

RAILWAY COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL

**January 10, 2018 – 1:00 p.m.
Committee Room 2, City Hall**

MINUTES

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor Chuck Puchmayr	- Co-Chair
Singh Biln	- Southern Railway (SR) Representative
Gordon Hamilton	- City Resident
Mike LoVecchio	- Co-Chair, Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail Representative
Bill Magri	- City Resident
Joslyn Young	- Canadian National (CN) Rail Representative

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT:

Rod McIvor	- City Resident
Stephen Semenick	- BNSF Railway Representative

GUEST:

Emily Mak	- Southern Railway (SRY)
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STAFF:

Mark Allison	- Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Sustainability
Jerry Behl	- Transportation Engineer
Roger Emanuels	- Manager, Design and Construction
John Hatch	- Deputy Fire Chief
Lisa Leblanc	- Manager, Transportation
Jim Lowrie	- Director of Engineering
Stacey Neves	- A/Engineering Technician
Heather Corbett	- Committee Clerk

1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the agenda for the January 10, 2018 meeting be adopted as presented.

CARRIED.

All members of the Panel present voted in favour of the motion.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of the September 13, 2017 Minutes

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the September 13, 2017 Meeting be adopted as presented.

CARRIED.

All members of the Panel present voted in favour of the motion.

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

No Items

4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4.1 Excessive Noise from Rail Car Wheels

Singh Biln, SRY representative, reported that in response to the complaint, lubricators had been installed on both sides of the Queensborough rail bridge and both sides of the bridge had been greased. In addition, additional power had been added to trains to ensure that they do not stall. Mr. Biln reported that they had not received any further complaints in the last few months

4.2 Braid and Brunette Crossing Malfunction Issues

Joslyn Young, CN representative, reported that the crossing blockages reported by email had been caused by a small electrical issue, and were not a frequent occurrence.

Roger Emanuels, Manager, Design and Construction, commented that the Engineering department frequently receives phone calls from businesses in the industrial area about the crossing being blocked, however it is often the case that a train is moving slowly.

Committee members made the following further comments and clarifications:

- Even if a train only moves a short distance (e.g. one metre), it is still crossing, and this does not qualify as a blocking;
- Under Transport Canada regulations, there is only a requirement to break a train if there is an emergency, and first responders need to use the route
- If mechanical failure occurs at a crossing, first responders are usually brought in to respond and there would be urgency to clear the crossing to minimize delays for both the public and to minimize railway operations;
- The City should pass all complaints and comments received from the public in regards to crossing blockages to the CN Public Response Line, who are a

dedicated team of people in place to answer questions, as this takes the risk away from City staff answering questions.

- Four railways operating in one community is unique and the level of coordination is very high, therefore working together to mitigate complaints would be beneficial;

Mr. Emanuels suggested that having the public number posted at the crossing in a prominent position would be ideal, and also suggested that the City draft a letter to send to businesses in the area about communication protocol.

It was decided that Mr. Emanuels would draft a letter, review it with the railways, send it out and follow-up with the Committee.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

No Items

6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

No Items

7.0 STANDING ITEMS

7.1 Whistle Cessation:

a) City-wide Whistle Cessation Program

Roger Emanuels noted that staff are finding that it takes some time for cessation to be implemented, and provided a verbal update on the City-Wide Whistle Cessation Program at each crossing, as follows:

Ewen Avenue & Brookes Street/Port Royal Crossing: Cessation Achieved

SRY will be posting notices in Queensborough regarding this initiative and it is expected that cessation will be achieved at this crossing by the end of the month.

Twentieth Street & River Drive: Overnight Cessation Achieved

Overnight cessation has been achieved for Southern Rail only, and complaints are frequently received about CN trains, typically from one individual.

The Committee made the following comments about cessation at this crossing:

- Cessation at this crossing would be advantageous and would limit public complaints, however CN and CP are not supportive of crossing with 24 hour cessation;
- If authority is given from the Transport Authority for 24 hour cessation, the railways would be more agreeable;
- An audit for cessation and infrastructure requirements (bells and lights) is still needed.

Mike LoVecchio, CP Representative, noted that if authority has been obtained from the Transport Authority, then the City should send the railways a letter to move forward.

Quayside Drive and Laguna Court: Cessation Underway

SRY has received rail signal equipment and is finalizing the construction schedule. Once work is completed, cessation can be implemented.

Cumberland Street and Columbia Street: Cessation Underway

The safety audit has been received, which includes comments regarding trespassing in the area. Additional signage may be needed because of the driveway near the crossing. Date for completion is still to be determined, and is also dependent on the Metro Vancouver pump station.

Front Street and Begbie Street: Cessation Achieved Front Street and Fourth Streets: Cessation Achieved

Cessation is in place at the Front Street crossings and they are now in the monitoring phase. There are no specific guidelines in regards to monitoring, however there will be annual meetings with railways in order to collect feedback.

Spruce Street and Brunette Avenue: Ongoing

There are a number of ongoing issues identified with this crossing that are still being explored, in regards to pedestrian safety.

Braid Street and Brunette Avenue: Ongoing

Transport Canada has identified issues with cessation at this crossing due to traffic queuing across the tracks that may be addressed with the Brunette interchange work.

b) Queensborough Crossing Upgrades

Derwent Way & Salter Street: Ongoing
Ewen Avenue & Stanley Street: Ongoing
Ewen Avenue & Mercer Street: Ongoing
Ewen Avenue & Furness Street: Ongoing

SRY is finalizing detailed design at all Queensborough crossings, with completion within 2018 expected.

Queensborough Crossings: Stanley and Mercer Streets: Ongoing

These crossings will likely be complicated and costly due to the location of Metro Vancouver mains, and a new development on Duncan Street, and are ongoing.

c) Fourteenth Street and Fourth Avenue Update

Mr. Emanuels reported that this crossing was not part of the City's original cessation plan and it is still unclear whether the crossing ownership is public or private. He noted that there are multiple tracks at the crossing, which may pose a safety hazard.

It was decided that Mr. Emanuels would correspond with the Railway companies to clarify the ownership issue and move forward accordingly.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Emanuels provided the following information:

- 4 out of 11 public crossings have achieved the City's objective of whistle cessation; and,
- Whistle cessation completions are published widely on the City's website, as well as on the specific 'Train Whistle Cessation' webpage, which contains information of the steps that are taken in the process and updates on the status of each crossing.

7.2 City Projects:

a) Brunette Fraser Greenway, Braid Street Section Update

Jerry Behl, Transportation Engineer, provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee outlining the next steps for the Braid Street section of the Brunette Fraser Greenway, including the following information:

- Background on the Brunette Fraser Greenway;

- Phase One, which includes a cycle and pedestrian pathway, is expected to be complete by March 31, 2018;
- Phase Two, which includes crossing one CP track and four CN tracks, is planned to be completed in 2018 in conjunction with water main work;
- The City is awaiting an agreement from the railways in order to tender construction;

In response to questions from the Panel, Mr. Behl and Lisa Leblanc, Manager of Transportation, provided the following information:

- The Brunette interchange project has not yet been approved and is still with the Province;
- The Greenway may be modified in future with the Brunette interchange project, but details are unknown at this point;
- The Braid Street Greenway is projected to be an ongoing requirement with an interest from the public because of the SkyTrain and upcoming developments in Coquitlam;
- The level of detail in the diagram provided about the interchange reconfiguration does not go down to a sufficient level of detail to provide details of how the bi-ped connection will traverse the tracks; and,
- The greenway path has not yet been designed, however it is definitely a City priority to address the grade change.

The Committee made the following comments:

- Concern was expressed about the potential of duplicating work at this crossing due to the Brunette interchange project which may require some degree of reconfiguration;
- Proper grade separation for the cycling path would be important, as cycling over 4 tracks can be hazardous for cyclists; and,
- Safety improvements for pedestrian users are of utmost importance as there is plenty of activity in the area due to employees who access the industrial area from SkyTrain.

Mr. Emanuels clarified the process going forward for the Greenway, which is as follows:

- City to work with the railway companies on safety concerns, then circulate design concepts and gather feedback;
- Once feedback is received, staff would move forward with-tendering the detailed design; and,
- Agreement still to be reached with rail companies regarding funding and maintenance.

7.3 Railway Projects:

a) Southern Rail (SRY) Update

Singh Biln, SRY Representative, discussed projects underway or proposed, including:

- Installation of double tracking on the south shore of Annacis Island, with a completion date of 2019, which will help with long train building and blockages along Ewen Avenue;
- Annacis Island connector loop, which will be important in terms of minimizing impacts in Queensborough; and,
- Improved crossings in yards.

Mr. Biln also reported that his colleague Emily Mak would be taking over his responsibilities due to his imminent retirement. On behalf of the Committee, Councillor Puchmayr thanked Mr. Biln for his lengthy service.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Biln noted that a decision is expected on the national infrastructure funding proposals for the Annacis double track application and the replacement of the Queensborough rail bridge by March.

b) Canadian National (CN) Rail Update

Joslyn Young, CN Representative, reported that they had also applied for money from the federal infrastructure fund and were awaiting the results by March. The projects involved work in the downtown Vancouver corridor and towards Prince Rupert.

c) Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail Update

Mike LoVecchio, CP Representative, reported that they had met with City staff in regards to the CP holiday train stopping in the City next year, however there is no ideal location in the downtown area. Mr. LoVecchio reported on the attendance experienced this year by the holiday train, noting that an excess of \$1.5 million had been raised for the Food Bank.

Mr. LoVecchio noted a few of the obstacles that would need to be overcome for the holiday train to stop in New Westminster:

- Ideal location to be identified, but there is willingness from City staff to work with CP;
- The train uses a professional sound system, so acoustics have to be considered among the buildings along Front Street;

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Railway Community Advisory Panel recommend that Council direct staff to send a letter to CP to request the Holiday Train stop in New Westminster in 2018.

CARRIED.

All members of the Panel present voted in favour of the motion.

d) BNSF Update

No update was provided.

8.0 CORRESPONDENCE

9.0 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the RCAP is scheduled for Wednesday, April 11, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. in Committee Room 2, at City Hall.

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, The meeting concluded at 2:45 p.m.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

**Councillor Chuck Puchmayr
Co-Chair**

ORIGINAL SIGNED

**Heather Corbett
Committee Clerk**