

RAILWAY COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL

**September 13, 2017 – 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
Bill Magri - City Resident
Rod McIvor - City Resident
Joslyn Young - Canadian National (CN) Rail Representative

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mike LoVecchio - Co-Chair, Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail Representative

STAFF:

Mark Allison - Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Sustainability
Lisa Leblanc - Manager, Transportation
Stacey Neves - A/Engineering Technician
Heather Corbett - Committee Clerk

Co-Chair Councillor Chuck Puchmayr called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

1.1 Adoption of the September 13, 2017 Agenda

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the agenda for the September 13, 2017 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 April 12, 2017 Minutes

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the April 12, 2017 Meeting be adopted as presented.

CARRIED.

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

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

No items were presented.

4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No items were presented.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

No items were presented.

6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

No items were presented.

7.0 STANDING ITEMS

7.1 Whistle Cessation

Ms. Stacey Neves provided a verbal update on the City-Wide Whistle Cessation Program at each crossing, as follows:

a) Downtown Whistle Cessation Update

Front Street & Begbie Street – WHISTLE CESSATION ACHIEVED

Front Street & Fourth Street – WHISTLE CESSATION ACHIEVED in May

Whistle Cessation has been achieved at these crossings. The City and railway will continue to monitor and maintain the conditions that support this initiative. At the time of meeting, there were no reported issues at this crossing.

b) City-Wide Whistle Cessation Program

Ewen Avenue & Brookes Street/Port Royal PEDESTRIAN Crossing

SRY will be posting notices in Queensborough regarding this initiative and it is expected that cessation will be achieved at this crossing by October 15th.

Twentieth Street & River Drive – overnight WHISTLE CESSATION ACHIEVED

Overnight Whistle Cessation was achieved at this crossing effective last weekend. Similar to the downtown crossings, the City and railway will continue to monitor and maintain the conditions that support this initiative.

Quayside Drive & Laguna Court

SRY has ordered the equipment to move forward with the required improvements at this crossing. Equipment delivery is expected to take 4-7 months. It is expected that civil works will occur in fall 2017 and that cessation could be attained by early 2018.

Cumberland Street & Columbia Street

Metro Vancouver is currently in the process of building a pump station adjacent to this rail crossing. Due to the construction activity in the vicinity of the crossing, improvements identified in the safety audit will have to be coordinated with Metro Vancouver. The City of New Westminster has met with Metro Vancouver to review the construction timeline and is currently in discussion with the railways to develop an execution plan to attain cessation.

Spruce Street and Brunette Avenue Braid Street & Brunette Avenue

No updates were provided on these crossings at the meeting.

c) Queensborough Crossing Upgrades

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

SRY has retained a consultant to undertake design works but it has been challenging because of tight clearances. Currently, they are in the detailed design stage and collaboratively working with the City on the identified changes required to the road alignment. Once the designs have been finalized, equipment will be ordered.

In response to questions raised, Ms. Neves provided the following information:

- Cessation at the Quayside crossing was planned for earlier in the year; however, the delivery of equipment has meant it will be delayed;
- The Port Royal Crossing is planned for mid-October because a public notification period from the Public Safety Authority is required, with signs 30 days' notice required from the point that signs are posted; and,
- While Transport Canada has not expressed concerns regarding the rail crossing at Twentieth Street, instructions are needed before crews will cease whistle blowing.

Councillor Puchmayr raised the issue of at least one email recently received by the City regarding the Front Street and Fourth Street crossing, in which it was claimed that trains passed through and whistles were still blown. Councillor Puchmayr acknowledged that some Operators may make oversights in terms of whistling, however if they are doing so knowingly, then this is important information to know. Councillor Puchmayr reported that he had asked the emailer to provide more information, identifying the time and carrier.

The committee discussed other factors that may cause whistling when cessation has been achieved (i.e. trespassing, safety factors) and agreed that education of the public remains the greatest priority.

7.2 City Projects

a) Brunette Fraser Greenway, Braid Street Section

Lisa Leblanc, Manager, Transportation, reviewed an overhead presentation titled "Brunette Fraser Greenway" and offered the following comments:

- The recent sinkhole between the tracks was traced back to the water main, which will be replaced as part of the greenway construction work;
- While construction is occurring, the City will coordinate to minimize the impacts on the businesses at Braid St.
- Tendering will occur in two phases:
 - Phase 1 will be to construct the pedestrian and cyclist path on the North Side of Braid, from Canfor Avenue to the rail crossing; and,
 - Phase 2 will involve upgrades to all rail tracks, and completion of the pedestrian and cyclist path;
- The City is working with BNSF on the design requirements and requests active participation from all carriers.

b) Riverfront Greenway Connection

Mark Allison, Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Sustainability, gave an overhead presentation regarding the “Brunette Fraser Regional Greenway” and covered the following points:

- Funding – secured from the Province for the greenway between the two City Parks;
- Purpose – the aim of the connection is to connect the broader greenway system through to Downtown New Westminster and coordinate with the Pattullo Bridge replacement;
- Project process timeline and public consultations – are underway and have garnered strong levels of support;
- Aim is to work with the railways in terms of enhancing protection in the proposed walkway areas and to ensure rail lines are secure;
- Challenges and Considerations:
 - Environmental sensitive areas;
 - Shoreline;
 - Commercial activity;
- Design considerations – accessibility, safety, attractiveness, user experience; and,
- Five options were evaluated and the clear winner has been a floating bridge which will act as a breakwater for the railways and which can be designed so that parts can be removed for maintenance – an example of a similar walkway in Portland was shown.

In response to questions raised, Mr. Allison provided the following information:

- The railways are not expected to provide funding for this project;
- Caging is proposed to be fabricated under the rail bridge so that it would not be possible to climb;
- The estimated cost is approximately \$16 million, with contingencies; and,
- The floating bridge would be built robustly, using concrete floats which have life spans of 40-50 years, however the moving parts will need to be inspected regularly and assessed for damages.

7.3 Railway Projects

a) Southern Rail Project Update

Singh Biln, Southern Railway (SR), discussed projects recently completed or underway, including:

- Installation of a second lubricator on the rail bridge to minimize wheel squealing – no complaints have been received so far;
- Application for Federal grant funding for projects, including Annacis Island double track and connector loop and a replacement for the Queensborough rail bridge (50-100 million);

- Working with UBC Okanagan to make a fuel efficient and low emission locomotive – working on putting a hydrogen fuel cell on to an old chassis

8.0 CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 Braid and Brunette Crossing Malfunction Issues

The committee discussed the email received and it was decided to let CN investigate and respond.

8.2 Excessive Noise from Rail Car Wheels

The committee discussed the email received and Singh Biln agreed to touch base with Roger Emanuel to follow up on the issue.

8.3 14th Street and 4th Avenue Whistle Cessation Petition

The Advisory Panel discussed an email which had been received related to achieving whistle cessation at the Railway crossing of Fourth Avenue and Fourteenth Street. The email stated that early morning train whistles had frequently been heard at 3am at this crossing and were keeping the community up at night, particularly in the summer when windows are left open.

The Engineering Department reported that it had been in touch with CN on whether the crossing was publicly or privately owned. Discussion ensued and the committee discussed that while it is a public crossing, it is often regarded as private to train operators because it is mostly trucks that cross the tracks when going in and out of Krueger Paper. They noted that changes in the environment, like an increased amount of vegetation growth, or operationally may have occurred provoking the train operators to whistle more frequently, as they are entitled to do.

The author of the email had produced a petition with 43 signatures in respect to the cessation of train whistling at this crossing. Given the petition, a study would need to be recommended by Council for cessation to be investigated.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council direct Staff to engage in a study with respect to whistle cessation at the Fourth Avenue and Fourteenth Street crossing

CARRIED.

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

8.4 Safety Incidents

The committee discussed recent injuries involving the railways and discussed a push for combined public education and rail safety awareness. Mr. Singh Biln

suggested opportunities for public outreach and will reach out to the CN community service team to coordinate efforts.

9.0 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the RCAP is scheduled for January 10, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. in Committee Room 2.

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, The meeting concluded at approximately 2:12 p.m.

ORIGINAL SIGNED
Councillor Chuck Puchmayr
Co-Chair

ORIGINAL SIGNED
Heather Corbett
Committee Clerk