

Chair's Report – March 2014

1. **Sale of Oblate Lands:** The conditional offer of the Regional Group along with Bob McGilligott has been accepted. Regional has 90 days to exercise “due diligence.” Regional called the association shortly after their offer was approved. The development firm will participate in the upcoming forum on sustainable development of the Oblate lands and are contributing to it.
2. **SLOE Forum on Sustainable Development of Oblate Lands:** As of March 2, all members of the OOECA planning committee had registered but few board members have signed up – all are encouraged to do so. SLOE has been working very hard in preparing for the forum scheduled for Saturday morning, March 22 in the second floor conference room of the River Building at Carleton University.
3. **Brantwood Park Rink:** The rink has had the longest season in its volunteer history and coordinator Cindy Courtemanche succeeded in recruiting about 12 new hoser.
4. **Safe Crossing of Parkways:** The NCC has agreed to consult on the proposed a safe pedestrian crossing of Queen Elizabeth Drive at Fifth.
5. **OOECA Column for Next Mainstreeter:** The column focuses on the volunteering of board members.
6. **Lansdowne Traffic:** Along with representatives of GCA and OSCA, I met the Mayor (March 3, 2014) to discuss the lack of concrete action in dealing with identified transportation / parking issues. The City’s approach is basically “Well, we’ll monitor the traffic and parking.” They are agreeing to sharrows and reduced (40km/h) speed limit on the Bank Street (canal) bridge but in the view of many of us this is an inadequate response to the need for safe cycling on the bridge. No improvements are planned for the Billings bridge.

The mayor spoke of the proposed canal footbridge being next in line for federal infrastructure funding if such funding becomes available and if there is enough to do more than the Ottawa River clean-up.

The city’s passive approach and their largely negative reaction to the many recommendations proposed by GCA and OSCA do not bode well for either the impact of Lansdowne on the surrounding communities or the success of the renovated park. OOECA will now be a part of the “Lansdowne Transportation Monitoring Operations Committee,” unlike what was originally recommended by staff.

7. **All-Candidates (municipal) Meeting** – Our sister community associations are willing to join with us to put on an all-candidates meeting but we need a lead from OOECA. GCA and OSCA have both identified their lead organizers for this.

8. **Lees Participation:** I've asked Bill Baldwin about the possibility / desirability of having an upcoming meeting of the board in the Lees tower neighbourhood (as a start on trying to get more engagement from residents there).
9. **Hospital Link – AVTC:** A two-lane version of the mid-section of the AVTC will be built this year and next – as had been approved and budgeted for some time ago and a public open house will be held soon. Last week Councillor Hume held a meeting with Alta Vista ward community association presidents to discuss the project. Heather and John Jarrett, Don Fugler and I showed up for the meeting but were not allowed to attend. If you look at the plans you may share my perspective that they are horribly and expensively over-designed (\$60M). Yet they don't have money for the canal footbridge until 2020-2025, if then!



(By Email)

January 22, 2014

Josée Vallée
Senior Engineer
Main Street Renewal
City of Ottawa
100 Constellation Drive
OTTAWA ON K2G 6J8

Main Street Renewal: Outstanding Issues

In view of the postponement of the next Main Street Renewal working group meeting until March 19, 2014, the Old Ottawa East Community Association would like to draw to your attention five issues that we would like discussed and, for several of them, addressed before the city tables its updated plans at the March meeting.

These issues are: creation of dedicated cycling lanes on Main Street north of Hawthorne Avenue; the determination of a better east-west cycling connection from the pedestrian bridge over the Rideau River to Pretoria Bridge; further pursuit of funding undergrounding through development related charges or other city-driven means, being clear what the city is going to do to protect a 23 meter right-of way along Main Street, especially when there is redevelopment of adjacent properties; and finding a satisfactory solution to the access needs of Liz Fulton of 56 Bower Street. Our position on these five issues is described below.

1. **Main as a "Complete Street" for its entire length:** The community association and many others throughout Ottawa were delighted with city council's strong support last year for making Main Street a "complete street." The current plans call for dedicated cycling lanes or a cycling track from the eastern end of the MacIlraith Bridge all of the way to the Lees-Hawthorne intersection. However, north of Hawthorne the current plans provide for just "sharrows," which while somewhat better than no provision for cyclists, are vastly inferior to what will be in place for the other 90 percent of the route. Main should be a complete "complete street," not just one that goes most of the way. From the community association's standpoint the only temporary exception to this would be the one-block portion between Hawthorne and Lees, a section that functions as a connection between the two streets as well as being a primary north-south route.

But even this exception should eventually have bike lanes as Main Street properties are sold and new “traditional main street” development occurs within the context of the recently approved Official Plan which calls for the protection of a 23 metre right of way for the full length of Main Street.

We have been told that there is not enough room for cycling lanes on the northern section of Main Street but our analysis of the available right-of way shows that there is enough space for the required three lanes of traffic, 2+ meter sidewalks and a 1.5 meter cycletrack. Please see attached analysis.

We have been told that the City has discussed Main Street renewal plans (the ones showing just “sharrows” for cyclists) with representatives of the condominiums at 10, 29, and 43 Main Street, however, the city right of way beside these properties should be used to make a complete street just as it is being used on other parts of Main Street. The principle of equity must hold: it is not reasonable for residents elsewhere on Main Street to lose “their” use of portions of the city’s right of way while those in the northern end of Main are being protected from any such loss. Furthermore, it is in the interest of both residents of the north end of Main and elsewhere that Main really be a complete “complete street.” If part of the reason for not providing for dedicated cycling lanes north of Hawthorne is because of the impediments of hydro poles then, as occurred on portions of Rideau Street, the hydro wires should be “undergrounded.”

We understand that there must be turning lanes from southbound and northbound Main onto Greenfield Avenue but, again, as per our analysis, there is enough room to have these lanes, cycling lanes and a wide sidewalk. It’s worth noting that currently Main Street is just two lanes wide as it meets Colonel By and Echo, allowing plenty of room for cycling lanes.

2. ***East-West Cycling (Lees and adjacent streets):*** The plans for rebuilding Lees Avenue feature a dedicated eastbound cycling lane on the south side of Lees with sharrows on the north side for westbound cyclists on Lees. This proposal allows on-street parking on one side of Lees, something that is strongly supported. However, the sharrows as the westbound cycling solution are an inadequate cycling connection for cyclists travelling between the critical old railway footbridge over the Rideau River and Pretoria Bridge, and those travelling along Lees between Sandy Hill, Old Ottawa East and beyond.

We are of the view that a better eastbound – westbound cycling solution should be found. We urge that this be examined now, before the rebuilding plans for Lees are finalized. For example, creation of a dedicated cycling lane on Hawthorne east of Main, Springhurst or even Evelyn could be a much safer solution than the current sharrow proposal. By looking at this as an essential part of the city’s cycling network we can avoid the quick fix – and inadequate - solution that is currently on the table. By now looking at other options it may become apparent that the dedicated cycling lane on Lees should in fact be westbound (i.e., on the north side).

In our recent discussion with the city’s planner for the Lees Transit Oriented Development it became evident that the rebuilt Lees-over-the-Queensway bridge would have cycling lanes and there is the possibility of creating a cycling lane – while maintaining parking – on the north side of Lees opposite the city’s 160 Lees property and to the west so that key parts of a dedicated westbound cycling route could be created. These possibilities should be factored into consideration of a better east-west cycling facility through Old Ottawa East.

3. **Undergrounding:** We realize that from the project team's perspective no undergrounding is currently contemplated because there is no budget for this. However, community representatives met again with Councillor Chernushenko who committed to exploring means of identifying necessary funding through the development process. That said, if hydro poles are currently preventing the creation of dedicated cycling facilities – as may be the case in the section of Main north of Hawthorne – we suggest that cyclist safety is being put at risk because of the city's unwillingness to fund undergrounding of the hydro wires.
4. **Right of Way:** The recently approved Official Plan calls for the protection of a 23 meter right of way for the entire length of Main Street. We have seen little evidence that when properties are being redeveloped along Main Street that the city is actually trying to secure additional property to provide the 23 meters and we suggest that that the Official Plan is therefore not being respected.
5. **Main Street Access for Liz Fulton:** The resident most affected by Main Street renewal is Liz Fulton of 56 Bower Street. She is confined to a wheelchair and her access to the rest of the world is via a ramp onto Main. A number of proposals have been made by her and the community to ensure that Ms Fulton may readily remain in her lifetime home but neither she nor the community association has heard any response from the city for at least two months. This uncertainty and the lack of a satisfactory solution needs to be addressed now.

Despite these outstanding issues, the community association remains strongly in support of the "complete street" redesign of Main Street and congratulates the City for approving and, soon, implementing the redesign which will be a model for the city and beyond. But let's resolve the key details outlined.



John Dance
President, OOECA
Old Town Hall
61 Main Street
OTTAWA ON K1S 1B3
john.dance.ottawa@gmail.com / 613 236 0650

c.c.: Councillor Chernushenko
Ron Clarke, Delcan
Robin Bennett
OOECA Board

Attach.

Dear Members of the Main Street Renewal Working Group,

We hope that the new year has gotten off to a good start for you! This is an update of the Main Street Renewal and Lees Avenue Reconstruction projects, and upcoming activities.

Lees Avenue Reconstruction

The design team is proceeding with detailed designs for the reconstruction of Lees Avenue between Main Street and Chestnut Avenue. The designs will be implementing the concept that was presented to the stakeholders meeting that was held on December 4th, 2013. A detailed design will be made available for community review in spring 2014.

Main Street Renewal

The detailed design process for the Main Street Renewal project is also proceeding. With the general layout having been confirmed, efforts are now focussed on design details including the precise location of street light poles, traffic light poles, relocated hydro poles, street trees, and other street furnishings such as bike racks, benches, and refuse containers. This is taking some time.

The design team is also studying construction phasing/staging choices as well as solutions to best manage transportation movements during the construction process, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit buses, and all other vehicles. As part of this study, additional geotechnical investigations in the form of borehole analyses are being conducted in the sector between Echo Drive and Springhurst Drive. These investigations will inform the design team in regards to available construction techniques to install a large diameter storm sewer in that location that will have the least impact on transportation movements during construction. The borehole drilling is expected to commence during the week of January 13, 2014.

In addition, the process for the public art competition is advancing. The "Call to Artists" is expected to be posted on the City of Ottawa website on January 17. The City is also planning an information session for interested artists, as part of the process.

We had originally scheduled a Working Group meeting for January 23rd. However, the ongoing development of the construction phasing/staging plans will continue to take place over the coming weeks, as will the detailed streetscaping plan. Therefore, we have decided to cancel the January 23rd meeting, and re-schedule the next Working Group meeting to March 19th, 2014, at which time a good deal of information will be presented for community review:

Next Working Group Meeting

5:30PM - 7:30PM

March 19th, 2014

Saint Paul University

Normandin Room, Laframboise Hall

249 Main Street

Ottawa, ON

We look forward to seeing you there and we are available to answer any questions that you may have in the interim.

Best Regards,

Arthur Lo, M.Pl.

Urban Planner - Transportation Division