

MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

19 NOVEMBER 1997

3:00 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: R. Cantin

Members: D. Beamish, L. Davis, D. Holmes, H. Kreling, J. Legendre, M. Meilleur,
V. Waddell

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Transportation Committee approve the Minutes of the meeting of 1 October 1997.

CARRIED

PUBLIC HEARING

1. NORTEL CARLING CAMPUS EXPANSION - MODIFICATIONS TO MOODIE DRIVE FROM CARLING AVENUE TO HIGHWAY 417 AND TO THE INTERSECTION OF CARLING AVENUE AND GRANDVIEW ROAD/NORTEL SITE ACCESS - PUBLIC HEARING

-
- Co-ordinator, Transportation Committee report dated 4 Nov 97
 - Director, Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services Addendum report dated 12 Nov 97

The Committee received the following correspondence:

- a) Nortel letter dated 11 November 1997
- b) Federation of Citizens' Associations of Ottawa-Carleton letter dated 19 November 1997

-
- Note:
1. Underlining indicates a new or amended recommendation approved by Committee.
 2. Reports requiring Council consideration will be presented to Council on 26 November 1997 in Transportation Committee Report 63.

- c) Citizens for Safe Cycling letter dated 18 November 1997
- d) Centretown Citizens' Community Association letter dated 19 November 1997

The Committee Chair acknowledged requests received from some groups to defer the public hearing, but unless overruled by the committee, determined the matter would proceed as scheduled. When questioned what the time constraints were for this project, staff acknowledged construction has already commenced on the site and there is a need to get beyond the transportation modifications and begin to prepare the draft site plan agreements at the City of Nepean and the RMOC, before further building permits above the foundation can be issued. It was confirmed that construction of the roadworks will not begin until next spring.

Doug Brousseau, Director, Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services indicated the City of Nepean has issued draft site plan approval for the inclusion of the proposed changes at the Moodie Drive/Highway 417 interchange, to the satisfaction of the Ministry of Transportation and to the RMOC. Since the province owns the interchange, the Region can only make recommendations to the Ministry on the design that staff feel are appropriate in light of the Committee and Council's recommendations. He referred to the recently distributed finalized version of the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) which is the guiding principle for this project and the changes to the interchange are in keeping with that plan.

Mr. Brousseau explained that Nortel has established a very ambitious travel demand management (TDM) program and staff are working closely with them to make those goals achievable. Even with such ambitious targets, he acknowledged there will still be increased residual traffic to deal with and this is being addressed through new turning lanes and signal installations. He advised that in front of the new access on Moodie Drive, the right-of-way is not wide enough to make the road a rural cross-section and therefore, a curb must be installed to create an urban cross-section on one side of the roadway. He pointed this out because adding the sidewalk, which will extend from the overpass to Nortel, is an incremental cost in terms of construction dollars. It is not recommended that the off-road recreational path be a substitute for a sidewalk, since it is not adequate for year-round use; it is not maintained in the winter, is not visible from the road and is not lit.

Further to these comments, Mr. Brousseau advised that the proposed changes to the interchange will maximize the investment for transit i.e. passengers will be able to use the sidewalk to transfer from one bus to another along this roadway. Bicycle lanes are proposed to be realigned across the interchange in order to come in line with the new design. He indicated that Ministry staff have tentatively agreed to the recommended changes to the interchange, including giving up a vehicular lane on the east side of the overpass to cyclists and pedestrians. With the anticipated increase in volumes along Moodie Drive as a direct result of this expansion, it is proposed to modify the free-flow lane from Highway 417 westbound to Moodie Drive to a double right-turn lane to avoid queuing back onto the highway. This will eliminate potential weaving of vehicles as motorists attempt to cross lanes to turn left into the site and will provide a shorter crossing distance for cyclists and pedestrians. This exit will be fully signalized.

Questions arose on the volume of pedestrians anticipated to use the sidewalk and staff advised that although they did not expect large numbers, if the sidewalk is not constructed, no pedestrians will use the overpass at all. Helen Gault of OC Transpo added that with a sidewalk on the overpass, transit users will at least have the opportunity to transfer to another bus should they wish to do so. She confirmed arrangements have not been finalized on how OC Transpo intend to improve transit, but would keep the committee apprised accordingly. She confirmed a sidewalk on the overpass will be an integral component of the transit solution to improve the service to this site.

With respect to the policy in the TMP on sidewalks, Councillor Beamish felt the intent was that these facilities would be constructed only when it made sense to do so and when and if the local municipality could afford to maintain them. The Environment and Transportation Commissioner advised this relates somewhat to the proposal by Council that sidewalks be maintained by the Region and staff will be reporting back on this issue in the near future. He confirmed the present practice is the local municipality is responsible for the maintenance of a sidewalk, and it is common for the upper tier municipality to recommend the installation of a sidewalk and in almost all cases in the past, there has been co-operation with the local municipalities in this regard. Legal staff advised the area municipalities are legally bound to maintain sidewalks.

David Kusturin, HOK Canada briefly described the proposals by Nortel to improve transit on site, as well as off-site facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. He explained the biggest investment Nortel has made is its underground parking facilities for car/van poolers, cyclists, et cetera. When questioned whether the travel demand management co-ordinator position has been designated, John Sauve of Nortel indicated the individual has not yet been hired; however, there is a commitment from senior management for this position and funding has been identified. It is expected the position will be filled before the end of the year. Discussion arose on what initiatives are planned to be advanced first. In fairness to the proponent, it was pointed out that no other employer in the Region has a TDM position and ultimately, Nortel's commitment to this shows their forward thinking with respect to travel demand management. The Commissioner added this is a growth area for the community and acknowledged there will be substantial increases in resources to do this, but fairly less in capital costs should Nortel not choose to implement TDM.

As part of his presentation to committee and in addition to the comments submitted in a letter dated 11 November 1997, Mr. Sauve did not believe constructing a sidewalk on the east side of Moodie Drive would be a wise investment or would assist any of their TDM initiatives. He referred to Section 2.2.2.1 of the TMP which states "ensure the provision of sidewalks on...roads...except those within or adjacent to the Greenbelt, where provision of a sidewalk or pathway on at least one side of those links abutting or connecting urban areas shall be ensured." Therefore, since an off-road recreational pathway currently exists connecting Corkstown Road to their site, they did not believe the sidewalk was necessary. In addition, it is Nortel's opinion that a sidewalk on the overpass will not get used and, in

fact, transit service should bring people directly to their site and not to a point where they must transfer over a highway.

Councillor Legendre questioned the cost of constructing the sidewalk as part of this design. D. Brousseau reiterated the comments he made previously about the width of the road and the necessity to install a curb on one side that requires storm drainage because there is not enough room to put in a ditch. The incremental cost is estimated to be less than \$100,000. In response to this, Mr. Kusturin indicated it is not known whether the rural cross-section will fit into the existing right-of-way. However, Nortel's lease with the National Capital Commission contemplates this eventuality and allows for the right-of-way to be expanded onto that property to account for the ditch. Further, as part of the Environmental Assessment process for Phase 2, the creek presently flowing in the ditch can be relocated back into the wetland basin and the ditch can be recreated at that location. In their view, therefore, even if the road does not fit into the present right-of-way, there is provision for the right-of-way to expand to accept the rural cross-section. Councillor Legendre queried that should Nortel be successful in this suggestion to the NCC, and if committee and Council insists a sidewalk be constructed, could the two not be constructed in such a fashion that would be compatible with each other. Mr. Brousseau confirmed that any details about how drainage is incorporated with the design and the sidewalk would be determined in the final design.

David Jeanes, Transport 2000 addressed the issue of transit usage and its relevance to TDM. He had not seen any transit priorities in any design for this site and did not feel the sidewalk would be an integral part of transit use. He was concerned there was no plan in place to have a reasonable north/south connector frequency on Moodie Drive and believed that what was missing was a determination of what the real transportation needs are for this facility. He was concerned whether or not this is the right design for transit when it is not known what the new transit patterns will be and he brought attention to the fact that OC Transpo was not involved in the meeting held between staff, the Ministry and Nortel representatives in early November. In closing, Mr. Jeanes did not believe the proposed design improvements would improve transit, emphasizing that frequency is the key to improving that service in this area.

Peter McNichol, Regional Cycling Advisory Group highlighted the comments included in his letter dated 11 November 1997, attached as Annex A to the Addendum report. He was somewhat concerned about what Nortel has stated they are willing to pay for. He emphasized that in order to improve TDM, provision must be made to get cyclists and pedestrians across the road and the existing recreational pathway is not a viable option at this point in time. In this regard, he firmly believed the design improvements will not help, unless the proposed modifications to the interchange are in place. As a pedestrian, he would use the sidewalk on Moodie Drive, but it is up to the Region through the TMP and TDM to ensure those improvements are in place.

Brett Delmage, Citizens for Safe Cycling stated that Nortel has an obligation to protect cyclists from the 4000 additional vehicles that will come to this site and in this regard, the

proposed changes to the interchange will mitigate some of the difficulties cyclists will face as a result of the increase volume. He explained that cycling lanes on overpasses are barriers to cyclists and there is a need to provide some kind of north/south crossing in this vicinity. Using colour overhead photographs, Mr. Delmage illustrated the difficulties encountered by cyclists on this overpass and how dangerous it can be where motorists are usually travelling in excess of 80 km/h. The signal timing and spacing identified in the Addendum report will be critical for cyclists in this design and where they ride in cycling lanes in the middle of the road. He made reference to discussions with other cycling groups and staff about this, noting cycling employees of Nortel are in agreement with the proposed changes.

As outlined in Annex A of the Addendum report, the question arose on what portion of Moodie Drive should be included as part of the Cycling Transportation Network and Peter McNichol indicated it should be from Corkstown Road to Carling Avenue. In response to a question posed by Councillor Legendre, D. Brousseau advised that when the Region constructs roads, cycling lanes are added; however, in this case, the road will not be widened and although there is a budget for such facilities, all that can be done is to add it to the list and priorities will dictate whether or not it will be included. The Director suggested it might be useful for committee to state that this is another option to present to the Ministry. He confirmed the Region's position would include the comments included in Annex A of the Addendum report.

Linda Hoad, Federation of Citizens' Association of Ottawa-Carleton was concerned the Addendum report was not available in a timely fashion. She noted there are many proposed infrastructure improvements for automobiles which Nortel will have to pay for, but was of the opinion that a little congestion is the best way people will be encouraged to change their travel habits. She believed the way in which this project proceeds will determine whether TDM is a success or failure and this is extremely important for future developments. Ms. Hoad believed there was some contradiction whereby the public is being asked to support an improved transit service to this site, but at the same time, Nortel is required to provide parking spaces to accommodate their new employees. She pointed out that the site plan agreement with the City of Nepean suggests the owner agrees to stage the provision of any modifications to the satisfaction of the RMOC and therefore believed the committee should consider a phasing of these modifications. She did not believe it was necessary to do the roadworks in the short term. She made reference to the letter submitted by the President of the FCA, which includes an extract from the Transportation Impact Study with respect to this expansion. Ms. Hoad maintained the level of service to this site by the year 2000 are very conservative, stating there is no proof the roadway modifications proposed for automobiles are necessary. She urged committee members to postpone some of the road related expenditures and concentrate on those expenditures that will assist the non-auto modes i.e. transit priority measures such as separate bus lanes.

Councillor Merv Sullivan, City of Nepean recognized that employees of the high tech industry usually have active lifestyles and he believed very few would take the bus and

transfer or walk to the Carling campus. He explained that to transfer at the interchange would not be conducive to pedestrian travel, especially during the winter when blowing wind and snow would discourage walking. He was not convinced the north/south bus route would get that much use during the day time and with free parking being offered to Nortel's employees, he could not envisage accomplishing a 25% modal split in the long term. The councillor expressed his deep concern for the proposal to convert the free flowing lane to a double right-turn lane because the community is not aware of this proposal and have had no opportunity to discuss it. Residents are concerned about traffic backing up from the double right-turn and using the Richmond Road exit instead and cutting through the community. He stressed this scenario is totally unacceptable and encouraged committee to ensure that residents are consulted in these very important matters before any final decision is taken.

With respect to some of the councillor's comments, staff assured committee that the conversion from the free-flow lane to a double right-turn would not cause congestion and would be safer, especially given the anticipated increase in vehicular traffic on Moodie Drive. The history of accidents on the ramp leads staff to maintain that the possibility of accidents is greatly reduced or eliminated by controlled access to the roadway.

David Gladstone, Centretown Citizens' Community Association indicated this is an important test case for the TMP and the Region's newly adopted Official Plan. He explained that if the current 88% level of single car commuters prevails while the Nortel site doubles, it will lead to vanishing green space, congestion and roads that are unmanageable by cyclists and pedestrians and a consequent degradation of the customer base for OC Transpo. He emphasized the importance of providing more than one method for commuters to get to work, other than by car. He noted that Nortel has agreed to implement a TDM plan that will lead to increased transit and since the Region owns OC Transpo, he suggested it would be appropriate to include some specific requirements on OC Transpo as part of the agreement between Nortel and the RMOC. He believed the Region should include a commitment to provide a certain level of OC Transpo service to that site.

Bob Wilson, Nepean Chamber of Commerce agreed with some of the previous speakers that a sidewalk on the east side of Moodie Drive is unrealistic. He questioned the proposal for signals at the double right-turn lanes, since there are already signals at Corkstown and Moodie. He felt motorists would be diverted through the Lakeview community to avoid the congestion. He agreed with the need to provide jobs in the Region and urged committee not to delay something that will allow them to proceed with their building permits; however, he believed that if the Region is recommending some changes, Nortel should not incur any more costs than necessary.

Councillor Legendre stated people are attracted to high tech industries because of the nature of the work offered by those industries and the facilities offered at the workplace. In addition, the quality of life offered by the Region and the surrounding communities provide additional incentives to prospective employees. He supported what staff have

brought forward in both reports and proposed that the Addendum report and its annexes form part of the report recommendations to Council.

Councillor Holmes questioned whether Nortel plans to have the TDM initiatives in place before the parking is implemented and Mr. Sauve indicated they do, but did not know which one would be first. Since the roadway modifications are before committee today, however, the councillor felt the Region was putting the transportation capacity before improving transit service and any TDM initiatives that will be explored. She was generally disappointed with the whole matter, especially given the visions put forward in the Region's TMP and the Official Plan. She proposed that transit priorities and TDM measures be implemented before roadway capacity increases are constructed and further, that the Nortel/RMOC agreement include a condition to mandate a 25% transit modal share. With respect to the sidewalk, she agreed there would be few pedestrians using it, but believed a benefit from this link could be realized by way of increased transit use.

Moved by J. Legendre

That the Addendum Report dated 12 November 1997 form part of the report on the Nortel Carling Campus Expansion and in particular, that the recommendations contained in the Annexes form part of the recommendations of that report.

CARRIED

Moved by D. Beamish

That a sidewalk along the east side of Moodie Drive, including on the Queensway overpass, not be required.

LOST

YEAS: D. Beamish, R. Cantin, H. Kreling....3

NAYS: L. Davis, D. Holmes, J. Legendre, M. Meilleur, V. Waddell....5

Moved by D. Beamish

That except for improvements to cycling movements, no modifications to the Queensway/Moodie Drive interchange be required.

LOST

YEAS: D. Beamish, H. Kreling....2

NAYS: R. Cantin, L. Davis, D. Holmes, J. Legendre, M. Meilleur,
V. Waddell....6

Moved by D. Holmes

That transit priorities and TDM measures be implemented before roadway capacity increases are constructed.

LOST

YEAS: L. Davis, D. Holmes....2

NAYS: D. Beamish, R. Cantin, H. Kreling, J. Legendre, M. Meilleur,
V. Waddell....6

With respect to her second Motion, Councillor Holmes explained it is an attempt to make the Region accountable to ensure it does what it says it will do. A. Hope advised that within the Regional Site Plan Agreement a clause on the de-commissioning of parking will be incorporated, so staff are doing everything possible to achieve those modal split objectives.

Moved by D. Holmes

That the Nortel/RMOC agreement include a condition to mandate a 25% transit modal share.

CARRIED

YEAS: L. Davis, D. Holmes, J. Legendre, M. Meilleur, V. Waddell....5

NAYS: D. Beamish, R. Cantin, H. Kreling....3

Having held a public hearing, that the Transportation Committee recommend Council approve:

- 1. The installation of traffic control signals at Nortel's proposed southerly site access and Moodie Drive (Regional Road 59) and the construction of the associated roadway modifications along Moodie Drive, and modifications to the intersection of Carling Avenue (Regional Road 38) and Grandview Road as discussed further in the report's Design Proposal Section and as illustrated in Annex D, subject to the owner, Northern Telecom Limited;**
 - a. funding the total cost of the proposed road works which would include paying the annual maintenance costs for the traffic control signals until such time as they meet the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario installation warrants and Council approves the assumption of the costs;**
 - b. executing a legal agreement with respect to the above;**

2. **That the Regional site plan agreement include a plan for the decommissioning of parking spaces resulting in a final total of 4200 parking spaces.**

CARRIED as amended

ROADWAY MODIFICATIONS

2. **MARCH ROAD RECONSTRUCTION - PHASE II - SOLANDT ROAD TO KLONDIKE ROAD - NEW INTERSECTION**
- Director, Engineering Division report dated 3 Nov 97

That the Transportation Committee recommend Council:

1. **Endorse an amendment to the 1994 Environmental Study Report (ESR) for March Road from the Queensway to Dunrobin Road whereby an additional signalized intersection would be constructed to service the rapidly developing lands on March Road between Solandt Road and Terry Fox Drive;**
2. **Authorize the initiation of the public hearing process, as required under the Municipal Act (Ontario).**

CARRIED

3. **MARCH ROAD RECONSTRUCTION - PHASE II - SOLANDT ROAD TO KLONDIKE ROAD - REQUESTED MEDIAN BREAKS**
- Director, Engineering Division report dated 3 Nov 97

Wayne Bennett, Manager of Transportation Projects indicated both Regional and municipal staff have been working with the businesses located along this portion of March Road to address their concerns. He confirmed they will have right-in/right-out access from March Road and with the exception of Capricorn Data, access is also available via Hines Road which runs parallel to the Regional road and behind the properties in question. He confirmed the 1994 Environmental Study Report contained this information.

Doug Brousseau, Director Mobility Services and Corporate Fleet Services spoke to the issue of safety with medians on high speed, high volume roadways. He stated that potential collisions are eliminated or reduced by the presence of these facilities and provided examples on other Regional roads where median breaks have caused many accidents.

Ray Ostiguy, Gowling, Strathy and Henderson spoke on behalf of the tenants of Kerscott Plaza at 591 March Road, a petition of which had previously been sent to Transportation Committee members in October, raising concerns about eliminating full access to the

plaza. Mr. Ostiguy clarified the comment made by staff that in fact the plaza's only access is from March Road and does not connect to Hines Road. They had discussed with neighbouring businesses the possibility of a shared access from this road, but were not successful in their attempts. Mr. Ostiguy emphasized that eliminating full access to these properties will have significant economic impact and requested reconsideration to find an alternate solution.

Dave Hatton, Cumming Cockburn, representing Capricorn Data, conveyed his clients concerns about the limited access to their site. Currently, the site is fully accessible from March Road and is a small business which relies heavily on consumers visiting the site. If access is limited, they fear economic hardship resulting from the deterrence a median will create for potential customers. Mr. Hatton compared this request to one made by a business on a busy section of Ogilvie Road, whereby a median break was provided and has been successful. Although the present speed limit on this portion of March Road is higher than that on Ogilvie Road, if development continues on both sides of March Road, he maintained the speed limit may have to be decreased, thereby making it safer to have a median break.

With the new intersection to be constructed between Terry Fox Drive and Solandt Road, Mr. Hatton suggested that staff be requested to modify the proposed geometry for the new intersection such that the southbound left-turn lane be made into a double left-turn lane, in order to obtain the required distance between the point where the turning lane could be developed into the access to Capricorn Data. When questioned whether a depressed median would be feasible at this location, staff advised vehicles would not be fully protected on the median and would not recommend such a facility for safety reasons.

It was questioned whether the owner knew of the limited access to their property when they purchased it initially. Staff confirmed the present owners have been at that location since June 1997, which is after the Environmental Study Report had been approved; therefore the owner should have had knowledge of the road reconstruction and future median.

David Makin, President, March Rural Community Association stated the community has had a keen interest and have participated in the planning process and development of March Road. He recognized the growth on this road has been dramatic, but emphasized this is a heavily travelled roadway for people from West Carleton, Carp, Buchams Bay and others. Further, this road is the main route for school buses taking children to and from school in the area and he was very concerned about their safety as well as others travelling on the road if median breaks were permitted. He suggested safety be the paramount issue in the Committee's consideration of the requests for median breaks along March Road.

Councillor Munter agreed safety has to be the first priority, but emphasized the issue of access to some marginal businesses needs to be addressed. He asked committee to refer the matter back to staff, with direction for further investigation and a report back on possible solutions to this difficult problem. The Commissioner reminded Committee this is

an approved design and it is only in light of the requests brought forward by several businesses, that staff are seeking reconfirmation of that fact. Any changes to the approved design would be at the cost of the proponent and would be subject to the public hearing process.

Councillor Kreling sympathized with the businesses, but believed this is one situation where a solution is not available. Further, he did not believe the issue should be sent back to staff for further review, when he recognized this has already been done prior to this report being brought forward. He maintained the committee could not resolve the issue and maintain the integrity of the road.

Councillor Legendre proposed that staff be directed to re-examine the question of access, particularly left-turning movements along this section of March Road. He was not convinced a median break was the answer, but felt further investigation was warranted in this instance; one option could be a lowering of the speed limit to allow a median break to function safely. Councillor Beamish stated the owners bought the property after the reconstruction had been approved and firmly believed it was their responsibility to discover what access they would or would not have as a result of that reconstruction. He did not believe it was the Region's responsibility to accommodate their request after the fact and did not support the suggestion to refer this issue back to staff for further investigation.

Moved by J Legendre

That RMOC staff re-examine the question of access, particularly left-turning movements, along March Road between Terry Fox Drive and Solandt Road

LOST

YEAS: R. Cantin, D. Holmes, J. Legendre, V. Waddell...4

NAYS: D. Beamish, L. Davis, H. Kreling, M. Meilleur...4

The Committee then considered the following staff recommendation:

That the Transportation Committee recommend Council re-endorse the road design for March Road between Solandt Road and Klondike Road as submitted and approved on 9 March 1994.

LOST*

YEAS: D. Beamish, L. Davis, H. Kreling, M. Meilleur....4

NAYS: R. Cantin, D. Holmes, J. Legendre, V. Waddell....4

Councillor Munter indicated he will submit a report on this issue for consideration at an upcoming Transportation Committee meeting.

* *Pursuant to Section 69(5) of the Procedure By-law, the Solicitor advised the Regional Clerk in his memo dated 20 November 1997 that this report would not rise to Council on 26 November 1997 since Council has had an opportunity to consider this item. (Item 1 of Transportation Committee Report 51 to Council on 13 April 1994 refers). Members were made aware of this fact by a copy of the Solicitor's memo on the same date.*

INQUIRIES

Mackenzie King Bridge and Plaza Bridge Rehabilitation - Timing

Councillor Meilleur explained that merchants in the Downtown Rideau area are concerned about the timing of the rehabilitation of the Plaza Bridge in light of the current work on the Mackenzie King Bridge. The Commissioner assured committee the latter bridge would be cleared before the surface restoration commences on the Plaza Bridge.

Laurier Avenue Reconstruction

Councillor Meilleur was concerned about the quality of access and the speed at which the reconstruction is progressing on Laurier Avenue and the impact this has had on merchants and residents on that street. The Commissioner acknowledged that staff were aware of the difficulties experienced by some merchants and are working with the contractor to ensure as little disruption as possible during this period. When questioned when the sidewalk would be reinstated, staff advised they would investigate and report back to the councillor.

Champlain Bridge

Councillor Davis questioned whether staff had received any further update in response to the Region's request to extend the one-year deadline for the Region and the Outaouais to determine how the reconstructed lanes on the Champlain Bridge would operate. Her concerns were based on the fact that 20 November 1997 will be the one-year limit to the

deadline to which the Region and the Outaouais have to consider their options and she suggested the Region's request be sent to the members of the National Capital Commission once again. The Commissioner advised he would investigate the matter.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

CO-ORDINATOR

CHAIR