

# ST. JOHN'S

## Minutes of Bike St. John's Advisory Committee

July 17, 2019

3:00 p.m.

Conference Room A, 4th Floor City Hall

Present: Marianne Alacoque, Systems Engineer  
Garrett Donaher, Manager of Transportation  
Carol Grouchy, Public Member  
Tobias Laengle, Organizational Representative  
Travis Maher, Community Services Coordinator  
David Hood, Public Member Representative  
Dave Lane, Council Representative  
Justin Dearing, Public Representative  
Heather Power  
Stephen Hill, Organizational Representative  
Craig Martin, Younger Generational Representatives

Staff: Maureen Harvey, Legislative Assistant

Others: Robert Moloney

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order with a welcome to two new members to the committee - Justin Dearing and Heather Power.

### 2. PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS

### 3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as presented. The following items were also added for discussion either at this meeting or at another time.

1. White Hills Trails - Given the Province's intent to build a new penitentiary in White Hills, it is noted that the area is currently used by people mountain biking and hiking. The area is currently zoned as rural but the new Municipal

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Plan contemplates a change in that zoning. It is acknowledged that the Province can make changes to zoning without the due consultation with the City. City staff will investigate the possibility of writing a letter to the provincial and/or federal government about the proposed zoning changes in the municipal plan, and the possibility of having the City's GIS Department add the existing bike trails to their mapping inventory.

2. Responsibility as Committee representatives - Councillor Lane took this opportunity to remind members of the Committee that while shared use paths are recommended in the Bike St. John's Master Plan, they are not yet built. As such committee members should not be using or encouraging shared use of existing walking trails at this time. It's important to respect the rules when communicating with the public as a representative of the Bike St John's Advisory Committee.
3. Rennie's River preliminary alignment conflict with private property - Councillor Lane made reference to one section of the Rennie's River path preliminary alignment where that encroaches across private property on Dover Place. He indicated his intention to seek Council approval to write a letter to the property owner with reassurance that this section of trail will be modified. The Committee concurred with this course of action

#### **4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

##### **4.1 Adoption of Minutes - March 28, 2019**

###### **Recommendation**

**Moved By** Dave Lane

**Seconded By** Tobias Laengle

That the minutes of the meeting held March 28, 2019 be adopted as presented.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The Chair welcomed the following new members to the Committee:

- Justin Dearing, general public member who is an avid cyclist for purposeful transportation
- Heather Power, general public member who is a beginner/occasional cyclist.

##### **5.1 Bike St. John's Master Plan**

- Review public response since plan approval
- Review Action Plan table

#### Review of Public Response Since Plan Approval

The Chair noted that there has been substantial mixed feedback on the plan and suggested a discussion about how to communicate with the public and move forward, particularly with catalyst projects.

Marianne summarized the feedback noting widespread support for the vision of the plan and the idea of shared use trails. In addition to the general resistance to the idea of paving and sharing trails, it's important to note that the the Rennies River Trail and Virginia River Trail are receiving the most attention from the public with particular concern about the environmental impact of working in these areas.

Discussion took place with the following points highlighted:

- Councillor Lane will be the Council spokesperson for the plan. There is also value in having the Committee provide messaging or a spokesperson.
- Agreed that the Kelly's Brook Catalyst Project (the one receiving the least public opposition) should be addressed first to build public confidence in the concept of shared-use paths and to demonstrate receptiveness in design through a thoughtful public engagement process. If properly executed, this project could serve as a demonstration project and build public acceptance of shared-use paths and trust in the process.
- Tight turns will be made straighter and steep slopes more gentle to improve sightlines/visibility and accessibility. This is important design parameter is necessary for safe and comfortable shared-use paths. The trails in the their current state are not appropriate for shared-use.
- There is a general fear of what may be lost by modifying existing trails.
- There should be a clear communication plan developed as catalyst projects commence.
- A short fact sheet or FAQ may prove beneficial in allaying fears and concerns. This could include reference to other jurisdiction where shared use trails are working favorably. Mount Pearl's network of paved shared-use paths is a good example.

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- Visual examples of what shared-use paths through natural areas could look and feel like.
- Communication should focus on the health benefits of cycling.
- A discussion about granular vs asphalt surface will be part of the public engagement process for the Kelly's Brook Trail project. Information about relative maintenance costs, environmental impacts and accessibility will be presented to the public to help inform decision making.
- Council is very supportive of the Bike Master Plan and shared-use path catalyst projects and hopeful of getting the ball rolling on the plan during the next two years, such that it gets more favorable acceptance.
- Improving accessibility so that more people can use the trails is important and should be communicated.
- Shared-use path design should address all aspects of safety to ensure everyone is protected.
- Environmental and flood risk concerns raised by the public need to be addressed. If environmental assessment or evaluation is in scope for design, it should be communicated to the public to help allay concerns.
- The committee hopes that plan implementation will not be scaled back because of public opposition.

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### Action Plan Table

The Committee was referred to Section 7.0 Action Plan of the Master Plan. All recommended actions are summarized in a table and categorized as primary, secondary, ongoing, or external. In advance of the next committee meeting, members are asked to review the Action Summary Table, with attention to primary and secondary actions, so that the Committee may discuss how to best support and move forward with plan implementation.

The Committee was informed they will be provided with a google doc through which questions, comments and feedback can be given.

Discussion concluded with agreement that:

1. the Chair will share a google doc for committee members to lead the preparation of an FAQ sheet. City staff will support by adding content and clarifications where needed.
2. the Committee will review the action plan in advance of the next meeting
3. Councillor Lane has drafted a blog post and will circulate to committee members for feedback

## **5.2 Request for Proposals (RFP) Kelly's Brook Trail**

- Detail design of shared-use path
- Includes public engagement, environmental

The Committee was informed that that the RFP for work on the Kelly's Brook Trail will be issued in the near future with the hope of construction starting in the spring of 2020. While this catalyst project has an estimated price tag of \$2.0M, it is hoped that through alternative funding sources this expense can be reduced substantially. Funding sources needs to be explored soon so that the City can finalize its contribution as part of the 2020 budget discussion.

It was also noted that careful consideration will have to be given to tree cutting and signage may be required to assist trail users to navigate some sight challenges

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

### **7. DEFERRED ITEMS**

It was noted that further discussion on these matters will be deferred until Fall 2019

#### **7.1 Bike Lane Parking**

#### **7.2 Quick Win Project Planning - T'Railway Improvements and Monitoring**

The Committee was informed that staff will provide updates as required on initiative progress

#### **7.3 Bike Lane Painting**

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 pm

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MARIANNE ALACOQUE, CHAIR