

MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

2 APRIL 1997

1:30 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: R. Cantin

Members: D. Beamish, A. Cullen, D. Holmes, H. Kreling, J. Legendre, M. Meilleur,  
D. Pratt

REGRETS L. Davis

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**That the Transportation Committee approve the Minutes of the meeting of 5 March 1997.**

CARRIED

REGULAR ITEMS

1. PRIVATE SIGNS ON REGIONAL ROADS - HIGHWAY SIGNS BY-LAW  
- Regional Solicitor and Environment and Transportation Commissioner joint report dated 14 Mar 97

Doug Brousseau, Director, Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services gave an overview of the report, noting there is more work to be done on this issue with respect to other signs and staff will be reporting back at a later date in this regard. The Department feels the principle role of the public's right-of-way is for the safe passage of people and goods and staff are seeking guidance from committee on how to achieve a balance between opening up access to the right-of-way and protecting its prime function.

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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 23 April 1997 in Transportation Committee Report 49.

In a slide presentation, Mr. Brousseau provided examples of the different types of signs to be regulated along Regional roads. With respect to some signs used by the development industry, he acknowledged these companies invest a lot in this type of advertisement and it is believed an agreement can be reached whereby guidelines can be established for such signs. Further, just as the development industry invests a lot in signage, so do small businesses i.e. sandwich/A-frame signs on the right-of-way; however, it is recommended these types of signs be prohibited for reasons outlined in the report. The Director realized this is a problematic issue, but he noted the City of Ottawa has a by-law that permits such signs on their local streets and should committee decide to permit these signs, staff will report back on regulations associated with this by-law. As a further note, Mr. Brousseau suggested another issue for the committee's consideration is that all signs located within the right-of-way should be bilingual.

Councillor Holmes questioned whether posters could be restricted to one per block and Stu Marshall, By-law Administrator advised that enforcement would be difficult as an inventory would have to be kept of signs on poles. In response to further questions, he indicated that to ensure businesses adhere to the 21-day regulation, the poster would have to be dated when it is first put up and upon expiration, anyone could remove it. The Councillor questioned whether the businesses could be charged if they put up more than one poster per pole or if they exceed the time period. Staff advised this would be difficult because they are often put up by volunteers and the businesses may not have control where they are placed. The councillor was frustrated the by-law does not provide the Region with the ability to charge for those infractions and was concerned about the visual clutter these posters often cause and the litter problem they pose when they come off the poles. The By-law Administrator indicated there are provisions in the by-law to apply fines for non-compliance and court action that can be taken if a business continually disregards the regulations.

Councillor Pratt made reference to ground-mounted signage used by the development industry and how unsightly it can be if many of them are located in a small area. S. Marshall advised the proposed by-law will address the councillor's concerns with respect to portable signs, but reminded committee that enforcement is based strictly on a complaint basis. The councillor explained he was more concerned about the more permanent installations that remain until the house is sold and how this can be a problem for some neighbourhoods. He was aware of the limited staff resources available and suggested their time may be more productively spent helping those who are out there rather than just enforcing the by-law. Staff confirmed this is their strategy.

Councillor Beamish suggested that staff begin removing the unlawful signs as soon as possible after the by-law is approved and D. Brousseau explained that would be difficult because there is virtually no staff to initiate that type of clean-up; however, they do intend to work with the Director of Infrastructure Maintenance and his staff in this regard. The councillor suggested and staff agreed that the Department establish a work plan for this effort. The Commissioner cautioned members that if the committee wished to establish a program for clean up, there are costs involved and an account would have to be set up to

cover those expenses. Councillor Beamish questioned whether there was potential for some joint agreement whereby the area municipalities enforce the by-law even on the Region's right-of-way and staff advised there is always that potential, especially since staff from both levels work closely together on this, although it would be at the municipality's discretion to charge the Region to do so. The councillor did not believe there would be additional costs to the municipalities since they have been doing this on Regional roads in the past. Joanne Poirier, Assistant City Manager, City of Gloucester, stated that city staff intend to prepare a report for their council's consideration which essentially mirrors the Region's proposed by-law and unless there are severe objections, they would recommend consistency. She stated enforcement is a policy issue Gloucester council will have to deal with.

Councillor Beamish was concerned about making this as simple as possible for the public and if there are two by-laws he did not believe it would work. The Commissioner suggested committee approve what is being proposed by staff and when it has gone through the local councils, staff would report back. The councillor agreed and formally asked that staff report back when the local councils have dealt with this issue.

Councillor Kreling echoed the comments made about availability of enforcement officers and agreed the municipalities should be approached with respect to assisting in this regard.

He questioned whether this report was brought forward as a reaction to concerns expressed by the area municipalities and residents and staff advised the Region did not have a by-law and was therefore unable to respond to complaints of any kind.

Chair Cantin made reference to signs used by a particular painting company and which are usually located in the centre boulevards. He noted they often remain there for long periods of time and often get caught in the wind and tear off and he questioned whether the ward councillor had the authority to remove those signs. The Solicitor recommended that if it is an unauthorized sign, it should only be removed by someone appointed to enforce the by-law.

Councillor Meilleur felt the proposed by-law was quite restrictive and asked whether Legal Department staff were confident the by-law will be successful. The Solicitor stated the Supreme Court of Canada was quite clear on what kind of regulations municipalities can impose and believed the by-law will be upheld. The Councillor was not so optimistic.

Pierre Dufresne, Ottawa-Carleton Homebuilders Association spoke on behalf of the Association, and in particular the home constructors and land developers. The homebuilding industry market their goods in a competitive fashion and one of the items they rely heavily on is directional signage which is typically placed on their own property or on private property which they rent. Although they have requested permission to place such signage on Regional road allowances, staff's reaction has always been that the Region does not allow any type of commercial signage on its road allowance. With the implementation of a new by-law, Mr. Dufresne saw an opportunity for representatives of the industry to sit down with staff and come up with a system whereby property

regulations can be devised and incorporated into the by-law so homebuilders can place directional signage on the right-of-way. He emphasized the industry would be willing to accept whatever conditions are necessary to ensure safety hazards are not promoted and there is no visual blight.

In response to a question posed by Councillor Legendre about a fee for such a permit, D. Brousseau indicated that this would be viewed like an encroachment and a fee would therefore be applicable. Further, staff would look at the possibility of a permit, develop criteria and propose an applicable cost to be charged to the industry; this issue could be brought back as part of the further staff report on this matter, or reported on separately in advance. Councillor Pratt stated development signs will soon be appearing in great numbers and he believed there was a need for firm guidelines with respect to how big those signs can be for instance because they can fall down and create a hazard. D. Brousseau recognized this and advised that liability insurance would be part of the permit. The Councillor was aware that this type of advertisement is important for the industry and felt there was some urgency to establishing some criteria as soon as possible. D. Brousseau agreed that staff will deal with this issue separate from the other initiatives. Councillor Beamish agreed that would be helpful to the building industry; however in the long run, there is a need to have a signs by-law that is fair to everyone because while the homebuilders may generate some income and business in the Region, there are a host of other businesses who would like the opportunity to do the same thing. D. Brousseau acknowledged staff will be meeting with the Homebuilders Association and the municipalities and will proceed accordingly.

Councillor Beamish opined that since the local municipalities have their own signs by-laws, perhaps the Region should adopt a by-law that conforms for those signs on Regional roads. He questioned whether staff had a difference of opinion with the local municipalities with respect to what types of signs are safe or unsafe and the Commissioner indicated staff have always worked closely and co-operatively with the local municipalities, the key being to have one by-law to avoid confusion about what applies. Councillor Beamish believed it would be simpler to ask the municipalities what their by-laws say and telling them what the Region will allow on its roads and in the meantime, staff can work together to reach some consistency. S. Marshall indicated he has been meeting with the area municipalities for quite a while now and explained that each one has a by-law to regulate commercial signs on private property, but they are all different. However, not many of them have a by-law to regulate commercial signs on the public road allowance, which is what staff are proposing with this new by-law. He confirmed that at the staff level, most of the municipalities are committed to adopting the Region's by-law once Council has adopted it.

The Committee Chair recognized that some places can be difficult to locate, especially new developments, and suggested a "builders community sign" might be useful to direct people to specific locations. Mr. Dufresne agreed, noting there could be a sign welcoming people to a particular community, with room around the whole sign for builders to put their logos. He felt this would be more aesthetic than having dozens of different signs

along a roadway. Questions arose on what staff intend to charge developers for their signs and the Director advised this has not been decided on yet. Mr. Dufresne suggested that if there is a permit system, it should be based on a fee schedule because homebuilders would want assurance there is justification for the fee and the amount to be charged. When questioned when staff intend to report back on Recommendation 8, D. Brousseau indicated staff would endeavor to have it brought forward within a matter of months.

Considering that all other area municipalities with the exception of Ottawa prohibit the use of A-frame signs, Councillor Holmes suggested the Region permit these types of signs in a similar manner with that of the City of Ottawa. She made note of their by-law and questioned whether the Region could adopt the same. The By-law Administrator confirmed that staff agree with the City of Ottawa regulations. Chair Cantin questioned whether that municipality allows for a minimum width of free space on the sidewalk and staff advised they do, noting the Regional regulations prohibit A-frame signs on sidewalks, but would allow for them on the inner boulevard.

Moved by D. Holmes

**That sandwich board/A-frame signs be allowed in a similar fashion to that of the City of Ottawa in the City of Ottawa only and that the by-law be amended accordingly.**

CARRIED

Councillor Holmes proposed that the by-law permit one poster per block face per poster subject from Queen Street south to the Rideau River and from the Rideau Canal to Bronson Avenue; she clarified the subject poster could not be placed more than once on the same pole, although the same subject matter could appear more than once if they are different posters advertising similar events i.e. a concert. Suggestions were made about the specifics of the boundaries and the Councillor agreed with amendments to bring the boundary to Preston Street in the west, the Rideau River in the east, from the Ottawa River in the north and to the Rideau River (Billings Bridge) in the south.

Councillor Cullen indicated the Glebe does not consider itself “downtown” and do not experience the same type of problems as the central area. He suggested the boundary to the south be the Queensway and should the ward councillor feel otherwise, he can make an amendment when this item is before Council.

Moved by A. Cullen

**That the Motion be amended to have the southern boundary end at the Queensway.**

LOST

YEAS: A. Cullen, H. Kreling....2

NAYS: D. Beamish, R. Cantin, D. Holmes, J. Legendre, M. Meilleur, D. Pratt....6

Moved by D. Holmes

**That there be allowed one poster per block face per poster subject within the boundaries of the Ottawa River to the north, the Rideau River (Billings Bridge) to the south, from the Rideau River to the east and to Preston Street in the west.**

CARRIED

Councillor Legendre questioned how the “visual blight” of signs will be addressed through the by-law, particularly when there is a proliferation of them in one small area. He noted that although the signs might meet all regulations, the fact they are together might appear unsightly and he wondered how this could be avoided. The Solicitor confirmed the Supreme Court of Canada did address the issue of regulations and agreed that municipalities could put their own in place, hence the 21-day limitation. The Councillor asked the Solicitor to provide some wording to address this concern more directly and hoped it would be available by the time this report goes to Council.

**That the Transportation Committee recommend Council approve:**

- 1. The Highway Signs By-law;**
- 2. The deletion of Section 2.2.4 of the Regional Regulatory Code;**
- 3. Amendments to Parts 2.5 and 2.10 of the Regional Regulatory Code to exempt the placement of signs pursuant to the Highway Signs By-law;**
- 4. That as staff resources permit, unauthorized signs be removed from Regional roads and that staff respond as required on a complaint basis, except where a sign is an obvious safety hazard;**
- 5. That permit fees not be charged, except for banners;**
- 6. That a processing fee of \$34.00 per application be charged to cover the administrative cost of processing an application to place a banner on or over a Regional road;**

7. **That the area municipalities be requested to adopt the Highway Signs By-law to regulate signs within their jurisdictions which will establish uniform sign regulations, and;**
8. **That staff liaise with the area municipalities to develop standards allowing additional signs on the road allowance, by permit.**

CARRIED as amended

2. COURIER DROP BOXES

- Director Mobility Services & Corporate Fleet Services report dated 18 Mar 97

**That the Transportation Committee recommend Council approve:**

1. **The placement and operation of courier drop boxes on Regional roads be permitted;**
2. **Amendments to Part 2.10 of the Regional Regulatory Code as required to implement the above.**

CARRIED

3. PERMIT FEES

- Director Mobility Services & Corporate Fleet Services report dated 18 Mar 97

With specific reference to road cuts, Councillor Holmes questioned whether the proposed fee of \$107.50 was cost recovery for the Region's inspections. Staff advised they will be able to establish the true cost following a consultant study on road cuts. B. Beveridge, Director, Infrastructure Maintenance Division added there will be different cost recoveries necessary and this will be known at the end of the study. He expected there will be an interim report this fall on activities the Department is involved in and where they propose to go from there, but the aim is to get cost recoveries and to extend the life of the pavement. The Commissioner added that staff are also examining a way to have the utility companies pay for the life of the road they use up.

**That the Transportation Committee recommend Council approve the proposed fees in the chart attached as Annex A.**

CARRIED

ROADWAY MODIFICATIONS

4. CONROY ROAD (REGIONAL ROAD 125) RECONSTRUCTION HUNT CLUB ROAD TO WALKLEY ROAD

- Environment and Transportation Commissioner report dated 6 Mar 97

J. Miller, Director, Engineering indicated a detailed presentation will be made by the consultants at the public hearing and that any changes resulting from that process will be incorporated in the environmental study report to be filed with the Ministry in June.

Councillor Legendre made note of the rail line that crosses Conroy Road and although it is not used very much today, questioned whether it could be a candidate as a commuter rail line in the future which would impact Conroy Road. Ron Jack from Delcan, acknowledged it is possible that corridor could be used for that purpose and confirmed the design is compatible with a grade separation if required in the future.

The committee noted the public hearing date is set for 7 May 1997 with the report to go to Council on 14 May 1997.

**That the Transportation Committee:**

1. **Receive and approve the Project Report and the functional design for Conroy Road as detailed on the presentation drawings;**
2. **Authorize that a public hearing be held by the Transportation Committee for the project as required by Sections 297 and 300 of the Ontario Municipal Act;**
3. **Refer this report to Council for final approval following the public hearing;**
4. **Authorize the Environment and Transportation Department to initiate expropriation proceedings and proceed with acquisition of property to be identified in the detailed design stage;**
5. **Authorize the Environment and Transportation Department to proceed with the relocation of utilities to be determined in the detailed design stage.**

CARRIED

### INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY DISTRIBUTED

1. TRAFFIC CHANGES IMPLEMENTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER UPON THE ASSUMPTION OF THE AIRPORT PARKWAY  
- Director, Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services memorandum dated 5 Mar 97
2. TRAFFIC CHANGES IMPLEMENTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER - BROOKFIELD ROAD BETWEEN THE AIRPORT PARKWAY RAMPS/FLANNERY DRIVE AND RIVERSIDE DRIVE  
- Director, Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services memorandum dated 5 Mar 97
3. TRAFFIC CHANGES IMPLEMENTED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER'S AUTHORITY (1 OCT 96 - 28 FEB 97)  
- Director, Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services memorandum dated 28 Feb 97
4. HIGHWAY TRANSFERS  
- Director, Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services memorandum dated 17 Mar 97

The Committee was informed that the province will not transfer Highway 16 to the Region until Highway 416 is fully opened.

### INQUIRIES

#### Road Reconstruction Projects - Tree Planting

Councillor Holmes asked staff to prepare a report that creates a policy regarding tree planting as a component of all road reconstruction projects.

#### Road Reconstruction Projects - Traffic Calming

Councillor Holmes asked that a report be prepared that provides for Council approved traffic calming plans implementation at the time of road reconstruction projects. She was seeking a policy to address this issue.

#### Transportation Committee Meetings re Transportation Master Plan

Councillor Holmes noted the Planning and Environment and Transportation Committees were originally supposed to meet jointly but have since been separated to meet individually on different dates. She felt it would be easier for the public if they wanted to speak to a particular issue and she inquired whether it was possible to blend the meetings with the Planning and Environment meetings in May. It was suggested that people wishing to speak to various issues be asked whether they want to address both committees and then

schedule one morning for a joint meeting to receive comments from those individuals/groups. After a brief discussion, the Committee agreed to schedule a joint meeting on the morning of May 20, and suggested the Planning and Environment Committee be apprised of this. Accordingly, the committee co-ordinators would make the necessary arrangements with the public.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

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CO-ORDINATOR

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CHAIR