- Given the scope of this project, the final details should be brought back to the Committee for review.
- In the past when concept plans have been presented, the Committee has noted impediments to cycling; the changes may have been small but important in terms of facilitating cycling.
- With the 5% grade and site lines, there maybe conflicts between young cyclists heading off to school and parents with baby strollers; the off ramp should be increased to 4 metres to alleviate this potential.

The Engineering Designer stated that bringing back the final details for feedback may be difficult. As part of the design build contract, the Municipality has a time frame to review and sign off on the detailed designs prepared by the design team and that time frame is 14 days.

The Chair stated that perhaps there can be a referral system put in place for this Committee to provide feedback within the 14 day time frame. This item should be brought back for further discussion at the next meeting.

SNOW REMOVAL DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER

Memorandum from Councillor Brownoff dated February 19, 2009 regarding snow removal on sidewalks and bus shelters along major and collector roads.

The Chair noted the following:

- As a follow-up from discussions at the last meeting, she has prepared recommendations to be forwarded to staff for the Committee's consideration.
- During a snow storm, Saanich residents are asked to not drive and take public transit but the sidewalks leading up to the bus shelters are full of snow and the bus shelter itself; this is a real public safety concern.
- The priority for the Public Works Department is to clear the major and collector roads, perhaps a similar program can be adopted for sidewalks.
- Many municipalities make it mandatory for property owners to clear snow and ice from sidewalks abutting their property within 48 hours of a snow fall.
- For some seniors, moving snow is impossible and they need help; for the City of Edmonton, help comes to seniors in the form of the Snow Angel Program.
- To be a Snow Angel, residents in a neighbourhood adopt a senior's sidewalk and commit to keep it clear.
- Alternative modes of transportation need to be maintained during snow storms.
- With climate change, snowfall in Saanich may become a normal event and needs to be prepared.

A discussion ensued and the Committee noted the following:

- During the recent snowfall, there were many residents walking on the streets because the sidewalks were not cleared; these residents were being sprayed on by passing vehicles and putting themselves at risk.
- The sidewalks were loaded with the snow ploughed from the streets and access to bus shelters was not cleared.
- Streets with grass boulevards are ideal as they do not plug up the sidewalk with the snow ploughed from the street.
- Although Saanich has a bylaw requiring all municipal sidewalks to be cleared, this is not being adhered to.
- The Snow Angel Program could be integrated into the Block Watch Program; a community approach is needed of neighbour helping neighbour.
- The message to send to residents is that public transit will be supported during snow storms.

Motion: **MOVED by J. Grayson and Seconded by D. Stenton: "That the Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Advisory Committee request that the memorandum from Councillor Brownoff dated February 19, 2008 be referred to the Engineering Department for a report back on the development of a program for clearing snow from sidewalks and bus shelters similar to the one for major and collector roads."**

CARRIED

POLICE DEPARTMENT TRAFFIC INITIATIVES

Cst. Ritchie advised that for many years, the Traffic Safety Unit's focus has been on the Pat Bay Highway, the major feeders and the school zones. For 2009, they will be concentrating on reducing crashes and injuries at intersections and focusing on vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. They will be enforcing entering intersections at high speeds and no helmets on cyclists.

In response to a question from the Committee, Cst. Ritchie will provide cycling and pedestrian related accident statistics for the past two years for the next meeting.

SWEEPING PRIORITIES

D. Wick circulated a memorandum dated February 19, 2009 to the Committee regarding bicycle lane debris and stated that there are two major debris problems that pose a significant safety hazards for cyclists: tree debris resulting from wind storms and gravel following a snow storm. When there is a windstorm there are roads that are covered with debris and it is unsafe for a cyclist. After the recent snow storm, the gravel was so thick on some streets that it presented a serious danger for cyclists trying to stop or turn. If cycling is to be promoted as a year round mode of transportation, sweeping needs to be a greater priority.

The Chair stated that, in the past, the Committee made a recommendation to the Public Works Department to not sweep residential roads so that the new cycling infrastructure could be maintained more frequently.

N. Neate stated that there may be ways of improving their efficiencies and perhaps it would be advantageous to have the operator come to a future meeting.

Motion: MOVED by D. Wick and seconded by D. Stenton: "That the letter submitted by Darrell Wick dated February 19, 2009 be referred to the Engineering Department for a report back to the Committee."

CARRIED

CONFIRM LOCAL CONNECTOR ROUTE: CEDAR HILL GOLF COURSE TO SAANICH BORDER: LINWOOD VS WICKLOW

D. Wick stated that at a recent Committee of the Whole meeting, Council considered a report from the Director of Planning recommending the local bike routes described be endorsed. At that meeting, a resident questioned why the route shown on Map 10.3 is different from the route that Council approved at a Public Hearing in 2005 which goes through Wicklow Street. He requested that members go out and look at Linwood vs Wicklow and be prepared to report back to the Committee on which one they prefer. The Public Hearing is not being scheduled until this matter is clarified.

Next Meeting:

The next regular BIPED meeting will be held at noon on Thursday, March 19, 2009 in Committee Room No. 2.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary

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Councillor Brownoff, Chair