

MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

17 JUNE 1998

1:30 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: D. Holmes

Members: M. Bellemare, W. Byrne, R. Cantin, L. Davis, C. Doucet, H. Kreling,  
J Legendre, M. Meilleur

REGRETS M. McGoldrick-Larsen

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**That the Transportation Committee confirm the Minutes of the meeting of 3 June 1998.**

CARRIED

1. PARKDALE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
- Director Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services report dated 1 June 98

**That Transportation Committee recommend Council approve:**

- 1. the construction of roadway changes proposed in the Parkdale Area Transportation Study as illustrated in Drawing #1 (TO2263TOA00), and;**
- 2. the initiation of the public hearing process as required by Sections 297 and 300 of the Municipal Act (Ontario)**

CARRIED

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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 24 June and 8 July 1998 in Transportation Committees Reports 14 and 15 respectively.

2. DESIGN STANDARDS FOR NOISE BARRIERS ALONG REGIONAL ROADS  
- Commissioner, Planning and Development Approvals Department report dated  
20 May 98

Brendan Reid of the Project and Infrastructure Planning Branch introduced Hazim Ghadami, an acoustical consultant with S.S. Wilson from Toronto. Mr. Ghadami has assisted the Region on many projects, environmental assessments and the development of its noise guidelines and was present to answer any questions of committee.

Councillor Legendre indicated that in the past, noise barriers were installed when they met provincial criteria and attracted subsidy as a result; where such criteria was not met, but where Council determined that some form of noise attenuation should be installed, it was referred to as privacy fencing. However, with provincial subsidy no longer available, he questioned whether the two different classification of fencing are in fact, physically and functionally, the same thing. Mr. Reid advised that a privacy fence was the terminology used for an unwarranted noise barrier (by provincial standards) and confirmed that Council approved a policy whereby privacy fences are erected where a noise barrier would have been unwarranted. The example noted in the report (Baseline Road) is such a situation.

Councillor Legendre further questioned whether privacy fences and noise barriers share the same standards with respect to material/construction/noise attenuation characteristics. B. Reid indicated that in general terms, the same standard would be expected in a privacy fence. The councillor noted that the acceptable standard from the Region's point of view are those included in the RMOC's "Standard for Noise Barriers report of November 1994" (as amended in May 1995). He referred to the letter dated 27 September 1996 to Regional staff from the Ministry of Transportation (MTO), which referred to standards that have been approved by the Region, but in fact do not meet Regional standards. He noted that the Canadian Standard Association (CSA) is adopting the MTO standards for noise barriers and Mr. Ghadami informed committee that he believed the standards set by the Ministry would be tighter than those of the CSA because the Ministry has approved only one or two products for use on provincial highways while the CSA standard can accept a variety of products.

Councillor Legendre made reference to acceptable wood components for noise barriers as contained in the November report; however, he was aware of two situations where wood products were used but do not meet those standards. He maintained this was a significant modification of the Region's standards because as mentioned previously, there were two projects that he was aware of where the Region allowed a very inferior product to be used and the effect of approving an inferior product will allow companies to provide an inferior product.

When questioned how many legal noise barriers have in fact been installed along a Regional road, staff advised the extension of Hunt Club Road called for a noise barrier and it was acceptable to the Region's standards. Councillor Legendre pointed out however, that he was aware of at least two projects where a substandard product was used and

should not have been accepted, according to the Region's noise guidelines. He believed the Region should at least maintain as good a standard as it can, but the standards established in 1994 are not what the Region does today.

In response to a question posed by Councillor Cantin, B. Reid indicated that when noise barriers are erected, there is a certification process to ensure that the end result is certified by the consultant who carried out the study and who advise the developer that the end result is an acceptable noise barrier; this is how the Region ensures that what is erected is an acceptable noise barrier as defined.

Councillor Bellemare was concerned that the Region appears to be looking at a one-size-fits-all type of approach for noise barriers and felt committee should be looking at it in terms of what are acceptable materials, because noise absorption requirements, for example, differ from one location to the next. He went on to state that what should be evaluated is the noise level in a particular situation and how much it needs to be reduced in order to meet Regional policy on the level of decibels that are acceptable around a residential area. Mr. Ghadami acknowledged that the issue of sound absorption of a sound barrier is very important in certain applications and agreed there is not one singular barrier design that will fit all applications; for a sound barrier to be effective, the extent, height, thickness and absorption level must be examined. He confirmed the Region does have a consistent approach in that its noise guidelines specify to consultants what rules apply with respect to two, four and six-laned roadways. A privacy fence, however, has only three conditions: that the installation will be at the cost of the RMOC; the area municipality be responsible for future maintenance, and; details of the privacy fence are to be agreed to between the Region and the local municipality.

In response to these comments, Councillor Bellemare wanted assurance from staff that when the Region looks at individual requests for noise barriers, the objective is to provide protection from a certain level of decibels in terms of noise acceptance. B. Reid advised that the Region does not have a policy for the building of noise barriers for residents who may be affected by increasing noise levels over time (i.e. retrofitting); however, there is a policy for new developments adjacent to existing and new Regional roads to protect new inhabitants from the impacts of increasing noise over time. Another noise policy the Region has is when there is new construction/reconstruction and in these cases, it is the Region's responsibility to apply the MTO policy with respect to noise mitigation or modify existing noise barriers which may be considered at that time to be substandard. He believed the products available to respond to the current standard for noise barriers in the Region is acceptable level. Mr. Ghadami added that the sound barrier on Hunt Club Road is one example of a product that will give a 20-year warranty. However, he believed there are real problems with the CSA standards because they refer to products that are difficult to maintain. For example, wood barriers are good and long-lasting types of fences/barriers and can be maintained by the homeowner. If the Region is looking at continuing with its use of mandatory sound barriers, he recommended that it review or revisit that policy to determine what products are available, being mindful of the fact that the CSA standard is not a law, but rather a recommendation.

*Chris Hughes, Woodlea Carleton Condominium Corporation #51* spoke specifically to the issue of noise as it relates to the earth berm along Hunt Club Road in his community. In particular, residents feel the berm is not high enough to deflect roadway noise, particularly the second storey area of the condominium development. Also, the emergency exit in the berm is directly opposite the Graham Creek Ravine which only serves to carry noise down into neighbouring backyards. In general, the residents of this condominium are dissatisfied with the mitigating factors that have been put in place and will be requesting changes accordingly.

Moved by J. Legendre

**That RMOc revisit the available products for compliance with the RMOc Standards for Noise Barriers - November 1994.**

CARRIED

Further to the above, the councillor proposed that when noise barriers or privacy fences not meeting the RMOc's "Standard for Noise Barriers - November 1994", that such proposal be submitted to the Transportation Committee for approval. He explained that very inflexible standards in all situations might be inappropriate and while it is important to have standards, when there is a deviation from those standards, it should be brought to the attention of the Committee.

Councillor Meilleur was hesitant to approve the Motion proposed, suggesting it is micro-management and undermines the quality of the work carried out by staff. She maintained that if members of the committee have difficulty with what staff approves, their concerns should be brought to the attention of the Environment and Transportation Commissioner and/or the Committee Chair.

Councillor Legendre defended the intent of his Motion stating that in most cases it is an artificial difference between noise barriers and privacy fences. The Acting Environment and Transportation Commissioner, Andre Proulx, indicated that the Region has standards for both and they are to be met. Councillor Legendre stated that he was just seeking assurance that the Region has a product that meets specific criteria and if not, staff should advised the committee why that particular product is being used. He did not anticipate a lot of cases being brought forward, but felt the Motion would provide some flexibility and would make committee members aware of specific situations where the standards are not being met.

Moved by J. Legendre

**That when noise barriers or privacy fences not meeting the RMOC's Standards for Noise Barriers - November 1994, that such proposal be submitted to the Transportation Committee for approval.**

LOST

YEAS: M. Bellemare, C. Doucet, J. Legendre....3

NAYS: W. Byrne, D. Holmes, H. Kreling, M. Meilleur....4

**That the Transportation Committee receive this report for information.**

RECEIVED

3. RESPONSE TO INQUIRY - SOUND BARRIERS - NICHOLAS STREET INTERCHANGE AREA

- Planning and Development Approvals Commissioner report dated 9 Jun 98

Brendan Reid of the Project and Infrastructure Planning Branch provided a detailed overview of the report, stating that the crux of the matter is that the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) do not feel they have to extend the sound barrier along the Queensway to include the condominium development to the south. As discussed in the previous item, he reminded committee that the Region does not have a retrofitting policy, which this particular situation would be.

Councillor Bellemare inquired whether the Region maintains a list of requests for retrofitting noise mitigation and although Mr. Reid was not aware of such, he did acknowledge that staff receive many requests for such retrofitting. The councillor asked that staff investigate and report back on two such requests:

1. the Highway 417 off-ramp at Regional Road 174 (Pineview area) and Eastcliffe Way and a portion of Cedarcroft Crescent;
2. Innes Road in the area of Stonehenge Crescent.

Given these two requests and assuming there were others that have or will come forward from other parts of the Region, the councillor recognized the need to develop a policy for retrofitting and proposed that staff develop a draft policy/priority rating system and implementation program concerning retrofitting noise mitigation measures along the Regional transportation system. He emphasized that a prioritizing rating system would enable the Region to prioritize requests in a coherent manner, just as is done for the traffic control signals.

*Wendy McRae, President, Ottawa East Community Association (OECA)* indicated that residents were not supportive of a noise barrier for the King's Landing Development along Greenfield Avenue because of the physical and visual barrier this sound wall would have on existing residences and the fact that sound would be reflected back into the community.

With respect to new development in existing communities and where a developer must provide sound attenuation for such development, she questioned whether the Region can ensure the barrier is constructed at source, whether or not it is strictly adjacent to the construction site. In this instance, she believed it would be more practical to erect a noise barrier adjacent to the Nicholas Street on-ramp to the Queensway, rather than having a sound barrier "hugging" the tree line directly behind the condominiums as shown as Point A to Point B in the report. She maintained this would work better to contain the sound at source and would open up the greenspace for the community.

In addition, the OECA requests that the barrier be an earth berm because it would be considerably less expensive to construct and therefore probably less opposed to by the Ministry. Ms. McRae commented that if this recommendation is not approved, the community would request that the Region recommend tree-planting along the Nicholas Street on-ramp as an interim measure. She further stated that the report does not account for the noise generated from heavier usage of an existing road and the community would like to see the statistics for the vehicles per day rate along Nicholas Street and the Queensway in 1985 when the condos at Montcalm, Havelock and Greenfield were originally constructed, and the decibel readings taken at that time. She believed this information would assist the RMOC to fine-tune its legislation regarding sound attenuation in this type of situation; it would also be a sensible approach since the Official Plan encourages building within the urban core.

*Bert Titcombe, Carleton Condominium Corporation #246* indicated that his condominium apartment on Havelock Street faces the Queensway and assured committee members that noise is a very serious problem. He indicated his support for the proposal put forward by the previous delegation for an earth berm adjacent to the Queensway and Nicholas Street on-ramp because he did not believe the proposed position of the sound wall would be very effective. He confirmed the greenspace referred to by Ms. McRae is used by many residents for leisurely activities.

B. Reid advised that this report isn't intended to design a solution and that the locations for sound attenuation were purely to illustrate what be the length of the barriers required and the range of costs that could be anticipated should the Region pursue this further. He noted that the suggestions made by the delegations are very worthwhile and agreed that an earth berm around the ramp (subject to MTO approval) would probably be a much more effective solution; under certain circumstances it could also be less expensive and is probably more visually acceptable because it blends in with the landscape.

Councillor Doucet indicated that the Kings Landing development has caused enormous stress in Ottawa east because it is the last piece of usable parkland in a very densely populated area and was very heavily used as parkland and residents assumed that because

the NCC owned it that it would be reserved for parkland. He acknowledged the lack of a retrofitting policy, but emphasized that not only are residents going to lose the only greenspace they have, they will also be faced with more noise and he concurred that something can be done to reduce the intrusion of such noise. He agreed there was a need for a policy for all of these retrofits and proposed that the committee ask staff to bring forward a policy for retrofitting.

The Committee Chair hoped a request would also be made that the Ministry put in a berm with tree planting on top of it.

Councillor Kreling acknowledged that the community may suffer negative impact as a result of this new development, but in the absence of a retrofit policy, he could not support the Motions proposed. He did not understand why the Region would construct this sound barrier because he believed that would be the responsibility of the developer. He recognized that the Region does have some neighbourhoods that are adversely affected by noise from existing roads and there is a Regional policy that where a road modification will result in increased noise levels, the Region would put up a barrier or privacy fence as appropriate, which he accepted as a corporate responsibility.

In speaking to his Motion, Councillor Bellemare stated that he was very sympathetic to the request before committee today and objected to making any decision on any specific request because the Region does not have an overall policy with which to evaluate whether or not this is something the developer, the province or the local municipality should be providing. He maintained that the Region has to be able to determine some objective criteria which would take facts and situations where those criteria can be applied and determine whether or not the Region should be moving forward and presenting some noise mitigation measures; however, this cannot be done until the Region has an overall policy. He further stated that with the province downloading its previously-owned roadways, there is a need for the Region to be more aware of the costs involved with these types of requests because it may be able to negotiate with MTO to receive a more acceptable amount which would better reflect the true cost associated with such downloading.

Moved by M. Bellemare

**That staff develop a draft policy/priority rating system and implementation program concerning retrofitting noise mitigation measures along the Regional transportation system.**

CARRIED

YEAS: M. Bellemare, W. Byrne, C. Doucet, D. Holmes, J. Legendre,  
M. Meilleur....6

NAYS: R. Cantin, H. Kreling....2

Moved by C. Doucet

**That the Transportation Committee recommend that Council approve that the Regional Chair request that MTO construct a berm along the Queensway beside this roadway to protect the community of Ottawa East between Concord Street and the Queensway on-ramp and a sound barrier from the on-ramp to Nicholas at Colonel By Drive.**

CARRIED

Chair Holmes asked that staff be directed to speak with representatives of Kings Landing to determine if the earth used from the development could be used for the berm, if the latter is approved by the province.

**That Transportation Committee and Council receive this report for information.**

RECEIVED

4. **CORPORATE POLICY MANUAL REVISION**  
- Environment and Transportation Commissioner's report dated 24 May 98

**That the Transportation Committee recommend Council approve the revision to Section 7 of the Corporate Policy Manual so that the public hearing process applied to intersection modifications also be applied to roadway and bridge reconstruction projects as described in this report.**

CARRIED

5. **LIGHT RAIL PILOT PROJECT - PROGRESS REPORT NO. 3**  
- Chair, Light Rail Pilot Project Steering Committee report dated 8 June 98

**That the Transportation Committee and Council receive this report for information.**

RECEIVED

### **INQUIRIES**

#### **Bayshore Transit Station**

Councillor Byrne submitted the following inquiry:

1. What steps and costs would be required to incorporate a community services facility as part of the Bayshore Transit Station.



2. That staff investigate how this project can be accomplished by using residual money from the Bayshore Transit Station account and with partnerships with private corporations, such as Minto and/or Cambridge Development.
3. That a report come to the last Transportation Committee meeting in August.

#### West Transitway Extension - Pinecrest to Bayshore

Given the result of the most recent light rail report (Item 5) which states that an east-west rail link is not viable and acknowledging the need to provide service to the western communities, Councillor Cantin asked that staff investigate the potential cost of completing the transitway link between Pinecrest and Bayshore.

#### Pot Holes on Lisgar and Elgin

Chair Holmes expressed concern about a pothole in the road in the eastside pedestrian crosswalk at Lisgar and Elgin. She asked that staff take immediate steps to rectify this very dangerous situation.

#### Security Index

Chair Holmes asked when the Security Index report would be coming to committee, and staff advised they would follow this up with Dr. Barry Wellar within the next few days. (Subsequent to the committee meeting, Grant Malinsky, Manager, Safety and Traffic Studies Branch advised the Committee Co-ordinator that he should receive the report in July.)

#### Moving the Economy Conference

The Committee Chair made reference to the "Moving the Economy Conference" being held in Toronto and questioned what staff would be attending. Pamela Sweet, Director, Infrastructure Policy and Planning Division indicated she would be presenting at the conference and agreed to report back to committee.

#### Traffic Calming - Kirkwood/Churchill/Island Park

Councillor Davis wondered whether there would be enough time to implement the traffic calming work for the above streets before the construction year ends. Staff advised that they expect to submit a report in July which will start the public hearing process and final approval will be in August or September. It was confirmed that the work can be tendered so that it is concurrent with the public hearing process as a provisional type of assignment.

Benches at Bus Stops - Advertising Proposal

Councillor Cantin wanted assurance that staff from the Environment and Transportation Department will be assisting OC Transpo in its review of the request for proposals for advertising on benches at bus stops. He wanted this matter reviewed in terms of avoiding costs to the Region, as opposed to simply a revenue-generator for OC Transpo. Bill Beveridge, Director of Infrastructure Maintenance acknowledged that he would be involved.

SUMMER MEETING SCHEDULE

The Committee agreed to meet on Tuesday, 21 July 1998 at 1:00 p.m and the Policy Session scheduled for the 15th of July would be rescheduled to sometime in September. The Committee Chair would only call a meeting in August, if necessary.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

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CO-ORDINATOR

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CHAIR