

MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

BELLS CORNERS PUBLIC SCHOOL

29 OCTOBER 1998

7:00 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: D. Holmes

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

REGRETS: C. Doucet, J. Legendre, M. Meilleur

1. RICHMOND ROAD (REGIONAL ROAD 36) AND STAFFORD CENTRE ACCESS - PROPOSED CONNECTION TO NORTHSIDE ROAD - PUBLIC HEARING
- Co-ordinator, Transportation Committee report dated 6 Oct 98

Doug Brousseau, Director, Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services provided a brief history of this issue. It is recommended that committee and Council approve this request from the City of Nepean to provide access to Richmond Road from Northside Road. Their proposal was determined to be safe and would not compromise the integrity of the Regional road system.

Robert Hall, President, Echelon Internet Corporation explained that whether or not this intersection will be safe is not a concern of his because he believed that city and Regional staff have the professional expertise on which to base their conclusions and it would be frivolous for committee to ignore this fact. He hoped the decision would be made based on this sound advice, and not influenced by what he maintained were unscientific opinions on the safety of this proposed connection. He related comments he had heard about development coming to a halt in Bells Corners and moving to Barrhaven, but did not feel residents would want business moved from this area to south Nepean. He urged committee to approve the staff recommendation.

Buck Arnold, The Greater Nepean Chamber of Commerce stated that with the current roadway configuration, traffic is forced into a pattern through the community if it is coming from the east and wanting to get anywhere within that area. He explained there are only two

Note: 1. Underlining indicates a new or amended recommendation approved by Committee.
2. Reports requiring Council consideration will be presented to Council on 12 November 1998 in Transportation Committees Report 22.

entrances to Lynwood Village - near Bell High School accessed off Cedarview Road and at the area in question. He was concerned that when an emergency vehicle is called to the Thorncliffe Place Retirement Home, for example, it would have to travel a circuitous route through the community to reach its destination; this new connection will provide a quick and more direct access to the community. He emphasized that this safety risk has been fully against the community for years and here is an opportunity to correct it. Mr. Arnold went on to state that motorists often make illegal and dangerous movements in order to by-pass the community, including making U-turns at Lynhar and Richmond and accessing Northside from the ramp and using the Lynwood Plaza parking lot as a short-cut. In one particular instance, he watched as a motorist travelling east on Northside exited onto Richmond Road, crossed three lanes of traffic then made a U-turn and headed west. Mr. Arnold was very concerned that the current situation forces traffic through high pedestrian areas, thereby creating a very unsafe environment for those individuals and urged committee to support the staff recommendation.

Warren Baskerville, Volunteer Chairperson, Executive Residents Council, Thorncliffe Place Retirement Home spoke on behalf of Don Francis, who was unable to attend the meeting. In a letter to the committee, Mr. Francis stated that Thorncliffe Place is located one block from the proposed intersection and is home to 75 elderly persons, most of which are in favour of the connection as they believe it would be a positive addition to the community. When Highway 416 was being constructed, Cedarview Road was realigned and direct access to Northside Road was eliminated, thereby increasing the distance travelled by 1.5 km. He indicated that visitors, employees and service trucks now have to travel through the community to reach the home and even ambulances must rush through this residential neighbourhood to respond to emergency calls. Mr. Francis wrote that the proposed intersection would remove heavy, noisy traffic from the residential streets in the community; the Lynwood Shopping Plaza has endured heavy cut-through traffic since the intersection between Northside and Lynhar road was eliminated and Eaton Road was constructed as a more efficient but circuitous route. Further, the local post office, is a store, warehouse and letter carrier distribution centre and these trucks and letter carriers have to travel back through the neighbourhood around on Larkspur Drive to reach Eaton Road. The proposed intersection would eliminate this unnecessary commercial traffic.

Councillor Wayne Phillips, Evergreen Ward stated that as the Nepean councillor for this area, he consulted with residents in Lynwood Village in the general area of this proposal and the overwhelming majority vehemently opposed this intersection. He has also discussed this issue with some of the businesses in the area who are generally in favour of the new intersection. Many of the people he has talked to have been original owners and they have known life in their village to have been quiet and peaceful with minimum traffic and congestion and are content with the status quo. The proposed intersection is close to two seniors homes whose residents walk throughout the entire year. As a resident of the area for thirty years, Councillor Phillips explained that while staff maintain this design is safe and workable, it is not what the people want.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen questioned what response the Nepean Public Works Committee gave the community in May 1998 in response to suggestions they made with

respect to alternatives to this design by way of traffic calming, streetscaping, lighting et cetera which would improve the Northside Road area for the businesses. Councillor Phillips recalled that there was no response. He added that the whole notion of changing the design of that particular area is, in his view, a golden opportunity and there is ample space in the area owned by both levels of government that could be redesigned and reconfigured to make it a more attractive locale and suggested the funds allocated to the proposed intersection, could be better put towards beautification of the area.

Councillor Bellemare questioned what the ward councillor thought about the statements made with respect to the cut-through traffic in the community and he stated the present configuration of the community does not lend itself to cut-through traffic, although the proposed connection would increase whatever cut-through traffic does exist.

The Committee Chair inquired whether the councillor had discussed with residents the possibility of traffic calming to ameliorate the situation should this connection be approved. Councillor Phillips advised he had not, but stated that if it were approved, traffic calming is an initiative that cannot be overlooked and should be part of the decision for this intersection. The Committee Chair advised that since the measures would be on local streets the municipality would be responsible for funding such installation and questioned whether this has been an issue discussed by Nepean. Councillor Phillips advised they have not discussed this as far as costing is concerned and confirmed there have been no proposals for traffic calming put to the local city council.

Patricia Murphy, Intersection Connection Taskforce objected very strongly to the proposal and hoped the Region would take responsibility for the technical nature of this connection and determine if it truly meets the needs of the community. She commented on the years of community involvement in this matter and the reasons this project has been proposed, which is supposedly to provide better access to the businesses along Northside Road. No studies have shown that traffic redirection decreased business on Northside Road. She stated that a condition for building the highway west of the village was that the traffic on old Cedarview Road (now Cassidy Road) would be reduced to compensate for increased traffic noise from the highway. However, she indicated that the traffic along Cassidy has not decreased as promised and the majority of speeding cut-through traffic continues to come from Barrhaven and the 416/Hunt Club junction. She believed the proposed intersection would encourage even more cut-through traffic through this predominantly residential area, making Cassidy, Northside and the new intersection extremely unsafe for pedestrians. In addition, Mrs. Murphy explained that many people are turning to other shopping areas and the businesses along Richmond Road can therefore not expect the same level of business they had enjoyed in previous years. She anticipated that safety will be compromised by this intersection, adding the city's engineers have said there is no good design possible for this connection. She referred to the petitions signed by residents in opposition to this connection and the countless times the community has spoken to the municipality, not just in a negative fashion, but to suggest alternatives such as sustainable transportation and beautifying the main streets as has been done in Stittsville and Kanata. She urged committee to reject the proposal.

Patrick Baldock, resident strongly opposed this proposal for safety reasons. Prior to the 2 September 1998 meeting of the Transportation Committee to consider this connection, he petitioned homeowners on Thorncliffe, Auburn and Larkspur and the majority were overwhelmingly opposed to it. He indicated there are at least five business establishments on Thorncliffe Place (west) and with the new intersection, all vehicles frequenting these businesses will have to exit via Thorncliffe Place (east) or Auburn Street, effectively increasing traffic and the safety of residents. He explained there are many retired residents who walk through the community and any increase of traffic would jeopardize their safety. He believed Thorncliffe, Auburn and Eaton will experience a significant amount of cut-through traffic during peak hours due to the poor engineering design of this connection. and higher traffic speeds will become a common problem with the increased volume. These problems will in turn cause delays for emergency vehicles. Mr. Baldock noted there will be two new stop signs on Northside at Thorncliffe Place (west) and at Larkspur, and the traffic entering from Richmond Road will have the right-of-way, which has a great potential for serious accidents since those motorists will undoubtedly assume they will have to stop at Northside. He believed the money allocated for this connection would be better spent improving sidewalk accessibility, street lighting, et cetera in the area.

Guy Duxbury, Intersection Connection Taskforce illustrated where he believed accidents would occur if the intersection were approved. His examination of this proposal has included both the access to Richmond Road and at Northside Road, whereas staff have only examined the former. He feared that accidents would occur with serious injuries and maintained that traffic will regularly block Richmond Road. Using an overhead photograph, he illustrated the blind spots that would affect a motorists' view of the roadway as they turn into the intersection; by the time they turn and see a pedestrian, they will not have time to stop before they hit them. Mr. Duxbury elaborated on this point by explaining how he had determined, through necessary calculations and parameters, how a car entering that junction at any speed over 27 km/h would not be able to stop before reaching the pedestrian crossing. Further, there is a major blind spot for motorists leaving the Stafford Centre whereby they will be unable to cars coming from the east on Northside and crossing Thorncliffe travelling west. He emphasized that cars cannot travel through this junction faster than 14 km/h or they will risk having an accident, effectively blocking further passage.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen referred to Mr. Duxbury's technical analysis and questioned whether that had been part of his presentation to the City originally. Mr. Duxbury indicated that most of that information had been presented to them between the time they asked the decision to be reconsidered and the decision not to reconsider it, although these new safety aspects had arisen. Therefore, the City had not considered this data prior to making their decision. When asked to describe staff's assessment of his technical analysis, he recalled they had told him the way he calculated it was valid, but that there were differences in the exact parameters, which affects the results. The discrepancy of opinions focuses mainly on the speed at which motorists will be travelling through the intersection and how well drivers adapt to this junction. He maintained that since the junction at Northside will appear like a standard four-way stop, there will be a significant number of traffic entering which will presume this, and staff disagree somewhat with this assumption.

The councillor requested clarification that the statistical data used for Mr. Duxbury's assessment is according to the transportation policy standards with stopping distances and speeds. J. Fraser, Senior Review Engineer, Environment and Transportation Department explained that his parameters were different from those used by staff and his deceleration rates were different from those used by the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) in developing the required sight distance in order to come to a complete stop at a given speed. Therefore, the speeds he calculated and the distance required for a vehicle to come to a complete stop were greater than those published by TAC (35 km/h).

Mr. Duxbury clarified there are other modes where the differences they each calculated could have changed the fact there would be accidents. Staff advised that detailed analysis was performed by the consultants for the City of Nepean and reviewed by their staff. He reminded the delegation and committee that staff reviewed the intersection as it pertained to the Regional road and the design of the Northside Road intersection is that of the consultants of Nepean. Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen stated that the question is whether the TAC standard of 35 km/h gives the driver enough time to stop if necessary.

Dave Hatton, Cumming Cockburn Limited, representing the City of Nepean, indicated they examined the points on safety raised by the delegation from the normal industry standards approach (TAC standards) and were satisfied that the design for the intersection is safe. He agreed that the speeds at which motorists would be travelling into this intersection and the corresponding stopping distances as calculated by Mr. Duxbury were on the high side, adding that if a motorist is turning right into that junction, the Highway Traffic Act requires that they be aware of a pedestrian in a crossing, who he confirmed would be clearly visible from the time that vehicle turns.

In response to further questions about what the average speed travelled through the junction would be, staff advised that at two intersections examined in the vicinity, the average speed was between 25 and 31 km/h and that typically, these speeds do not vary throughout the day.

Deborah Rose, Intersection Connection Taskforce and Bells Corners Caregiver's Association spoke on behalf of 50 registered caregivers who opposed the intersection. She did not feel the proposal has taken into consideration safety factors. While they note the City's claim that the Northside Road intersection will be safe, it has been proved to be unsafe by a residents committee. She believed the committee should consider the fact that when the intersections of Richmond and Northside are linked, a dangerous hazard will be created on Northside Road. She referred to a report from the Public Works Committee dated 11 June 1996 which stated that any connection on the south side of the new intersection will necessitate operational compromises and she questioned whether the City will be taking responsibility for any accidents that might occur on the associated intersection.

Kevin Smith, resident urged committee not to build the intersection, reiterating concerns already raised about safety, excess speed, noise and volume of cut-through traffic. He related that it is already very difficult to cross Northside Road in the evening because of the volume of

traffic and he stated motorists are using this as short-cut to Barrhaven. He believed the new intersection will make residents and businesses use Thorncliffe Place east as their route out of the area. He explained that residents are already experiencing traffic problems on Thorncliffe Place because people attending the church at the corner tend to park on the street rather than in the parking lot provided and visitors and tradespersons to the seniors residence on this road are parking on both sides of the street because the parking lot is inadequate to meet these needs; he emphasized that this situation is much worse in the winter. Mr. Smith stated that the Nepean Public Works Committee reported that if this intersection is approved, opportunities would always exist for addressing concerns that may arise; however, he believed all issues should be addressed when examining this connection and not looked at separately after the connection is in place because then it might be too late to do anything concrete to solve the issue.

Chris Wood, Intersection Connection Taskforce refuted the statements made about the safety of the proposed junction. He advised that where the Northside ramp meets Larkspur there are twice as many accidents that can occur there as anywhere else along that road, probably due to the fact that there is uncertainty of who has the right-of-way and also the higher speed at which motorists are travelling when they come off Richmond Road. He maintained that the same situation will occur at this new intersection, whereby traffic travelling at higher speeds will be entering onto a lower speed road and at this junction, the motorist heading south will have the right-of-way, although one would presume they would have a stop sign at that location. Adding to those problems is a higher volume of traffic, so he questioned how that connection could possibly be safer. He believed that the problem of cut-through traffic in the shopping plaza can be easily solved by installing curb-type barriers that will redirect the traffic around the north side of the parking lot; at the back entrance, he suggested the road be changed to a one-way heading east.

Mr. Wood made reference to the comment that eliminating the slope on Northside Road will eliminate the accident potential; however, he believed there would be insufficient stopping distances for some vehicles. He further discounted the statement that the new junction will shorten ambulance arrival times to Thorncliffe Place, because additional stop signs and increased traffic flow will slow emergency vehicles through the area. He concluded he has a difference of opinion than that of staff on the matter of driver behaviour, but stated even if most drivers behave as staff predict, there will be some that will not and this marginal design has many blind spots and stopping distances that just meet minimum engineering standards.

Gilles Mongeau, Intersection Connection Taskforce stated there are a number of factors that must be considered as part of this proposal i.e. cost, access, quality of life, business development, safety and traffic flow and overall, there should be a balance between these on which a decision is made. He stated that none of the residents would refuse something that would make their life more convenient, but the committee should consider that such strong opposition comes from those people who are living in the area and who have an intimate knowledge of how things happen around them. While residents are not against the businesses prospering, the committee should consider that there has been no impartial comprehensive cost-benefit analysis done to support this investment of public tax dollars. It appears, he stated, that business owners believe the increased traffic flow in front of their doors will increase

business and while this may be the case, he did not believe there could be a direct cause-to-effect relationship in this regard.

Mr. Mongeau indicated that Bruins Road serves as another exit from Lynwood Village onto Cedarview Road, but noted the difficulty experienced by residents attempting to make a left-turn because of the amount of traffic coming from the south. He indicated that he has been a resident of the village for more than 20 years and when he first heard of this proposal for this intersection he thought of the traffic jams that existed at Lynhar and Richmond before all the improvements were made; he emphasized that residents are well aware that the existing situation leaves very much to be desired; however, they conclude that the wisest decision would be to respect the constraints that are imposed by the topography of the area and not make a poor situation worse by increasing traffic that cannot be accommodated.

Bill Joe, owner, Lynwood Plaza made reference to a letter he received from the Larkspur Association made up of professional business persons in Bells Corners in support of the intersection. Since the closure of the access from Cedarview to Northside Road, cut-through traffic has increased tremendously through the plaza parking lot and they have taken steps to improve safety and encourage the use of Eaton by installing curbing and stop signs in and around the shopping centre. However, those attempts were not overly successful as cut-through traffic continues through the parking lot and as a result, he is quite concerned about the safety of pedestrians who may be walking to and from their cars and must contend with this increased traffic. Mr. Joe believed this junction would not completely eliminate, but would reduce that safety aspect. Further, he indicated that the closure of the food store at the plaza, resulted in the residents in the village having to cross Richmond Road to get to the LOEB and this intersection would provide the means for a quick and safe access to that facility whether residents are driving or walking. He urged committee to support the proposal because it is the best thing for the whole area, residents and businesses alike.

Albert Wubbs, resident, found it ironic that Regional staff work to reduce traffic fatalities and yet here is a recommendation that the community feels is a bad situation. He realized that the Region only deals with the portion of the intersection as it would relate to the Regional road, but there are many concerns with respect to the function of the bottom half of that intersection as it enters the community.

Jim Sourges, Electrical and Plumbing Store indicated that he had hired an independent traffic consultant to respond to many of the concerns expressed by residents. He highlighted that at the time Cedarview Road was realigned to make room for the highway, severing access to Northside Road, the businesses were promised they would be given access back when it was appropriate and possible to do so. He reminded committee that Northside is not a residential road and in response to some of the presentations made this evening, he believed some of the focus has been lost on the major issue which is the safety of the connection to the Regional roadway. He referred to a petition which contained over 800 signatures of people in support of the intersection, many of whom were from the local area. He believed the city sees this proposal as an investment in future growth, especially when one looks at the business development on Northside Road; the money invested now will return to the municipality by

way of tax dollars from those businesses. He quickly highlighted the findings of the consultant, stating that it was his opinion that overall, the intersection has been designed to proper engineering standards and the concerns raised can be addressed as part of the final design stage.

Clarke Bellinger, Commissioner of Public Works, City of Nepean advised that the City has examined the submissions made by the community and assured committee that some of the issues they raise are constructive and can be dealt with. He referred to a particular concern about the stacking of vehicles who are leaving Northside Road to access Richmond Road, stating that during peak hours, in a standard signal cycle, with a volume of 90 vehicles, it was determined there would be a requirement for stacking of 2 1/4 vehicles/cycle so he was not concerned the traffic would stack back up onto Northside compromising site lines as much as has been feared. He assured committee the City would not recommend an intersection they felt was unsafe. He reminded members that there will be a red light facing vehicles on Richmond Road when traffic comes out of Northside but the volumes are equivalent to one vehicle every 40 seconds so it is not high volume traffic. He concluded by stating there will be design stage modifications which is normal and are details that will be worked out with Regional staff and the consultant at the design stage in conformity with some of the suggestions they had received.

The Committee Chair asked that if this proposal is approved and problems do occur, would the City be prepared to perform some ameliorating measures to address those issues. Mr. Bellinger indicated there may be a case for some kind of traffic management in the form of traffic calming if speeds or volumes are excessive. He confirmed the city has experience in traffic calming.

Following up to this comment, Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen inquired whether this area would then be placed on a priority list with other locations awaiting funds and Mr. Bellinger confirmed that, although he noted there are no current projects scheduled for traffic calming.

Andy Burnett, Bells Corners Re-runs related the difficulties he had trying to access his business on Northside Road and urged committee to support the staff proposal.

Allan Soifer, Hosanna Christian Fellowship did not support the view that just because people want a quiet community they should isolate themselves and prevent the general public from access, especially since these streets would be used by all residents of Nepean and not just by those living in the area. He believed Council has been given the professional advice from staff and can determine that this intersection will operate safely. He believed the fear of excessive traffic is unfounded and reminded members that the people who are most at risk, the seniors at the retirement homes, are in favour of this proposal because it will give them greater mobility within the community. He referred to the comment that motorists still have access to Cedarview via Cassidy but noted this is more time consuming and would increase traffic on a road that is being travelled by students attending the high school; therefore, asking motorists to detour via Cassidy, Bruin and Northside will impact directly on those students.

John Tierney, Microzone Corporation stated that traffic service in and around Northside Road has been totally inadequate to serve the businesses on that road. He maintained that the new connection will result in reduced traffic in the area and easier access to and from the businesses on that road. He indicated that the construction of Highway 416 has increased traffic volume up and down Cassidy Road and the access to and from Northside Road is so confusing that he has seen motorists driving westbound up the eastbound ramp trying to get to Richmond Road. His business has heavy supply trucks coming to and going from his business and it would be more sensible to have them access from Northside via Richmond instead of having to drive through the community. He noted that the concerns of residents are purely speculative and believed most people would take the direct route and onto the main artery.

Nick Georgitsos supported the construction of the intersection. He was concerned about the issue of safety since the access to Northside Road was eliminated and local residents and business patrons have been forced to make unsafe U-turns at Richmond and Stafford or cut through the Lynwood Plaza. As a patron to many of the local businesses in that mall, one of his concerns is the speed at which cars are travelling through the parking lot. He believed the safest and most convenient access to Northside Road would be through the proposed intersection which could only benefit everyone in the area involved.

Frank Dinardo explained that as a business owner on Northside Road, this proposal will provide simple access to and from his business. He added that his customers and delivery trucks would gladly use the new intersection instead of having to take the current, circuitous route through the community. He maintained this intersection was a sensible approach to the difficulties expressed by local businesses and residents alike and was confident that Regional and city staff were capable of designing a safe intersection.

Tracey Connors, Corporate Research Group, supported the connection as did one of their tenants, Masha Krupp Translation. She explained they are a market research firm and when they conduct surveys that involve asking people what their main reason is for going to a retail establishment, convenience is always on the top of their list. She reminded committee that Northside Road is zoned commercial for the most part and all of these retail establishments have a right to reasonable access, which does not currently exist. She believed the connection will alleviate the traffic through the residential area rather than making it worse and did not believe there were any safety concerns.

Sandra Copeland indicated she is a volunteer at the Lynwood Retirement Lodge and frequently walks people along Eaton Street. She emphasized there are many existing dangers which occur on a daily basis to the residents of the Lodge and also to the children going to and from the swimming pool. Ms. Copeland believed that traffic will continue to exist whether or not the connection is approved and to continue to force motorists to detour around Eaton Street is a dangerous situation.

Councillor Rick Chiarelli, Nepean Centre referred to the contention made at the time this issue was first raised in the community, but recalled the city's promise they would do what it could to try and reopen an access to the businesses affected by the realignment of Cedarview Road.

He indicated that the majority of Nepean Council supported the proposal and noted that most of the issues raised by the delegations deal with local traffic planning issues, while the only issue of Regional concern is whether or not that intersection will be safe. He emphasized that the residents of his ward are in support of the proposal because it will ease traffic problems on this stretch of Richmond Road, particularly on weekends. With respect to the concerns raised about cut-through traffic, he wondered where those motorists will be coming from and what their destinations are because, he maintained, there is no reason to cut through the neighbourhood. He maintained that if the intersection is not approved, there will be accidents and more businesses will go bankrupt because of loss of business.

Vicki Mason indicated that the problems associated with Northside Road are the responsibility of the local municipality. In reference to the comment made by a previous delegation, she explained that the food store that used to be at the Lynwood Plaza closed as a result of a LOEB's grocery store being built directly across the street and there is also a Loblaws just further down Richmond Road and the local store could not compete with the larger chains. She believed there were many areas of Nepean which are in need of some form of traffic calming and hoped the city would take the initiative to implement some of those measures in the areas of greatest need. She believed the new connection will only worsen an already bad situation on Northside Road with respect to traffic flow. She further believed the quality of life of residents will be greatly reduced by the increased cut-through traffic.

William Richardson, Joanash Investments explained that the biggest complaint they receive from tenants is the lack of access to the building. He added that part of his business entails a courier service, with cars and trucks coming and going through the area. He was concerned these vehicles are forced to drive through school zones and retirement areas to access their place of business and was in favour of removing the commercial traffic by way of this new proposal, thereby keeping residents safe.

Councillor Jan Harder, Barrhaven was fearful for the business community along Richmond Road because residents living in Kanata have a lot of opportunities to shop where they live and do not frequent Bells Corners as they did in the past. Further, residents of Nepean south who used to shop in Bells Corners, now have those same opportunities in newly opened chains in Nepean, hence, there is a reduction in customers coming from these areas to the stores along Richmond Road. She believed these changes in shopping habits must be carefully considered as they relate to the impact on businesses in Bells Corners. She recognized the difficulty faced by Nepean with respect to this intersection and the opposition voiced by the residential community; however, she maintained that Nepean council did factor in the safety issues and she stated it was her job to represent both the residents and the businesses in this matter. With respect to cut-through traffic, the councillor believed that once this intersection is constructed, there will be no reason for motorists to drive through the community, thereby making it safer for residents. If committee and council agree to this proposal, she recommended that there be a turn signal installed to regulate the number of cars that can turn and go into the connection to ensure traffic does not get congested through this intersection.

Ron Stang, resident addressed the question of cut-through traffic by stating that if the connection is approved, it will shorten the travel time for motorists travelling from Hunt Club Road to Richmond Road because they would not have to go through the plaza. With respect to the suggestion of traffic calming, he referred to discussions he had with Nepean staff previously, at which time it had been recommended that this be incorporated as part of the design; however, nothing was implemented as part of this plan. He stated that the problem of cut-through traffic is not caused by residents cutting through the plaza. With respect to the issue of stacking difficulties, he believed that 30% of the time there would be a minimum of four cars in that junction, which will cause sight visibility problems. He questioned when the calculations for this intersection were done and whether they were done prior to this issue arising at the city. On behalf of the city, Mr. Hatton explained that approximately 80 vehicles will make the northbound left turn in the p.m. peak period which equals approximately 2 1/2 vehicles/cycle waiting to turn and during the greater proportion of the day there will be less than that.

Russ Redshaw, Nepean Cycling Advisory Committee voiced his concern about the effect of vehicle stacking on bicycle movements. Having conducted their own review, it was discovered there are more cars on Northside Road than what has been reported and therefore questioned the accuracy or the timing of the traffic studies which were used as a basis for the analysis. Mr. Hatton explained that the studies took place on a weekday and on a weekend (during both peak periods) in November 1997.

Cathy Frampton indicated she has lived in the area for five years and highlighted the fact that people can live, work and shop in one area. She felt the quality of life in this community is good, except for this intersection. She related her experience of having to drive through the community to get to her caregivers home and she was frustrated at the lack of easy access to this portion of Bells Corners. She believed this connection would be an asset in this regard and believed the testimony of staff and traffic engineers that this intersection will function safely. With all the tax increases, she believed providing easy access is the least that should be done for these businesses, adding that if there is no access to these facilities, the neighbourhood will become less desirable. Given the existing traffic patterns motorists tend to take through the community and the plaza parking lot, she was quite concerned about the safety of residents, especially if an emergency vehicle had to get through to someone and their response time was reduced as a result of the existing conditions.

In the committee's discussion of this matter, Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen referred to the economic factors that have affected the businesses on Northside Road and in Bells Corners in general. While the councillor agreed there has been an impact because of the construction of Highway 416, she believed there are two other major factors that are more relevant - the development in Kanata and the change in the retail market to big box stores. She referred to the amount of commercial and industrial development in Kanata over the past few years and therefore, Bells Corners no longer serves that municipality or other western townships for commerce as they once did. She also made note of a document prepared by the city that indicates much of the existing retail space in the municipality is being supported by non-Nepean residents on a net basis and the increased development at Hunt Club and Merivale has also

affected traditional shopping habits. With respect to the safety concerns raised, she recognized there are engineering standards that roads are design to, but there are roads i.e. Cedarview that continue to be extremely hazardous to motorists, but which were designed under those same standards. She commended the speakers for their comments this evening and recognized the hard work put forward by both the business community and residents on this issue.

Councillor Kreling believed it was unfortunate that after all the years this has been an issue at the local level, the businesses and residents were not able to find some common ground from which a proposal might have received more support from both sectors. He recognized that no plan will satisfy everyone's interest, but the Transportation Committee must now debate and consider an option which has divided the two for several years. He recalled his earlier position on this matter, but based on the variety of comments voiced this evening by residents and businesses alike, he indicated he would now support the staff recommendation.,

Following on these statements, Councillor Cantin explained to the audience that the committee must make decisions that are as fair for as many people as possible and he hoped committee members would support the overall community. He failed to understand the argument that big box stores have had an impact on smaller retail stores in Bells Corners, citing an example of a local business in his ward that is holding its own against a popular chain. He maintained that access is as important as location when it comes to owning a business. With respect to the safety issue, he honestly could not believe that someone whose responsibility is to design the safest roadwork possible, would recommend going through a residential area with large heavy trucks, which is what the current situation calls for if these vehicles do not cut through the shopping centre. He urged committee members to put their trust in their staff and support the recommendation for this connection.

Councillor Davis expressed the view that committee should support the position of the councillors that represent the area, and it was clear that the majority of residents have stated quite emphatically, that they do not want this access. She appreciated the diligence of those residents who have fought long and hard in opposing this connection.

Councillor Bellemare stated that Nepean city council is responsible for local traffic issues and after weighing all the factors, have concluded that this connection is needed. He reiterated the fact that the Region's responsibility is to determine the safety of this connection to the Regional road. He recognized the division within the village, but based on the facts presented and concerns raised, he determined this connection would be a positive move for the residents who are concerned about cut-through traffic and for the businesses who were originally promised that access would be given back to them. He stated he would not discount the will of the local council on this matter nor the professional evaluation made by their traffic engineers, independent traffic engineers and the Region's own staff.

The Committee Chair was disappointed that the residential community has been pitted against the business community and while she recognized the importance of having healthy businesses, it should not be at the expense of a residential community. Before she would support the link, she wanted assurance by the City that there are funds in the 1999 budget to provide for

ameliorating traffic calming measures if it is determined such measures are necessary to address any difficulties associated with the connection.

That Transportation Committee recommend Council approve the modification to the traffic control signals at Richmond Road and Stafford Centre Shopping Mall and the construction of associated changes on Richmond Road to provide a new road link to Northside Road as described in the report and illustrated in Annex B, subject to the City of Nepean funding the total cost of the traffic signal modifications and the proposed road works.

LOST

YEAS: M. Bellemare, R. Cantin, H. Kreling....3

NAYS: L. Davis, D. Holmes, M. McGoldrick-Larsen....3

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

CO-ORDINATOR

CHAIR