

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

Present: Chair: Councillor Judy Brownoff
Members: James Grayson, David DeShane, Judy Gaylord, 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. Ian Ritchie; Cst. Petra Dornblut; and Isobel Hoffmann, Senior Committee Clerk
Regrets: Ian Graeme

MINUTES MOVED by J. Smith and Seconded by D. DeShane: "That the minutes of the meeting held February 19, 2009 be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED.

REZONING APPLICATION – 4590 LOCHSIDE DRIVE

Mark Johnston and Mike Baier (Limona Holdings) were present to elaborate on the changes to a proposed 6-lot subdivision adjacent to Lochside Trail. Mr. Johnston stated:

- The original proposal for eight RS-10 lots has been changed to six lots, with each lot being over 1,000 m², more in keeping with an RS-12 zone.
- Currently, Lochside Trail is a 4.5 m paved trail with a ditch on both sides; the side adjacent to the school will be unchanged, but the pavement will be widened by 1.5 m on the other side providing a 6 m road width, with a sidewalk from the development to Royal Oak Drive.
- The wider width will accommodate farm vehicles, bikes and pedestrians at the same time.
- Some trees will have to be removed to accommodate the expansion, but they are not in good condition. New trees and as much natural vegetation as possible will be planted instead, in cooperation with the Parks Department.
- Regular discussions have been held with the School District and Lochside School; he has a letter of support for the new proposal from the PAC, the School and the School Board.
- The drop-off area adjacent to the school on Lochside Trail is a safety issue, particularly in the mornings, as there is insufficient room.
- The current school parking lot configuration cannot handle the volumes for drop-off either.
- It is proposed to relocate the staff parking area to the other side of the school and expand it to handle the volume, with access from Lochside Drive. This will free 21 spaces in the main parking area for drop-off and pick-up, with access/egress from Royal Oak Drive.
- "No Stopping" signs will be posted adjacent to the school on Lochside Trail just before the driveway entrance to the new teachers' parking area to prohibit pickup and drop-off.
- Additional landscaping will be planted to screen the staff parking area from the trail.
- These modifications, together with enforcement and education, will improve the current situation.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Baier and Mr. Johnston stated:

- Improvements to the parking areas will be completed during the summer when school is not in session but they want to finalize the rezoning first.
- Adequate street lighting will be provided.
- Concerns about the height of the screening in front of the new staff parking area in terms of security and crime prevention were duly noted.
- They will work with the school on re-educating the parents to use the new on-site drop-off area and if necessary a parking commissionaire could be hired initially.
- Permitting parking by trail users will be discussed with the CRD and Saanich staff; noted weekends and evenings parking would be available on the school site, when trail use would be most popular.

Motion: MOVED by D. Wick and Seconded by Cst. Dornblut: “That the Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Advisory Committee support the improved initiatives proposed in the revised design plans for 4590 Lochside Drive and the modifications to the Lochside Trail including the posting of No Stopping signs; request that the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design guidelines be referred to when making revisions to the school parking lot; and, endorse efforts to re-educate the parents about the new pick-up and drop-off regulations at the beginning of each school year.”

CARRIED.

BUS STOP STANDARDS

A joint memorandum was circulated from the Planning and Engineering Departments in response to the Committee’s request to review current bus stop standards, and identify basic standards for neighbourhood stops and criteria for stops near major centres.

General discussion noted the following:

- Part of encouraging transit use is to provide safe and accessible bus stops, built to a standard that fits the area and the volume of use – whether rural, urban, or commercial.
- Both the Shelbourne and Douglas Street corridor studies will provide an opportunity to refine the Development Permit Guidelines for specific stops along these corridors.
- One standard would not work for all stops; we need to look at stops on an individual basis and have regional design standards for different areas; the community associations could assist, advising of inadequate stops in their specific areas.
- In conjunction with Engineering, BC Transit is focusing on high-activity stops; but there are some areas in Saanich where the stop is just a pole in a mud puddle that could be improved with the application of gravel.
- It was a concern that the review of transportation related specifications has been put on hold pending Engineering staffing and budget review.

Motion: Moved by D. De Shane and Seconded by J. Grayson: “That it be recommended to Council that Saanich consult with BC Transit to establish design and community standards for different levels of passenger waiting areas for transit users.”

Discussion continued:

- Because there are no standards, bus stop improvements are mostly complaint-driven.
- Saanich has committed to modal shifts; but the case study that Engineering was hoping to do this year has been cut from the budget and this is a concern.
- If we continue to encourage transit use, cycling or walking, we have to address the issue of bus stop standards.

The Motion was then Put and CARRIED.

CENTENNIAL TRAILS

Report from the Park Planner and Designer regarding the route for the Royal Oak Trail was circulated, together with two maps indicating cycling/walking trail routes proposed by Saanich in the Royal Oak area, and the route preferred by the Broadmead Area Residents Association.

The Park Planner and Designer stated:

- An east/west connection from Bryon Park, through the underpass at Highway 17 to the Lochside Trail was proposed as part of the Centennial Trails initiative.
- The trail proposed through Emily Carr Park has met with resistance from BARA.
- While experienced and commuter cyclists use the roads, the recreational cyclists and young families may be uncomfortable doing this and prefer the park route.
- The issue is being considered by the Parks, Trails & Recreation Committee next week.

- He noted the trail through the Emily Carr Park will be restored from its present 1.5 m width to its original width of 2.5 m. The reduced present trail width is due to the encroachment of grasses into the edge of the gravel trail over a period of several years.
- A meeting with BARA is proposed in April and he is trying to explore the options.
- As far as he is aware there have not been any complaints about cycling in parks.

Committee discussion noted:

- BARA's proposal does not support the municipality's multi-use trail system and does not recognise the needs of recreational cyclists.
- We should be encouraging cycling from a young age if we want people to adopt cycling as a life-long activity.
- This trail links to Safe Routes to School, provides access for children and families to commercial and recreational areas, and allows children to safely visit neighbourhood friends on their bikes.
- The Pondwood Park area is a preferable route to school to avoid heavy traffic.
- BARA's submission is a step backwards and could set a troubling precedent.
- Another member attended a BARA meeting, and noted that there are many quiet roads throughout Broadmead suitable for cycling and perhaps it is not necessary to take the trail through the park. BARA would rather keep the park trail for walking.
- It can be more pleasant to ride on a trail rather than a road; pedestrians and cyclists can co-exist on shared trail provided there is mutual respect for both uses: it is standard practice to *share the trail*.

The above comments to be provided to the Parks Department accordingly.

SNOW REMOVAL PROCEDURES

Councillor Brownoff advised that Council reconsidered the matter at its March 2, 2009 meeting, together with a briefing note from the Director of Engineering. The briefing note is good, but is still lacking; she expects a more detailed report from Engineering and Public Works. When the Committee discussed the matter previously, a number of suggestions were put forward. Staff should still provide a report back on these suggestions at a future meeting.

INCLUSION OF BIPED IN 14-DAY DETAIL DESIGN REFERRAL

The Engineering Planner/Designer stated:

- The 14-day referral period only applies to the Admirals Bridge project; other projects usually have a 30-day referral period.
- This does not mean Saanich has to approve it within 14 days; it just means the review period has been shortened.
- If there are substantial changes with this, or any project, in terms of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, it would be referred to this Committee.
- With respect to the Admirals Bridge project, the scope of the work and the right-of-way are limited. The main issue for cyclists would be travelling westbound and how to get into a dedicated left turn lane on the bridge.
- Any comments can be included in the concept drawings if received on time; it is not necessary to wait until you see the design before providing input.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Email from the Mt. Tolmie Community Association was circulated on bicycle infrastructure improvements; comments were noted as follows:

Bike Lanes on Richmond Road – from Poplar Ave to Cedar Ave (0.4 km):

- Richmond Road is part of the official commuter network
- The suggested route was supported because it follows side streets which have less traffic; members thought it was a valid proposal.

- Engineering advised that in terms of a streetscape priority list, the roads mentioned would be added to the end of the current priority list. Richmond is not wide enough to just paint lines; there are many other issues to consider and other areas with a higher priority.
- This is a small portion of a bigger project in an underserved area; perhaps BiPed could find a creative funding solution as there is some merit in pursuing it.
- Once the Bowker Creek connection is completed to Hillside, this route can be linked to it; perhaps the work could be completed at the same time.

The Park Planning and Design Manager left the meeting at 1:00 pm

Electric Bicycle Charging Outlets at Public Locations

- Suggested that 220v charging outlets to be installed at recreation centres and regional parks as well as shopping centres, libraries and other public centres.
- Agreed this was a good suggestion and referred to staff for Saanich facilities as well as look at how major centre or village, such as the Shelbourne Corridor, could capture this need. Staff requested to report back.
- The outlets could be added to the existing list of desired amenities provided to developers.
- CRD Parks to be contacted to consider installation at Elk and Beaver Lakes and other regional parks.

Width of Iona Drive (Cedar Hill to Broadmead) & Palo Alto Street

- These narrower streets are no different from other areas of the municipality.
- Saanich has been working on an “off McKenzie” bike route, and Palo Alto would be widened at that time; at the moment, these roads are not on any local connector routes.

Bike Lanes on Cedar Hill Road

- The existing bike lanes in this area are a result of land development; but it is piece-meal; would be desirable to connect the pieces.
- The same rationale could be applied to sidewalks.

Bike Lanes on Shelbourne Street (from McKenzie north to Dairy Ave & north of McKenzie)

- Refer to the Planning Department for the Shelbourne Corridor Review Process.

Councillor Brownoff suggested that we respond to the Community Association, advising that we appreciate their input and pro-active suggestions, and advise them of the committee's comments and suggestions accordingly.

LOCAL CONNECTOR ROUTE: CEDAR HILL GOLF COURSE TO SAANICH BORDER (Linwood vs Wicklow)

An email and map was distributed to the Committee outlining the routes. Mr. Wick stated:

- Linwood's grade is 2% steeper than Wicklow, but there is a pedestrian signal on Cook at Linwood, which benefits the southbound commuter.
- Linwood also provides connectivity at the end of Inverness to the Park.

Discussion noted the following comments:

- Although the grade is steeper, most committee members, as experienced cyclists, stated they would prefer Wicklow for a north to south commute.
- Linwood is the wiser choice for less experienced cyclists, it is on a school route and connects to Inverness.
- There could be merit in having two designated, parallel routes.

Motion: Moved by D. Wick and Seconded by N. Neate: “That the Bicycle Advisory Committee recommends the local connector route between Cedar Hill Golf Course to the Saanich border have a designated southbound route from Camrose to Cook to Linwood; and a northbound route on Wicklow to Salisbury Way.”

CARRIED.

CYCLING AND PEDESTRIAN RELATED ACCIDENT STATISTICS

Constable Dornblut stated:

- There were 10 fewer pedestrian-related incidents in 2008 compared to 2007.
- Cst. Dornblut noted that the problem with stats. is that sometimes a cyclist or pedestrian may be partially responsible for the cause of an accident, but not necessarily a victim.
- With respect to cycling incidents, they occur all over the municipality although are more prevalent along Douglas and Shelbourne Streets, or at the entrance to major centres (in particular Saanich Centre).
- The cause is normally user-error; to determine specific causes, each individual report would have to be pulled.

Councillor Brownoff agreed with Cst. Ritchie’s suggestion to review the “top ten sites” for pedestrian and cycling incidents, as this would be helpful to identify improvements or the need for additional signage, etc. Also, any sites along the Shelbourne Corridor could be considered in the upcoming design review.

COMPREHENSIVE CYCLING MAP

D. Wick displayed a map he prepared showing all the existing designated and proposed cycling routes. The Committee noted:

- It is important to distinguish from what is developed and what is proposed, although it is beneficial to see what the cycling network will eventually look like.
- It is difficult to produce an accessible and readable map that shows this much detail; having a map on a larger scale is useful; it would be helpful for planning and provides some perspective.
- Agreed it should be reference material used at each meeting.

VICTORIA REGIONAL RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT

D. Wick advised that the Community Liaison Committee is having some conflict. The citizens on the committee have varying opinions and want a voice, whereas the people running the committee disagree with going public at this time. At the last meeting, possible routes for an LRT system from Langford to downtown based on high traffic volumes throughout the day were reviewed; the routes do not consider commutes to UVIC. The Committee meets on a monthly basis. He will provide an update in April.

SAN JUAN GREENWAY AND COASTAL GREENWAY SIGNAGE

D. Wick stated:

- The custom signage developed for the Centennial Trails project is inconsistent with standard cycling signs. The matter has been raised previously but no action taken yet.
- Each transportation mode has its own distinctive signs and colours: yellow is for cycling. He suggested that proper cycling signs be posted on the Blenkinsop and San Juan Connectors.

Councillor Brownoff noted there are too many signs and this is having an impact; the issue of signage in general should be discussed at a future meeting.

The Committee agreed that more Centennial signs are not needed; the yellow cycling signs can be affixed to existing posts. This item should be brought forward for further discussion when a Parks Representative is present.

REQUEST FOR BIKE LANES ON WEST BURNSIDE ROAD

Email request from Steen Magnussen was distributed requesting bike lanes on W. Burnside Road, specifically between Spectrum High School and Interurban Road.

- The Engineer stated the intent is to improve Burnside Road from Grange Road to McKenzie Avenue over the next three or four years.
- The first phase is on the south (school) side between Grange and Marigold, and will include bike lanes, sidewalks and relocation of the bus stop at Grange.
- Council will consider this request next week, and hopefully it can be put out for tender and work started this spring.
- Burnside Road is within the bike network from View Royal to Interurban and future phases will include the north side of Burnside between Grange and Marigold and both sides of the road between Marigold and McKenzie.
- There are no plans to extend the upgrading past McKenzie to Interurban, or beyond Grange Road, at this time.
- Engineering will prepare a response to Mr. Magnussen.

REVISIONS TO THE MOTOR VEHICLE ACT RE SAFE CYCLING

D. Wick stated:

- The MVA prohibits cyclists riding two abreast on the roadways and he would like to request Council to write to the Minister of Transportation to review this section of the Act.
- Riding two abreast is safer for cyclists and shortens the passing distance for cars.
- Compared to passing single riders, drivers tend not to pass those riding two-abreast unless there is no on-coming traffic in the other lane.
- This practice is permitted in Ontario, but most provinces do not allow it.
- He noted this is the focus of many cycling groups.

Councillor Brownoff suggested the matter be referred to the CRD Traffic Safety Committee. Agreed that Mr. Wick draft up a request to Council and circulate to BiPed members for comment.

Next Meeting: The next regular BIPED meeting will be held at noon on Thursday, April 16, 2009 in Committee Room No. 2.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary

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Councillor Brownoff, Chair