

Chair's Report – October 2015

(* Indicates agenda item at OOECA Board meeting of October 13, 2015)

1. *Main Street Construction

You now get a real sense of how the street will feel when it's completed: the new sidewalk in front of SPU is spacious and the new cycle track on the east side works perfectly. Paul Goodkey and Ron Rose are pursuing the question of whether there will be a roller-coast-y, undulating nature to the cycle track and the sidewalk where there are driveways going onto Main. Two years ago the Main Street working group had asked that both sidewalk and cycletrack be flat but it appears plans may have changed. The issue remains under discussion.

In terms of traffic, it appears to me that Clegg residents are bearing the greatest "load" in terms of increased traffic because of construction - a great thanks to them for enduring this. For about 15 minutes I watched the functioning of the new Clegg-CBD intersection and was amazed at the number of pedestrians and cyclist using it and using it properly (i.e., crossing where you are "supposed" to). That said, there are still motorists turning from Clegg onto CBD northbound who do not properly yield to cyclists crossing CBD. Also, in a 10 minute span I counted nine vehicles illegally proceeding northbound on Echo at Church of the Ascension. It remains a mystery me why the Ottawa Police Services can't find an economical means to enforce traffic rules in our community.

2. Greystone Village Update

Josh Kardish of the Regional Group notes:

"The Regional Group has now received draft approval for our subdivision, a copy of the draft approved plan and the conditions will be posted on our website (oblate redevelopment.ca) this week (Oct 5-9) ... Our brownfields file will receive approval this fall and prior to commencing the clean-up, we will send a detailed update to the community (as we had done before) with a formal communication mailed and had delivered to affected neighbours. The next step up in our approval process will be the 'tidy up' zoning approval, and we will let the community know when that is going to Planning Committee. We opened the sales center two weekends ago and we appear to have about 65-70 deals...people seem thrilled with the concept of the community (rear lanes and quiet, public streets) and the feedback about the project has been very favourable.

“We will be turning our minds now to how we can begin to ensure that these new homeowners (who won’t be moving in for 2 + years) can begin to get involved in the Parks planning process for Greystone.”

3. Greystone Village - New Park

Eddie Gillis is working with City Planner Louise Cervený to set a time and location for the community review of the revised plan for the Forecourt - Grande Allée park.

4. *Resurfacing of Springhurst Park Basketball Court

Springhurst Park area resident Rick Burrowes has been leading an effort to get the surface of the Springhurst Park basketball court resurfaced. Originally constructed in 1996, there has been no maintenance on the court since that time and it has become pitted. Meanwhile, its popularity continues to grow, being one of the most used courts in the central urban area.

Ian Grabina of the Councillor’s office advises that the parks group will be sending someone over to both Brantwood and Springhurst [parks] some time in the next few weeks (no specific date available at this point). “They’ll assess the current condition of the playing surfaces and be able to provide info regarding their assessments back to us...Although the surfaces may be deemed in need of some amount of repair, they will be need to be placed in a priority list relative to all other city operated playing surfaces and then assigned to a specific fiscal year...I’ll be following up with [staff] in a week or so to see if there has been an assessment completed. Until that time, please leave it with me and I’ll flag it back to you once information becomes available. We should have some good info for you to pass on in time for the AGM in November.”

Chris Smith of Canada Courts advises that if the community were to cost share with the city it could be possible to expedite resurfacing of the courts. He will provide a cost estimate with specifications that would meet city requirements.

If the community were to endorse a cost-sharing approach there could be a contribution from OOECA and, conceivably, others. And, by virtue of the change in the cash-in-lieu of parkland policy, it is now possible to use CIL funds for park maintenance projects although both CAG and OOECA opposed this change when it was being proposed.

5. Lansdowne Park Update

On behalf of OOECA rep Tara Hogeterp, I attended the September 29th meeting of the Lansdowne Community Working group and learned that the park events, commercial activity and residential occupancy are all proceeding well. Although there were about 30 noise complaints pertaining to the AC/DC concert and CityFolk, none resulted in city staff issuing an infraction charge. Other interesting points were: the many dead trees on site will be replaced next spring; all construction activity is nearly complete; and the city wants to ensure the park is not “overprogrammed” (i.e., they know the surrounding communities do not want events all the time). One slight gaffe - in my estimation - was there was no advance warning that a jet fighter would be flying over the stadium on October 1st. A number of residents complained about this.

6. City Budget: OOE Issues

At an October 6th public discussion of the 2016 budget, I suggested that the city could increase revenues / save money / appropriately reallocate by: re-examining the “development charges” allocation and shifting some money to active transportation infrastructure (meaning, in our case, the Clegg-Fifth Footbridge); improving the efficiency of traffic law enforcement with cameras (e.g., photo radar); seek less expensive park installations/improvements (given OOE’s experience with cash-in-lieu of parkland proposals); and increase the expenditures in the urban areas and reduce them in suburban and rural areas given that the City’s per capita revenues from urban area residents are about \$550 more than the per capita expenditures in urban areas (2013 Henson report).

City of Ottawa Tax Levy and Rate Supported Services Summary (Annual \$/Capita)				
	Higher-Density Urban	Lower-Density Urban Greenfield	Low-Density Rural Village	Scattered Estate and Low-Density Rural
Cost				
Tax Levy Supported	1,055	1,338	1,458	1,734
Rate Supported	165	289	365	0
Total Cost	1,220	1,627	1,823	1,734
Revenue				
Tax Levy Supported	1,471	979	1,224	1,490
Rate Supported	340	379	533	0
Total Revenue	1,811	1,358	1,757	1,490
Variance in Expenditures				
Tax Levy Supported	415	(359)	(234)	(244)
Rate Supported	175	90	168	0
Total Variance	590	(269)	(66)	(244)

The Mayor responded to my points and basically said 'no way. That said, I'd recommend that OOECA press Councillor Chernushenko to get development charge money allocated to the footbridge project. The City used about \$6M of DC money for Lansdowne - so there is no reason why DC moneys shouldn't be used for a footbridge that has a multitude of benefits, just as the Corktown Footbridge has demonstrated.

7. Rideau River Nature Trail / Western Pathway

As a follow-up to the information presented by Councillor Chernushenko last Board meeting, I wrote to Luc Frechette, senior project engineer for the initiative. He has been remarkably responsive and thorough (see Attachment 1).

Key outstanding issues include what will be done first and the routing of the pathway through the southern end of OOE (Brantwood Park, Brantwood Drive, and Rideau Garden Drive). SLOE and residents of RGD have suggested that the cycling portion of the path be diverted to the new cycle track on Main Street. Others believe the cycling portion pathway should go along Rideau Garden Drive, then onto Centennial, Brantwood Drive, into Brantwood Park, veer to Onslow and return to the river on the north side of the fieldhouse.

8. Ian Grabina: New OOE Advisor in Councillor's Office

Old Ottawa East resident Ian Grabina recently joined David Chernushenko's staff and will cover OOE and OOS. As CAG chair Melanie Gilbert has said, Ian lives on Main Street so is very familiar with the issues that we are facing. Ian has been treasurer of CAG since 2014 but will be transitioning out of this role by the end of this year.

9. AGM Preparation (November 10, 2015)

In the interest of ensuring members have the opportunity to review the Board's "annual report before the AGM," I'd like to have the report posted on the OOECA site at least a week before the AGM. If by the end of next week committee heads could send me key points they'd like included in this report I'd appreciate it. I'd then draft the report, send for comments and then prepare a powerpoint presentation to give at the meeting.

The liquor licence has been issued for the "after" reception.

If Board members are not going to be able to attend the AGM please let Phyllis and me know.

10. OOE Welcome Brochure

I've heard positive commentary on the new brochure. Jan gave copies to Domicile for their sales office and Regional printed 2,000 copies for its sales office. CAG was given 50 copies for its pilot "welcome wagon" project for newcomers to OOE.

11. Soil Testing at 160 Lees / Springhurst Park

We'll need to closely monitor the work that has been done to determine just what the potential use of 160 Lees is. Last year, City staff prevented SLOE from a tree planting project at 160 Lees because of concerns about contaminated soil and potential injury to tree planters. This large greenspace is key to providing adequate recreational and natural land for the growing OOE population. We're still waiting for a response from the parks department in terms of how the playing field area could be improved without spending the \$275,000 of cash-in-lieu of parkland funding that was originally seen by the city as necessary.

12. All-Candidates Meeting (Federal Election)

Unfortunately I was not able to get any volunteers from OSCA or GCA to help organize an all-candidates meeting for Ottawa Centre. That said, good local questions have been raised in other fora including the *Mainstreeter*.

13. Good News

This is the last excessively long "chair's report" I'll be writing. Thanks to all of you for the extraordinary efforts that I've been able to write about.

Attachment 1:
Correspondence on Rideau River Nature Trail / Western Pathway

A. *Dance to Frechette (Sept 16, 2015)*

At the OOECA Board meeting last week Councillor Chernushenko gave an update on progress on the RRWP / NT ... I am wondering if it might be possible for you to share the detailed design or let us know how things have changed since we saw the conceptual design. Three specific questions are:

i.) Treatment of the pathway for the Rideau Gardens Drive section. The conceptual design called for the diversion of the cycle traffic onto RGD with there being a boardwalk along the river "behind" RGD - is this still the case?

ii.) Treatment of pathway through Brantwood Park. The conceptual design originally called for a paved pathway along the river through all of Brantwood Park. This was opposed by the community association, given the desirability to keep fast cyclists away from the play area near the river. Councillor Chernushenko mentioned the idea of the pathway going from the south end of Brantwood Drive towards Onslow and then back towards the river in the area of the Brantwood fieldhouse. So we're curious what the plans now show.

iii.) Pathway near the LRT Bridge crossing / uOttawa. We have suggested that the pathway under the transitway / LRT bridge be higher than it is at present (it floods out seriously during the spring) so we are wondering if this detail has been addressed.

The completion of this missing link has been long sought but we want it to be completed so that it respects the delicate ecology of the shoreline and ensures that safe pedestrian passage is not sacrificed to speeding road bikes.

cheers john dance
president, Old Ottawa East Community Association.

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B. *Luc Frechette to Dance (Sept 17, 2015)*

Good afternoon Mr. Dance,

Thank you for your email. I have copied Robin Bennett who is the Transportation Planner for this project, and should be copied on all correspondence. In response to your email, the RRWP "Functional Design Report and Pathway Plan" dated July 17, 2014 by Stantec remains the guiding document but we are reviewing certain sections as described below.

We have not engaged a consultant to start detailed design yet. Before starting detailed design, we need to streamline the scope at the following areas:

- i.) Agreement with U of O on the pathway alignment, responsibilities, and timing
- ii.) Agreement with Regional Group (Oblates property) regarding pathway alignment, responsibilities, and timing
- iii.) Brantwood Park alignment
- iv.) Route through Rideau Garden Drive.

Regarding Item iii.), we recently met on site with Councillor Chernushenko to review the pathway alignment options through Brantwood Park. From your email below, I understand the Councillor has provided you an update. Attached is our latest working plan showing the new alternative proposed alignment (in pink) through Brantwood Park. Note that we still need to discuss this proposed plan internally at the City, in particular with the City Accessibility Department.

Regarding Item 4, we are considering using Rideau Garden Drive for the bike route, and leaving the existing trail along the river as is (i.e. no boardwalk). This also needs to be discussed internally at the City.

Regarding the alignment under the LRT bridge, our intention is to raise the path as high as physically possible while maintaining the specified headroom requirements and any other restrictions caused by the bridge. The higher we can raise the path under the bridge, the more gradual the slopes will be on either end.

We shall keep you updated on our progress with respect to Items 3 and 4 above.

Best regards,

Luc Frechette, M.Eng, P.Eng, PMP

C. Dance to Frechette (Sept. 22, 2015)

Mr. Frechette: Thank you for the prompt, thorough and positive response to my email. It's encouraging to hear of the progress. I've shared your response with my colleagues from Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE), though not with the full Old Ottawa East Community Association. The responses I've received from SLOE are positive as I'll discuss briefly below.

Streamlining the scope in the four segments you speak of makes considerable sense. Indeed getting uOttawa and the LRT project on-side - and hopefully their providing funding - also makes sense. I should note that the community association had to fight hard to get the pathway to run along

the river in the "completed" part of the pathway through the 200 Lees property. The university was less than enthusiastic about the community - city desire for the pathway to go along the river through the site. And they have encroached on ready access as you go through their property just to the east of the transitway bridge. In terms of the Regional property, we have had positive discussions with Regional about the MUP. We believe that the sooner we get the pathway completed through the Regional property (including up the slope from Clegg) the better it will be for the development, the community and the city.

As you know, the route through Brantwood Park has been contentious. SLOE welcomes the proposal to swing the cycling path from the northern end of Brantwood Drive to Onslow (I think Councillor Chernushenko originally had this excellent idea). This will be safer for the many children who play near the play structures by the river and will be better for the river ecology. Further, several very large oak trees along the river will not be disturbed by pathway construction if there is the cycling diversion to Onslow.

In terms of the actual alignment of the pathway going to Onslow, please see the attached sketch - SLOE is suggesting the pathway go to the south of the basketball court rather than, as you've proposed, to the north. Also, members of SLOE would be pleased to consult with you on the specific alignment to minimize impact of the trees in this area. There's also the issue of springtime flooding in this area but this problem would have been encountered regardless of the location of the pathway through Brantwood. I should note that in our discussion of your email one suggestion was to leave the whole stretch between McIlraith Bridge and Clegg as is, and just do the path from Clegg north. Just under Smyth, the cycling route could go north on the little stretch of street running parallel to Main (Rideau Garden Drive - Bullock) then out onto Main with its to-be-new cycle track. Cyclists could go back down on Clegg if they wanted, to head north along the River. That said, I also know that there are cyclists who would like to stay as near the river as possible and would rather not be routed onto the new Main cycle track.

In terms of the idea to "use Rideau Garden Drive for the bike route, and leaving the existing trail along the river as is (i.e. no boardwalk)," SLOE members endorse this ... that said, I'm aware of some residents on RGD who liked the conceptual design's idea of a boardwalk on this river stretch.

Your email didn't make mention of the unfinished portion of the pathway through Old Ottawa South (i.e., south of McIlraith bridge) ... our OSCA colleagues would be interested in knowing if anything new is being proposed there.

Thank you for pursuing this ... we know it will take a few years to complete but in the end the city will have a wonderful new route that respects the river

ecology and the adjacent neighbourhoods while fostering development, cycling commuting and recreational cycling and walking.

cheers john dance
president OOECA

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D. Frechette to Dance (Sept 24, 2015)

Thank you for your email. We will take your comments into account as we move forward with this project. As mentioned below, we have not yet engaged the consultant to start the preliminary or detailed design. There will be opportunity for OOECA to review and comment on the preliminary design. Regarding the pathway alignment south of McIlraith Bridge, we plan to proceed as per the Functional Design Report. Your proposed alignment through Brantwood Park will be considered and evaluated.

Best regards,

Luc Frechette, M.Eng, P.Eng, PMP

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E. Allison Dixon (Rideau Garden Drive residents) to Frechette (Oct. 2, 2015)

Bonjour Mr. Frechette,

Thank you very much for providing further details. I wanted to share with you input on behalf of the residents of Rideau Garden Drive (RGD). I have taken the time to survey each of the 26 homes so that we are able to present information which represents the views of those living on the street. We felt this important since our stretch of the Rideau River Nature Trail has distinctly unique characteristics unlike other parts of the Rideau River Western Pathway (RRWP). We were pleased to see some of those unique characteristics highlighted in the Stantec Report (July 2014) which I recently received.

Our section of the RRWP has an intense human-nature interface unlike any other along the pathway. As such, overwhelmingly residents wish to keep commuting cyclists and high speed "traffic" off of the Nature Trail along RGD, thus keeping the path as it is principally used which is pedestrian - dog walking, bird watching, shoreline fishing, cross country skiing, and a put-in spot for kayakers, canoeists, and Stand Up Paddle boarders. We believe this is the direction you are presently headed. In addition, we feel not much work needs to occur along RGD aside from some "maintenance" done to the Trail

to help prevent erosion and control invasive species that has occurred over the years. Much of the maintenance of the RGD section has been done by residents living along the River - some hard at work for more than three decades to help maintain such a peaceful slice of nature in the heart of the city.

Residents of RGD also have concern for high speed cycling along the RGD roadway itself. It appears that the Main Street cycling track is parallel at this particular section as both go between Main St and Lees Avenue. Residents question if a route is really necessary along RGD at all? Or if it could simply bypass our street, use the Main Street Cycling Track, and connect back on the RRWP closer to the Clegg portion?

We are also hoping that you would consider opening up "internal" discussions you mentioned below regarding the RGD section to include a resident of our street into the planning and implementation phases? We feel it would be beneficial to both residents and the City to have partnership in such a project.

Many thanks and I look forward to hearing from you.

Allison Dixon