

MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

7 JULY 1999

1:30 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: D. Holmes

Members: M. Bellemare, R. Cantin, L. Davis, C. Doucet, H. Kreling, J. Legendre,
M. McGoldrick-Larsen, M. Meilleur

REGRETS W. Byrne

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Transportation Committee confirm the Minutes of the meeting of 16 June 1999.

CARRIED

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. CONROY ROAD RECONSTRUCTION - REQUEST FOR MEDIAN BREAK
- Co-ordinator, Transportation Committee report dated 28 Jun 99
- NCC letter dated 5 Jul 99

Robert Walters, National Capital Commission indicated the decision to grant the opening was made early enough to avoid any major costs, which would have been incurred had the project been any further advanced. In speaking with the consultant from Delcan and in consultation with staff, it is the NCC's understanding that 5% of the costs associated with the break relate to redesign, while 95% of those costs are for contracting charges. The NCC was seeking assurance that any costs being passed onto them be related only to the incremental work. The Deputy Commissioner, Doug Brousseau confirmed the Region will only charge the NCC the incremental costs.

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- Note:
1. Underlining indicates a new or amended recommendation approved by Committee.
 2. Reports requiring Council consideration will be presented to Council on 14 July 1999 in Transportation Committee Report 43.

Tim Rivers, Thunderbird Golf and Go Karts thanked committee for agreeing to the median break, but found the estimate of \$25,000 somewhat excessive. He indicated that as the tenant on the NCC's land, he will be forced to bear the costs associated with the break and this would present a financial hardship to him. He asked that the costs not be added on or to have more minimum charges, with construction costs to be assumed by the Region.

In response to a question posed by Councillor Cantin, Jim Miller, Director of Engineering advised that the total will be less than \$25,000 and would probably be in the order of between \$15,000 and \$20,000. He confirmed the costs would be necessary to cover the additional lanes and asphalt necessary for this median break. When questioned whether these costs would apply if the median break had been approved as part of the original design, he indicated that the additional expense is to cover excavation for the turning radius and the deceleration lane; it is a unit price contract and this is just additional work to that contract. D. Brousseau added that committee and Council had originally approved a design that did not include a break at this location, but if it had, it would have been part of the overall cost of the project. In this case, the request for a break came after the fact and now it is the proponent that has to pay.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen questioned whether there would in fact be \$25,000 left in the account of a contract of such magnitude to cover this additional expense and J. Miller confirmed the budget can accommodate this work. The councillor proposed that the project funding cover the costs associated with this median break.

In response to a question posed by Councillor Kreling, staff advised that the reconstruction of Conroy Road has been planned for quite some time and there have been numerous public hearings and environmental assessment studies as part of the process. While the road was under construction, the request came forward for a median break. Chair Holmes recollected that in the previous discussion at committee with Mr. Rivers, he had indicated that he had been told there was always going to be a break in front of his business and Mr. Rivers confirmed this fact. D. Brousseau indicated that at the original public hearing committee approved a design which did not include this break.

Ron Jacks, Project Manager advised that during the environmental assessment process, a detailed traffic analysis determined there would be median breaks and it was debated at that time, whether or not there would be one in front of this business. However, the decision was made that only commercial businesses to the north would have right in and right out access/egress and it was determined there would be no median break at the Thunderbird Golf and Go-Kart business. He recalled that he had spoken to Mr. Rivers at the time and advised him of this fact.

Moved by M. McGoldrick-Larsen

That the costs associated with the median break be taken from the Project (Conroy Road Reconstruction) budget.

LOST

YEAS: M. McGoldrick-Larsen, D. Holmes....2

NAYS: M. Bellemare, R. Cantin, L. Davis, H. Kreling, J. Legendre,
M. Meilleur....6

Moved by R. Cantin

That a \$10,000 cap on costs of the median break be attributed to the landowner (NCC).

CARRIED

YEAS: R. Cantin, C. Doucet, D. Holmes, H. Kreling, M. McGoldrick-Larsen,
M. Meilleur....6

NAYS M. Bellemare, L. Davis, J. Legendre....3

Having held a public hearing, that the Transportation Committee recommend Council:

- 1. Endorse the design as presented for a median opening on Conroy Road to allow access to the Thunderbird Golf and Go-Karts business as approved by Regional Council on 26 May 1999;**
- 2. Confirm that the median opening is specific to the Thunderbird Golf and Go-Kart business and that the median opening be reviewed if there is a land use change to this property.**

CARRIED as amended

2. **MODIFICATIONS TO ALBION ROAD AND LESTER ROAD - EXPANSION OF THE RIDEAU CARLETON RACEWAY**

- Co-ordinator, Transportation Committee report dated 28 Jun 99
- D. Gladstone, Centretown Citizen's Community Association letter dated 7 Jul 99
- C. Robertson, City Centre Coalition letter dated 7 Jul 99

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner, Doug Brousseau suggested the recommendation more appropriately should refer to the "Rideau Carleton Raceway" rather than the "proponent".

Moved by R. Cantin

That Recommendation 1 be amended to change the word “proponent” to “Rideau Carleton Raceway”.

CARRIED

At this point in the discussion, Councillor Holmes had to leave the meeting and Councillor Legendre assumed the Chair.

Councillor Doucet did not support the staff recommendation because there has been no traffic impact study associated with the expansion of this facility. It appeared the development was not in accordance with the Region's Official Plan because it will increase car traffic, with no alternative mode of transportation being offered. It would appear, therefore, that the Region encourages car use. As a result and as referred to by the Centretown Citizens Community Association (CCCA) in their letter dated 7 July 1999, residents of Ottawa-Carleton will pay for this new car usage through declining quality of life and decreased road infrastructure. He was anxious that committee not augment what is already a difficult situation, at a time when the Region is working towards other modes of transportation i.e. light rail.

Deputy Commissioner, Doug Brousseau explained to committee that the modifications are necessary in order to make this access operate safely. He emphasized that the Region does not have a say in whether or not the expansion proceeds, noting the development will occur whether or not committee approves the staff recommendation. However, the staff recommendation ensures the road will be safe once the expansion is complete. He further confirmed that despite what is stated in the report, the traffic control signals will be installed as part of the roadway modifications.

In response to the question of whether police officers would be assigned to help patrol the accesses, Ron Jacks, Delcan advised there have been discussions about this for the peak periods. In response to Councillor Doucet's concerns, and while there is currently no transit service to this site, he advised that the expanded parking lot will provide for bus parking because many people are expected to come to the facility as part of a bus tour.

As eluded to in the letter from the CCCA, Acting Chair Legendre questioned whether the City of Gloucester have carried out a comprehensive planning review as part of the site plan approval for the expansion. D. Brousseau advised that site plan approvals frequently require traffic impact analysis, but it was unclear whether this expansion is significant enough that the City would want to carry out such a study. R. Jack advised that there are assumptions of how much traffic will be generated and the new accesses from Albion Road should operate safely. He admitted they needed an opportunity to monitor the site and see where the traffic comes from.

Having held a public hearing, that the Transportation Committee recommend Council approve the installation of traffic control signals at the intersection of Albion Road and the primary access to the Rideau Carleton Raceway as shown in Annex B, and the roadway modifications to Albion Road adjacent to the Rideau Carleton Raceway and at the intersection of Albion Road and Lester Road as described in the report and illustrated in Annexes D and E, subject to the proponent:

- a. funding the total cost for the traffic control signal installation and annual maintenance costs, roadway modifications and the associated utility relocations;**
- b. executing a legal agreement with respect to the above.**

CARRIED as amended
(C. Doucet dissented)

REGULAR ITEMS

3. SOUTHEAST TRANSITWAY - RIVERSIDE TO BILLINGS BRIDGE STATION - NOISE MONITORING REPORT
- Director, Engineering Division, Environment and Transportation report dated 4 Jan 99

Wayne Bennett, Manager, Environment and Transportation Projects indicated that staff are working within the Region's Noise Guidelines established and approved in 1995. As detailed in the report, the noise must exceed 55dBA and must increase above the existing background noise by 5dBA before mitigation is warranted.

In response to a question from Councillor Cantin about the existing noise wall on the west side of the transitway, Neil Standen, Senior Acoustic Consultant with Jacques Whitford Environment Limited, explained that a study had been carried out on that side along Cabot Street 18 months previous to this current study and it was confirmed that the noise levels are essentially identical to the noise levels on the east side. He estimated that the amount of noise being cut because of the noise attenuation on the west side was approximately 6-7dBA.

Councillor Legendre made reference to the fact that the monitoring results were based on noise guidelines established in 1995, even though the Region's Official Plan (which was modified and approved in 1997), amended those guidelines. In particular, with regards to road, rail and transit, measurements will be taken based on Leq 30-minutes - not Leq 16hr. Mr. Bennett advised that staff have consistently used the latter for their noise monitoring results. The councillor argued that the ROP is the "official" policy and should be followed. He explained that he had fought to reduce the use of that time period for

measuring noise because no one can hear the average noise over a 16-hour period and preferred an average evaluation be taken over a shorter period of time.

Councillor Bellemare recalled that last year staff had been directed to develop a draft policy on noise barriers to be applied across the Region and questioned the status of that report. D. Brousseau confirmed a retrofit policy is anticipated to come forward in the fall. The councillor questioned whether that policy would apply to existing residential developments such as the one being discussed today and D. Brousseau advised that that was his understanding at this point in time.

In his introduction to committee on this issue, Councillor Hume stated that Lamira Street and Mount Batten/Pleasant Park/Blossom should be considered differently because one area is easier to solve than the other. He explained that the two issues which need to be addressed are the noise and the transitway design. With respect to the former, he indicated that this issue became apparent in late 1997, but unfortunately the current noise guidelines do not address the problems associated with noise during peak periods. During these times, as buses accelerate and decelerate in and out of the station, they produce a noise level as much as 68-70dBA which carries over into the community immediately to the east. While this noise is bad during the day, residents have told him it is unbearable at night and is even more significant for residents on Lamira Street, whose homes back and front onto the transitway.

With regards to the issue of the transitway itself, the councillor explained that the original design had both the rail line, which runs adjacent to the transitway, and the transitway in a "cut" which would place them at the same level; however, the elevation of the railway changed and the result is a bowl-shaped valley with one side topped by a sound barrier. This effectively reflects sound back into the community.

He went on to state that residents living along Pleasant Park/Mount Batten/Blossom would prefer some form of privacy fencing along their property line, similar to what the Region has approved for Conroy Road. In this regard he asked that committee consider the following Motion:

That the Transportation Committee approve, in principle, the installation of a solid plank privacy fencing for the properties abutting the Transitway and that Transportation staff report back to Committee on the specific design and specific costs for the recommended privacy fencing.

Given the fact there are multiple landowners in this area i.e. the RMOC, City of Ottawa and CP Rail), Councillor Hume suggested the privacy fencing be owner-maintained. He estimated the cost at approximately \$400 a linear metre and while this would ultimately be a significant cost, \$800,000 remains in the transitway account, which is more than enough to cover that expenditure. He confirmed that such fencing would reduce the peak-hour noise by approximately 5dBA, but advised it will not solve the night-time problem where

the sounds will still be heard from the upstairs floors of homes in that area. Further, because the property lines and grade changes are not all the same, it may not be possible to fence all the properties and other solutions will have to be investigated. In this regard, he proposed the following Motion:

That Regional staff be directed to investigate alternative solutions including the installation of solid plank privacy fencing for the homes along Lamira Avenue and that a report on the options be presented to the Transportation Committee.

The councillor further advised that when the lots on Lamira Street were sold to the original owners, a caveat was placed on the property deed stating that while there would be a transitway constructed in the area, there would be no noise mitigation provided. Unfortunately, when those properties were sold, it was on the understanding the transitway would be in a "cut". For a variety of reasons, the Region changed the design and the final product produces more noise than was originally anticipated. In this regard, he believed some form of mitigation was warranted for those residents.

When questioned whether in fact the increase in noise was as high as 65dBA, Mr. Standen confirmed that in some areas it did reach that level, but the length of time would only last for approximately one second or less. He explained that as the averaging time is reduced, noise levels can be significantly higher because it brings you closer to the peak noise. When questioned whether that was consistent with traffic noise along Hunt Club Road for example, Mr. Standen replied it is the same phenomenon i.e. when there is more traffic, there is uniformity of noise because there would be a vehicle passing close by at almost every instant.

Councillor Bellemare questioned what the noise level impact is of having the transitway at a higher grade and if staff know whether or not those levels are higher than what they would have been under the original design. Mr. Standen advised that if the grade is increased, it will raise the noise level because the source is closer. Further, in terms of peak noise levels, it would be more noticeable, but on average over a longer time period, it probably would not be noticeable. The councillor questioned whether there are industry standard estimates that could be calculated for the existing noise levels compared to what the grade level could have been under a different design and whether or not that level of noise would require mitigation. Mr. Standen agreed such a calculation could be done. The councillor believed such information would be useful for committee members and could perhaps be brought forward at a future meeting.

Councillor Hume reminded members that when the design was changed, it raised the level of noise closer to the homes.

In response to a question posed by Councillor Legendre with respect to the perception of noise levels, Mr. Standen indicated that a 3dBA change in noise is not perceptible but a

5dBA increase can be perceived, although most people cannot decipher the difference between the two.

Michel Haddad referred to the documents he previously distributed to committee members, including a letter from the president of the Alta Vista Community Association dated 6 July 1999 to Councillor Hume. He advised that buses travelling along the transitway produce a significant and disturbing noise source which is worse in the peak periods and at night; it continues between 4:30 a.m. and 2:00 a.m.. In a 2-minute video, committee members heard the noise residents are exposed to and Mr. Haddad maintained that those living on the east side of the transitway only want the same consideration as was given to those living on the west side. He opined that while a state-of-the-art concrete barrier might be acceptable, residents feel plank privacy fencing would be appropriate and would provide almost the same sound reduction. He submitted a petition of 19 signatures of residents on Pleasant Park, Lamira and Mount Batten in favour of noise mitigation on the east side of the transitway near Pleasant Park, including a proviso from one resident that the fence be 8-10 feet high and be located at or near the existing chain link fence adjacent to the railway tracks to the west of the emergency access lane.

Councillor Meilleur questioned how much it will cost to build what the residents want and it was estimated it would be in the order of \$100,000 - \$200,000, assuming everyone takes the option for the fencing. The councillor questioned the level of effectiveness of a noise barrier if one neighbour decides not to have it, leaving a gap between properties. Mr. Standen advised that any break or gap in the fence will reduce its effectiveness. Mr. Haddad advised that he did not know whether all residents were in favour of cost-sharing, but believed that for the fence to be as effective as possible, it should be as close to the transitway as possible. While he recognized that that land is not Regional property, he was confident he could obtain support from his local city councillor to install the fence on the municipality's property. Councillor Hume interjected that this issue had been discussed with city officials and CP Rail, but neither was particularly co-operative; he opined that one solution would be if the Region acquired the property from the City and maintained the fence in perpetuity. He agreed all parties will have to be in agreement or the fence will not be an effective tool.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen inquired what the difference was between a noise barrier and a privacy fence and was informed by Mr. Standen that a noise barrier reduces noise levels while a privacy fence generally provides a visual obstruction. He agreed that the latter, if properly constructed, can have an affect as a noise barrier up to perhaps a reduction of 5dBA. When questioned whether the retrofit policy would apply to existing situations, such as the one before committee today, Brendan Reid, Manager, Infrastructure and Projects Planning advised that the report will likely recommend that in those cases where residential areas are subjected to a noise level in excess of what staff recommend is acceptable, committee might wish to have a program that would retrofit those situations. In light of this information, the councillor did not agree the current situation can be

considered as a retrofit and would be inclined to consider it more a new capital project as opposed to being noise mitigation of an existing situation.

Councillor Doucet called the question and proposed committee vote on the item now with no further discussion. This suggestion was met with opposition from several members, who opined this would deny residents an opportunity to have this issue resolved today, and does not take into consideration the fact that clarification was required before a vote could be taken on the Motions before committee.

Moved by C. Doucet

That the question now be put.

LOST

YEAS: C. Doucet....1

NAYS: M. Bellemare, R. Cantin, L. Davis, D. Holmes, H. Kreling, J. Legendre,
M. McGoldrick-Larsen, M. Meilleur....8

Councillor Bellemare questioned whether the retrofit policy to come forward will address the issue of who should pay for noise attenuation and whether there will be a ranking list of the locations to be examined. B. Reid confirmed that the report will make recommendations with respect to cost sharing as well as examine a ranking system in order to set criteria to evaluate locations that come forward on an ad hoc basis. The councillor noted the Region must face annual budget cuts of \$50M as a result of provincial cut-backs and suggested perhaps setting up a fund allocated to looking at the need for such attenuation.

Councillor Davis proposed the following amended Motions as originally put forward by Councillor Hume:

Motion 1

That the Transportation Committee approve in principle the installation of a solid plank noise barrier fencing for the properties along Pleasant Park, Mount Batten and Blossom Drive abutting the transitway and that staff report back to committee on the acceptance of the property owners concerned regarding a continuous barrier as well as their acceptance of ongoing maintenance of the barrier and on the specific design and specific costs for the recommended noise barrier fencing in the event that residents are accepting of the earlier points as per Figure 1.

Motion 2

That staff be directed to investigate alternative solutions including the installation of solid plank noise barrier fencing for the homes along Lamira Avenue and that a report on the options be presented to committee.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen supported the Motions, noting the issue of noise has become more of a problem in many communities. She had concerns about the fact the original design for the transitway changed and when the Region is preparing designs for new transitways and conducting environmental assessments for those facilities, she hoped staff will be more aware of how much noise will be generated and take steps to lower the acceptable noise levels along those areas.

While he sympathized with the ward councillor and area residents, Councillor Bellemare was mindful of other requests for sound attenuation and believed this whole issue should be examined in a systematic, consistent and fair basis across the Region. He maintained the committee did not have all the information in order to make a fair decision in regards to this situation and proposed that the two Motions be referred to staff and consideration of deferral be considered pending the retrofit policy being brought forward.

Councillor Cantin supported referral and cited similar experiences he has witnessed with respect to noise attenuation, particularly for those properties along Innes Road which is a very busy and noisy roadway.

Councillor Hume urged committee members not to support referral because of the uniqueness of this situation and the fact it should rightly have been dealt with when the transitway was originally constructed. He hoped some solution could be found to address the problem, emphasizing that residents have been quite patient and the Region owed it to them to resolve this issue now.

Several councillors voiced their opposition to referral because they maintained this situation has been of particular concern for at least two years and agreed that steps should be taken to rectify the problem. In particular, it was stated that these kinds of problems will be around for many years as they are a result of growing in, not out. Mass transit has to go somewhere and the Region must respond and do something about the negative aspects of such facilities.

Chair Holmes was supportive of Motions 1 and 2, but was somewhat concerned about changing the term “privacy fence” to “noise barrier”, because it was her understanding that what the residents really wanted was a 6-foot privacy fence.

Moved by M. Bellemare

That Motions 1 and 2 be deferred pending the adoption of the Region's new policy on retrofit noise barriers; and that staff compare the existing noise levels with those that would have existed had the original transitway design been implemented.

LOST

YEAS: M. Bellemare, R. Cantin....2

NAYS: L. Davis, C. Doucet, D. Holmes, H. Kreling, J. Legendre,
M. McGoldrick-Larsen, M. Meilleur....7

Motion 1

Moved by L. Davis

That the Transportation Committee approve in principle the installation of a solid plank noise barrier fencing for the properties along Pleasant Park, Mount Batten and Blossom Drive abutting the transitway and that staff report back to committee on the acceptance of the property owners concerned regarding a continuous barrier as well as their acceptance of ongoing maintenance of the barrier and on the specific design and specific costs for the recommended noise barrier fencing in the event that residents are accepting of the earlier points as per Figure 1.

CARRIED

(M. Bellemare and R. Cantin
dissented)

Motion 2

Moved by L. Davis

That staff be directed to investigate alternative solutions including the installation of solid plank noise barrier fencing for the homes along Lamira Avenue and that a report on the options be presented to committee.

CARRIED

(M. Bellemare and R. Cantin
dissented)

4. INSTALLATION OF TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNALS AT THE INTERSECTION OF HUNT CLUB AND PAUL ANKA DRIVE TO ACCOMMODATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GAS BAR, CONVENIENCE STORE AND CAR WASH
- Director, Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services report dated 17 Jun 99

Councillor Cantin was concerned about the number of traffic control signals already situated along Hunt Club Road and believed the addition of more signals would only further degrade this multi-million dollar investment which was constructed to provide an alternate route to the Queensway. D. Brousseau confirmed the committee could deny the request for signals, but he pointed out that this intersection was always recommended for signal installation and that this is an opportunity for a developer to cover those costs until such time as the signals are warranted.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen was somewhat concerned about the access to this site but the Deputy Commissioner assured her the access would be safe. In view of this, the councillor supported the proposal, stating it would enhance pedestrian access across the road for residents in the area.

Councillor Cantin expressed concern about vehicles exiting car washes and entering the road. He explained that quite often, the water is still dripping off the car and during the winter, it can quickly become black ice which can lead to collisions. He questioned whether there was a way the Region could influence how car washes are positioned so this danger can be avoided. D. Brousseau agreed this is a legitimate concern and perhaps steps could be taken in future to ensure egress from those facilities are onto the side street. While he acknowledged nothing could be done to change this site at this point in time, the councillor inquired whether staff could look at this suggestion for future developments. The Solicitor, Ernest MacArthur advised this was a valid concern in the development process and suggested it would be appropriate for Regional staff to examine. D. Brousseau agreed to bring it to the attention of Sunoco.

That the Transportation Committee recommend Council approve the installation of traffic control signals at the intersection of Hunt Club Road and Paul Anka Drive, subject to the developer Sunoco Incorporated:

- 1. Funding the total cost of the traffic control signal installation which would include paying the annual maintenance costs for the traffic control signals until such time as they meet the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario installation warrants and Council approves the assumption of the costs, and;**
- 2. Executing a legal agreement with respect to (1) above.**

CARRIED

5. MERIVALE ROAD FROM SLACK ROAD TO AMBERWOOD CRESCENT -
SIDEWALK AND ROAD WIDENING CONSTRUCTION
- Director, Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services report dated 18 Jun 99
- A. Burdett letter dated 7 Jul 99

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen expressed appreciation to the City of Nepean for this initiative, noting it will provide an opportunity for more pedestrians to be able to travel through the area. She asked that staff pass this comment along to municipal staff.

That the Transportation Committee recommend Council approve the widening of Merivale Road from Slack Road to Amberwood Crescent on the west side to accommodate the construction of a sidewalk and a 1.5 m road widening to accommodate cycling, subject to the City of Nepean funding the total project cost.

CARRIED

INQUIRIES

Bus Lane on Queensway

Councillor Cantin indicated he had raised a question at yesterday's Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee meeting because he witnessed the contractor spending what appeared to him to be an inordinate amount of time on the reconstruction of the bus lane on the westbound Queensway. He was pleased to report, however, that they are paving the full four lanes because it is more cost-effective to do it that way. He asked that some preventative work be done on the rough spots on the eastbound lanes between where the buses come back on Regional Road 174 and Montreal Road to prevent further deterioration.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

CO-ORDINATOR

CHAIR