



**ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
May 18, 2017**

PRESENT: Ben Buckwold, Chair
Kelsey Lane, Vice Chair
Councillor Sam Austin
Councillor Lindell Smith
Ella Dodson
Eliza Jackson
Lindsay Slade
Ian Watt
David Jackson

REGRETS: Councillor Tim Outhit
Maggie Lucas
Elizabeth Pugh
James McMillin

STAFF: Leslie Neate, Legislative Support
David MacIsaac, Active Transportation Program Supervisor

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

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Active Transportation Advisory Committee are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/170518atac-agenda.php>

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. and adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at **4:00** p.m.

- Community Announcements

Ella Dodson advised that a survey relating to “Halifax Strategic Road Safety Plan” is underway and circulated a one-page document. The survey closes May 19, 2017. The intent of the survey is to gain a better understanding of safety issues and priorities perceived by the public.

Kelsey Lane discussed Bike Week events. The Halifax Cycling Coalition is hosting Cycle the Sea Port and an Open Doors Ride. On June 10, a “Bike-in” Theatre is being hosted at the Oval, beginning at 6:00 p.m. (Tune-Up Tents, Art Bikers, Vendors, and more), with a movie beginning at 9:00 p.m., called WADJDA - “The story of a young girl living in a suburb of Saudi Arabia determined to raise enough money to buy a bike in a society that sees bicycles as dangerous to a girl’s virtue.” A poster of this event was made available to members.

Eliza Jackson gave an update relating to a key election issue of the Ecology Action Centre. Investment in active transportation has been identified. More information is available at their website to learn more about what EAC is asking from provincial candidates.

The Chair advised that the schedule for Bike Week is now up. The website is <https://www.halifax.ca/bikeweek/>.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 20, 2017

MOVED by David Jackson, seconded by Kelsey Lane.

THAT the minutes of April 20, 2017 be approved.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

MOVED by Ian Watt, seconded Eliza Jackson

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

David MacIsaac provided follow-up on the status of ATAC’s report requests to Transportation Standing Committee, as discussed at the April 20, 2017, meeting.

- “On-street Bicycling Parking Policies”: The aim is to have this to June Transportation Standing Committee meeting (75 percent chance).
- “Protected Bicycle Lane – Hollis Street”: The aim is to get this to the July Transportation Standing Committee.

- “Policy for Regularized Participation and Funding Consideration for HRM Partnered Trail Association”: -- Regional Council dealt with this on April 25, 2017; and approved the following motion:

“That Halifax Regional Council continue to provide eligibility for funding, through the Community Grants Program, to recreation trails that are located on property owned and operated by non-profit and charitable organizations until such time as:

1. Council receives a staff report and recommendation respecting the possible adoption of a policy to regularize participation and funding consideration for HRM partnered trail associations; and
2. Council provides direction to the Chief Administrative Officer in respect of that report and recommendation.”

Ella Dodson discussed that there are a number of recreational walkers who are not part of any group (non-profit or charitable) who, therefore, don't qualify for grants programs to address trail issues showing up (ie. signage). The suggestion was made that HRM should partner with the province to get a grant to fund some improvements that are needed under a 50/50 split agreement.

The Chair indicated that this committee had wanted to see Council have a strategic framework for the way it invests funding in trails development to prioritize projects; however, what seemed to have happened is that Council debated the availability of funding for recreation trails in general. The report that came to Council seemed to say that Recreational Trail funding is dealt with through the Community Grants program, and there is no recommendation to change it until a further report and study is completed.

Councillor Austin advised that the trail pieces are quite complicated due to ownership.

The Chair will forward the report that went to Council for all members for review, and **it was agreed** that it would be further discussed at an upcoming meeting.

Ella Dodson indicated she would put together a list of bullet points on the accessibility section for distribution to members.

The Chair will connect with Ian Watt to obtain HRTA's position on this.

- “Brunswick Street as a Candidate Bike Route”: A report is in the works and is being combined with another report. It may be at the May Transportation committee meeting. The report will include a total of five corridors.
- “Trans Canada Trail”: Regional Council dealt with this issue at the February 7, 2017, meeting. Council approved the following motion:

“That Halifax Regional Council endorse ongoing collaboration between the Municipality, the Nova Scotia Trails Federation, and the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) on the development of a connected and complete TCT route within the municipality.”

- Willow Street Local Street Bikeway: ATAC report dated for November 24, 2016, TSC meeting was prepared. The meeting was cancelled, and the report was not carried forward to the December meeting. This will be placed on the June 7, 2017, TSC agenda.

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence - None

7.2 Petitions - None

7.3 Presentations

7.3.1 LeMarchant St Thomas Drop-off Loop Presentation - Natalia Diaz-Insense, Youth Active Transportation Coordinator, Ecology Action Centre

The following was before the Committee:

- A hand-out titled, "Safety and Health Concerns with LeMarchant-St. Thomas Elementary School.

The presenter explained the concerns for health and safety with the planned drop-off loop considered for the new school. The loop was proposed to alleviate traffic congestion; however, it is felt that it will instead create more congestion and become a safety and health hazard to children who attend the school due to its planned location.

It does not follow the recommendations made by the Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) according to which passenger pick-up and drop-off areas should: 1) be placed at the rear or side entrances of buildings and away from main entrances, 2) not pass in front of a main entrance, 3) not cross major sidewalks or other pedestrian facilities, and 4) be located downstream of the building entrance. It is believed that this loops causes:

- Increase traffic volume in the neighbourhood.
- Increase amounts of air pollution around the school and neighbourhood.
- Increase traffic congestion in front of and around the school as cars have to cross the sidewalk to access drop-off area and a wait to get to the drop-off area.
- Increase in risk of short term health problems.
- Increase in dangerous driving behaviours associated with higher traffic congestion.
- Increase in risk of injury to children.

The request to HRM/ATAC is to weigh in on the health and safety concerns the proposed drop-off loop at LeMarchant-St. Thomas Elementary School will have on traffic congestion, air pollution, and other transportation (level of service), given recommended best practices and existing or on-going municipal AT standards, strategies, and plans, such as Halifax 2014-19 Active Transportation Priorities Plan and Halifax Regional Plan 2014 and Integrated Mobility Plan (in progress). Also to demand that Transportation Infrastructure Renewal/Halifax Regional School Board/NS Department of Education and Early Childhood Development provide non-anecdotal evidence regarding the claim that the loop will calm traffic congestion and make things safer, since all expert evidence will have on the effects of such a loop contradicts this claim.

Committee engaged in a discussion. A suggestion was put forward to consider Jubilee Road as a possible alternative drop-off location. The Chair thanked the presenter for the information provided and asked the Councillors how this could be dealt with. It is unclear what type of motion could be effective in making a change.

MOVED by Councillor Austin, seconded Kelsey Lane

THAT this item be deferred to the next ATAC meeting to allow time for conversations with staff who may be able to steer the committee in the correct direction on this matter relating to a possible motion.

7.3.2 Winter Cycling Congress Presentation – Kelsey Lane

This item was moved to follow item 7.3.3; but then was deferred to the next meeting due to lack of time.

7.3.3 Almon Street Bike Lane Proposal – Staff

David MacIsaac provided a presentation to the committee, titled “Almon Street Bike Lane Planning.”

Highlights of the presentation are as follows:

Why this project now?

Halifax’s Active Transportation Priorities Plan

- Almon Street is a designated “candidate” bicycle route
- Focus on developing bike network in the “Regional Centre”

Halifax Regional Plan Policy

- Objective to “design complete streets for all ages, abilities, and modes of travel.”

Integrated Mobility Plan

- Almon Street part of proposed bicycle network for “all ages & abilities” on the Halifax peninsula by 2020

Street repaving provides opportunity for integration

Planning Project Objectives:

1. Explore opportunities to add bicycle facilities on Almon Street in conjunction with 2017 street repaving.
2. Extend and connect bike route network and increase comfort and safety.
3. Understand the implications for other street functions:
i.e., pedestrians, transit, car & truck traffic, on-street parking, loading, trees, accessibility, other.
4. Submit proposed option to Regional Council for consideration (early summer 2017).

Two Options:

1. Implement a combination painted bike lanes/shared-street facility in 2017. Conduct planning on conversion to protected bike lanes in two-three years.
2. Reinstate street with no changes in 2017. Conduct planning on conversion to protected bike lanes in two-three years.

Planning for protected bike lanes – additional work:

- 1) Research and planning protected bike lanes for blocks under 11m wide.
- 2) Design of “all ages and abilities” intersections;
- 3) Confirm legality of treatments in Nova Scotia MVA;
- 4) Full parking occupancy and mitigation plan, including accessible parking;
- 5) Loading requirements and how to accommodate with protected;
- 6) Operations plan (e.g. drainage, snow clearing);
- 7) Public education plan for new facility treatments;
- 8) More public/stakeholder engagement

Evaluation Criteria:

1. Potential for Use/ Connectivity (existing bicycling, land use)

2. Street Characteristics (traffic, slope, width, intersections)
3. Alternative Route Analysis (are there other options)
4. Feedback: Public, Stakeholders, Internal HRM

Public consultation ends tomorrow. Staff are seeing a variety of comments, suggested changes, positive and negative feedback is being provided as well.

At the end of the presentation, the following questions and comments were noted by committee members:

- Could there be better protection for bicycles if the bike lane was moved inward for safety purposes? David MacIsaac noted there is more work/study to be done.
- Does removing parking increase vehicle speed if no bikes present? David MacIsaac advised that this is certainly possible.
- Has there been any feedback from businesses along that stretch? David MacIsaac noted he had delivered notices to all the businesses and cannot recall any specific comments.
- Businesses on Windsor street, who have lost parking spaces previously, are now concerned about losing parking on Almon. Some residents are also noting the same concern.
- Kelsey Lane, representing the Halifax Cycling Coalition (HCC), noted a primary concern is that the report is not yet back relating to Hollis Street, which could be a good indication of how to proceed with bicycle lanes that are not 100 percent prepared for implementation (lack of data, lack of formal occupancy study for those lanes, not sure about protection, or intersections). HCC is worried that this will be another bicycle lane that just won't work (for people riding bikes, residents, and businesses); and it brings up the questions, "Do bike lanes work at all?"

David MacIsaac asked for members to send him emails with any further comments, ideas, thoughts, or suggestions.

8. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

8.1 COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES

This item was deferred to next meeting due to lack of time.

8.2 STAFF UPDATES

This item was deferred to next meeting due to lack of time.

9. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – June 15, 2017

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Leslie Neate

**ATAC Minutes
May 18, 2017**

Legislative Support