

MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

20 OCTOBER 1999

1:30 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: D. Holmes

Members: M. Bellemare, W. Byrne, R. Cantin, L. Davis, C. Doucet, H. Kreling,
M. McGoldrick-Larsen

REGRETS J. Legendre, M. Meilleur*

* Councillor Meilleur was unable to attend due to a business emergency.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Councillor Byrne suggested the second sentence in the third paragraph at page 14 be amended to read as follows: “She noted that the *benefit from* the trucking industry...”

That the Transportation Committee confirm the Minutes of the meeting of 6 October 1999 as amended.

CARRIED

1. ROAD SAFETY CHALLENGE - VERBAL PRESENTATION
- Co-ordinator, Transportation Committee report dated 12 Oct 99

The Director of Mobility Services, Doug Brousseau, provided a detailed overview of the Road Safety Challenge, as outlined in the hand-out by the same name dated 9 July 1999. He explained that the Department’s mission is to reduce injury and death in Ottawa-Carleton, in conjunction with the Medical Officer of Health and the Chief of Police. He

Note: 1. Underlining indicates a new or amended recommendation approved by Committee.
2. Reports requiring Council consideration will be presented to Council on 10 November 1999 in Transportation Committee Report 47.

advised that staff would like to empower the Ottawa-Carleton Safety Council (OCSC) to do more of the work staff want to do and it is intended to further develop partnerships in this regard. Their program for the week-long events was submitted to the province and the Department won an award for its efforts.

Councillor Cantin congratulated staff for this achievement and agreed it is a massive effort to change people's driving habits. He questioned whether any thought had been given to moving the Safety Village to another site. Mr. Brousseau advised this issue has been raised over the years, but in recent discussions with the OCSC, they indicate a desire to keep it in Britannia. He suggested the Region may want to explore the possibility of having its own safety village.

Councillor Cantin inquired as to the status of the red light camera issue and D. Brousseau advised that the tender was developed and released for these units, but unfortunately, the industry did not respond as expected. The City of Toronto has re-tendered and if committee and Council approve the budget for this program, staff hope to proceed with installations as quickly as Toronto (April).

Councillor Cantin related another incident where he witnessed a Regional truck on the road which did not have a sign board on the side panel. He suggested bumper stickers should at least be put on every Regional vehicle to advertise the various educational programs. Mr. Brousseau explained that during the change-over period between campaigns some trucks have empty panels.

That the Transportation Committee receive this verbal presentation for information.

RECEIVED

As mentioned at the last meeting, staff presented a model of the small electronic speed sign. John Buck, Manager, Operational Studies indicated that this portable model, which costs \$5000 is available to communities where speeding is a problem.

He illustrated the larger model (\$25,000) in a slide presentation, which also has the capability of displaying a message e.g. "school zone" to explain to motorists the type of area in which they are driving. While it was pointed out at the last meeting the Region's logo may not be overly visible on this model, thought has been given to clipping it to the front of the base to ensure visibility. Mr. Buck also illustrated a large electronic sign which is used to advertise upcoming road closures and such advance displays not only enable motorists to plan alternate routes, they serve to protect the workers on site. Staff will be requesting additional funds in next year's budget to purchase another one of these information signs.

REGULAR ITEMS

2. RUSSELL ROAD BETWEEN WALKLEY ROAD AND ST. LAURENT BOULEVARD - TRUCK ROUTE DESIGNATION
- Director, Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services report dated 5 Oct 99

The following submissions were received:

- a. Hawthorne Meadows Nursery School letter dated 15 Oct 99
- b. Canterbury Community Association letter dated 18 Oct 99
- c. Confederation Court Tenant's Association comments dated 18 Oct 99
- d. W.H. Sutherland comments dated 18 Oct 99
- e. A. Hewart letter dated 19 Oct 99
- f. Sheffield Glen Community Association letter dated 19 Oct 99
- g. M. Della-Valle comments dated 19 Oct 99
- h. Mr. & Mrs. C. Gordon comments dated 19 Oct 99
- i. Mr. & Mrs. A. Markowitz comments dated 20 Oct 99
- j. Y.L. Knight letter dated 18 Oct 99
- k. A.H. Pond letter dated 18 Oct 99

John Buck, Manager, Operational Studies indicated that if trucks were removed from Russell Road, they would be diverted to alternative routes such as Lancaster Road, Sheffield Road and Highway 417. In a brief overview of these routes, he indicated the lanes are narrower on Lancaster, but all the development is commercial or industrial. There is a grade on the road as it approaches St. Laurent Boulevard. This is a local road and the City of Ottawa is opposed to any additional trucks on Lancaster as the road was not designed to be the primary truck route through this corridor. Directing the trucks to Sheffield Road may cause problems where the road intersects with Bantree/Innes. Due to the shortness of this intersection, there could be delays caused by large tractor trailers waiting to turn onto Innes. Having truckers use Highway 417 would work, but staff believe signage would be an issue with respect to directing them to this facility. In discussions with the Heavy Construction Association, staff were advised they do not want to get involved.

Mr. Buck stated that truckers prefer the most direct route and it would be difficult to enforce a no-truck ban on Russell Road. He indicated there is currently a night-time ban on heavy trucks and yet, as evidenced by complaints, truckers continue to use this route during the night. On other Regional roads, such as Maitland Avenue, which was taken out of the truck route some years ago, staff investigated the possibility of applying higher fines for those not complying, but this has proven not to be a deterrent and they are concerned the same situation would happen on Russell Road. Based on this information, staff cannot recommend its removal from the truck route system at all times.

Taking into consideration that Lancaster is a bicycle route, Councillor Byrne inquired whether the Regional Cycling Advisory Group (RCAG) had been consulted about the proposal which may divert truck traffic to that road. D. Brousseau explained that the City

of Ottawa has indicated their reluctance to use Lancaster Road because it is a bike route. J. Buck added that the heavy truck volumes noted in the report are somewhat misleading because they are based on an 8-hour period and include other vehicles such as buses and school buses. He believed there would be twice as many trucks over a 24-hour period.

When questioned what their specific objection was to using Lancaster Road, Rob Orchin, Manager of Transportation Services, Licensing, Transportation and Buildings, City of Ottawa, advised that there was a concern from the cycling community when the city designated it as a truck route. However, they were relieved when they were told that Russell Road would be the route of choice. He confirmed that Lancaster is structurally built to carry heavy vehicles, however, it is a question of balance and its volumes would double if Russell is removed from the system.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen questioned at what capacity Lancaster Road is presently operating and while Mr. Orchin offered that the road could probably handle more, it is a question of balancing the other uses on that road (cycling) and the fact trucks should stay on truck routes. The councillor recognized there is more residential community off Russell Road, than off Lancaster and hence believed it would be a better route for cyclists. In this vein, she questioned whether the city had investigated the option of moving the bicycle facility off the road if more trucks were going to be diverted and Mr. Orchin advised they had not examined that option.

Councillor Hume distributed copies of his submission dated 20 October 1999, transmitting correspondence received on the matter, and to request that Russell Road be removed from the truck route system. He indicated there are day care centres and various housing developments along Russell Road and two schools behind the day care centres. He emphasized that 600 pedestrians cross Russell Road during an eight-hour period to access the park and these community facilities, including transit service, while pedestrian movements along the alternative routes are almost negligible. When the community recognized there were three alternate routes, they agreed trucks should be removed from Russell Road which has so much pedestrian activity. He noted there are even more cyclists using Russell than there are on Lancaster. He reiterated the point made previously that the trucking industry had no comment to make, which he took as an indication they do not perceive this to be an issue. With respect to the issue of compliance, he and the community associations will implement an information campaign directed to those businesses that rely on truck access through this area, aimed at educating drivers on alternative routes. He emphasized the community is committed to making this work and, in conjunction with proper signage and limited police enforcement, he believed they can make a serious effort to ensure compliance. While he agreed that Russell Road will still be a busy road, without trucks it will be safer and less daunting for everyone.

Marjorie Gordon, resident, Blackstone Crescent spoke on behalf of homeowners on her street, whose main concern is the excessive truck traffic coming down Walkley Road, adding to a noise problem that is already unbearable at times. She asked that if committee

approves the removal of trucks from Russell, that it consider putting a buffer zone on the north side of Walkley Road between Russell and Lancaster and to supplement the existing trees and bushes that are not doing well on that side of the road. They believe this would help reduce the noise. She agreed Lancaster is a good alternative route, noting she has seen very few cyclists on that road in the 26 years she has lived in the area.

Eric Dormer, resident, Tawney Road spoke as a trained truck driver, as a parent of a child at the Aladin Day Care Centre on Russell Road and as a member of the Ottawa Athletic Club on Lancaster Road. While he understood that the community associations are particularly concerned about noise and general safety, he supported the staff recommendation because less than 6% of the traffic on Russell is truck traffic and he opined there was more noise emanating from Highway 417 than there was from Russell. He suggested that deleting this road from the truck route system will remove the pressure to build the road properly needed as a four-laned road, with sound attenuation and pedestrian crosswalks which in his view should have been built long ago. He believed that if there is a desire to reduce the traffic in this neighbourhood, the Region should take a long-range view i.e. determining when the Hunt Club Road interchange to Highway 417 will be built to allow traffic wanting to go to the west to use Hunt Club and not to go through this part of the city. He concluded by stating he could not support removal from the system because the alternate routes could not support it and the prohibition would be unenforceable. He believed the upper and lower tier governments should work together to plan and build a proper road system for this part of the city.

M. Begin, resident, Russell Road indicated that his property is near the seniors residence and fronts onto the street. The proximity of the road to his driveway is only two feet and deters people from walking in front of his home because the heavy trucks are passing so closely. While he recognized it is a dangerous road, he suggested if it is a truck route, it should be so for the entire length of the road, day and night.

Councillor Davis proposed the following Motion:

That Russell Road between Walkley Road and St. Laurent Boulevard be removed from the truck route system.

Councillor Cantin was sensitive to what Councillor Hume was attempting to do, however, he also recognized that truckers will naturally want to take the shortest route. He was surprised that Lancaster and Sheffield are truck routes, given the poor pavement conditions on those roads. He stated there are several traffic control signals on this stretch of Russell Road, giving pedestrians ample opportunity to cross the road. He agreed that the volume of truck traffic going through that area is higher and he did not think truckers will be convinced to take another route, because it is not fair to force it onto another road. He supported the staff recommendation and hoped that in the future, sufficient funding can be made available to make the road a decent truck route.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen could not support the Motion at this time, noting there are issues which she did not feel it resolved, mainly: the cycling network system and the issue of enforcement. She believed there was a need look at it in a more cohesive way and in the future, with the extension of Hunt Club Road to Highway 417, perhaps that would be a better time to re-route trucks.

Councillor Davis commended Councillor Hume for his efforts and recognized the difficulties ward councillors are faced with in dealing with truck routes in their communities. She believed he knew best what his community needs and indicated her support in his effort to remove Russell Road from the truck route system.

Councillor Byrne stated that although this is a Regional road, she thought that the nature of the road as opposed to the nature of the local road (Lancaster) is of more relevance because it is very residential and has more activity. Based on some of the comments made today, she believed Lancaster is not an overly popular cycling route and suggested the following amendment to the Motion:

That staff consult with the Regional Cycling Advisory Group (RCAG) on designating Russell Road as a cycling route.

Councillor Kreling was sympathetic to the concerns expressed by Councillor Hume and to those put forward in writing by the community associations. However, the committee has also heard from residents who do not share the same views. He maintained that if committee supports the Motion, it would not be taking a full look at the whole community. Even at the point in time when Hunt Club Road will eventually connect to Highway 417, that particular corridor (Hawthorne/Russell/St. Laurent) still provides the most direct route for truck traffic heading north, than some other combination of streets which force trucks to make more turning movements, leading to greater risk and safety implications.

Councillor Bellemare stated that in order to remove a truck route from the system, the Region has to satisfy very high standards, which in his mind, has not been done today. This issue involves the restricting of the transportation of goods in the Region and the committee is not really looking at the overall impact to the truck route system. He objected to doing this on an ad hoc basis and in a piecemeal fashion. He stated if the committee were to consider the investment the Region has made in terms of road infrastructure, this Motion goes in the opposite direction in what committee wants to achieve. He agreed there would be serious enforcement problems in removing this truck route designation during the day.

The Committee Chair agreed there are clear alternatives to Russell Road and emphasized the need to provide a safe road for residents in the area, especially when pedestrians are the top priority in the Region's Transportation Master Plan and the Regional Official Plan.

Moved by W. Byrne

That staff consult with the Regional Cycling Advisory Group (RCAG) on designating Russell Road as a cycling route.

CARRIED

Moved by L. Davis

That Russell Road between Walkley Road and St. Laurent Boulevard be removed from the truck route system and that staff consult with the Regional Cycling Advisory Group (RCAG) on designating Russell Road as a cycling route.

LOST

YEAS: W. Byrne, L. Davis, C. Doucet, D. Holmes....4
NAYS M. Bellemare, R. Cantin, H. Kreling, M. McGoldrick-Larsen....4

That the Transportation Committee recommend Council not approve the removal of Russell Road between Walkley Road and St. Laurent Boulevard from the Truck Route System.

LOST

YEAS: W. Byrne, L. Davis, C. Doucet, D. Holmes....4
NAYS M. Bellemare, R. Cantin, H. Kreling, M. McGoldrick-Larsen....4

COUNCILLORS ITEM

3. **DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE FOR 525-603 MARCH ROAD**
- Co-ordinator, Transportation Committee report dated 13 Oct 99

Councillor Munter advised that the proponent had withdrawn his request for signage that would bear his business name and the names of the other businesses affected. He understood the current Regional policy would permit addresses without the business names and would discuss this option with those businesses.

That the Transportation Committee consider the request from Councillor Munter that directional signage be installed within the March Road right-of-way which bears the business names of those located between 525 and 603 March Road, in conjunction with the staff report dated 1 October 1999.

RECEIVED

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

CO-ORDINATOR

CHAIR