

**Ottawa East
Community
Association**



Old Town Hall

December 19, 2014

Greg Kehoe
Project Manager
Colonel By Drive – Clegg Street Crossing
National Capital Commission

Dear Mr. Kehoe:

Safe Crossing at Colonel By Drive and Clegg Street

The Old Ottawa East Community Association strongly endorses the National Capital Commission's plan and accelerated construction schedule to create a safe pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Colonel By Drive and Clegg Street.

Just as we applauded the Commission's creation of a safe crossing at Queen Elizabeth Driveway and Fifth Avenue, the safe crossing at CBD-Clegg will greatly improve safety and accessibility for cyclists and pedestrians.

Twenty-eight years ago (October 16, 1986), Jean Pigott, the then NCC chairperson, wrote about the CBD-Clegg crossing: "Commission staff is currently studying the locations as well as the most effective means to create safe crossings without unduly impeding the flow of vehicular traffic. We hope to have solutions to this perplexing problem by next spring." So we've waited a while. In the OOECA's 2010 response to the Rideau Canal Pedestrian Crossing Study, we wrote that creation of a signalized crossing at CBD-Clegg was our priority (see attachment).

And, given that there is about twice the traffic volume on CBD as there is on the Driveway, it is appropriate that the work be done next year. We also note that the accelerated construction of the safe crossing is welcomed by pedestrians and cyclists who, without the crossing, would have an even harder time crossing the parkway when traffic increases during Main Street reconstruction.

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In terms of the proposed closure of Echo on the north side of Clegg, the traffic counts show that there are only low volumes so that only minor increases of traffic will be experienced on McGillivray, Clegg, Herridge and possibly one or two other neighbouring streets. Also, the experience of having Echo closed on the south side of Clegg has worked well for residents, cyclists and pedestrians so a similar experience is likely when there is a closure on the north side.

As for the suggestion of removing the planters / barriers on Echo at Hazel, our suggestion is that they remain. Should in the future it be determined by those affected by the closure of Echo on the north side Clegg that removing the planters at Echo-Hazel would result in improvement then such a proposition can be considered at that time. We understand that you may reduce the width of the crosswalk on Clegg from the 4 m width to something less and this will contribute to a better design and functioning of the intersection. As an aside, we expect that the City of Ottawa will ensure this passage will be plowed in the winter, something that, unfortunately, hasn't happened at the Echo-Hazel intersection where cyclists can't pass between the planters in the winter.

We very much appreciate that the signalized crossing is primarily being created to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety. However, it may also improve motorized accessibility and flows. In this regard we would appreciate your further consideration of two suggestions that arose during the consultations.

First, the proposed "no right turn on a red" from westbound Clegg onto northbound CBD may not be a required or useful prohibition. We appreciate that the prohibition is to prevent motorists from endangering Echo pedestrians and cyclists who will be crossing on the green of the Echo signal. While we need to ensure the north-south Echo Drive crosswalk is not blocked, a prohibition of the right turn on a red may backup up traffic on Clegg. Further, a greater threat to pedestrians and cyclists is when they are crossing CBD on a green and cars are turning both left and right from Clegg onto CBD. Clearly, in this case, the motorists must yield to pedestrians and cyclists and the same would apply to motorists who, were the prohibition not to exist, could be turning right onto CBD from Clegg.

The second suggestion that may warrant further consideration is the creation of a left turn lane from southbound CBD onto Clegg. We appreciate that there may be cost and “real estate” issues that led to the NCC not including this idea, however, a turning lane would improve CBD’s southbound traffic flow. At present, southbound vehicles often squeeze by other southbound vehicles waiting to make a safe left turn onto Clegg so that if an extra metre or so could be found it would make for a safer left turn and would contribute to southbound flow on CBD. That said, the Association requests that the current “peak” turning restrictions from CBD onto Clegg be maintained except if there are key accessibility issues during the reconstruction of Main Street.

Regardless of the result of any further consideration of these two suggestions, we very much look forward to the creation next spring of a safe crossing at CBD-Clegg. Many skaters, pedestrians and cyclists will have such an easier and safer time “getting to the other side.” Congratulations on this initiative.



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c.c.: Josée Vallée
Councillor David Chernushenko

Attach.

**Ottawa East Community Association /
Sustainable Living Ottawa East
Comments on NCC's
"Rideau Canal Corridor Pedestrian Crossing Study"**

(November 10, 2010)

General Observations

- OECA/SLOE strongly supports the idea of improving the safety of pedestrians and cyclists crossing the two canal parkways in order to move between the canal pathways (or the skateway) and adjacent routes / communities.
- For more than two decades OECA and its residents have been asking for improvements but all to no avail until this study was launched. The NCC is to be congratulated for the study.
- The difficulty of crossing the parkways is particularly difficult for the young, the elderly and the physically challenged. Indeed, at rush hours it becomes almost impossible to get across without running. Also, long wait times to cross lead to able-bodied pedestrians to take dangerous risks.

General Recommendations / Concerns:

- The fundamental problem with the canal parkways is that ***they have become de facto arterial roads for the City of Ottawa***, rather than being leisurely scenic routes. Not to overstate it but the NCC has been complicit in allowing speeding motorists to make the routes and their crossing unsafe.
- The City of Ottawa has failed in providing better and city-taxpayer-funded north-south routes (transit and roads) ***but it is unreasonable that pedestrians and cyclists should be at risk (and the NCC should allow this) because of the unplanned-for excessive motorized traffic on the canal parkways.***

- In addition to changes at the crossings of the parkways, ***the parkways should have lower speed limits which are enforced.*** Also, the parkways should be welcoming for road bikes rather than the current situation whereby motorists act as though these cyclists should be on the pathways. Pathways should be for pedestrians and slow cyclists.
- To some extent, the study's ***collection of the pedestrian crossing data is inherently skewed*** because people don't currently cross as much as they would if there were safer crossings. Similarly, the study seems not to address the fact that rush hours that are particularly problematic for crossers. Finally, the comparisons of various options for each crossing undervalue the importance of safety. ***The safety rating should be "weighted" to be at least equal to all other factors combined*** (the study currently gives an option's safety a weighting of just 30 percent, about the same as heritage and aesthetics).
- ***The parkways and their pathways should give priority to pedestrians and cyclists.*** The closure of some canal accesses in the winter (Mount Pleasant, Echo/Riverdale/Southern – stone steps) is evidence of priority being given to cars rather than people.
- Although the report follows the methodology outlined at the June 2008 workshop, some prime crossing spots in certain areas (notably Centretown, the Glebe, and Ottawa) were not assessed. ***OECA supports other community associations in the desire to have safe crossings:***
 - ***about mid-point (Leonard) between Bronson and Bank on CBD;***
 - ***at least at one point between Pretoria Bridge and Somerset on QED;***
 - ***at least one point between Pretoria and Fifth on QED.***
- Indeed, the overall results of the study need to be looked at in the context of "Can a person safely cross every 0.5K (or thereabouts) when there are significant numbers of people living nearby?" Obviously, there's no need for a crossing of CBD between Hog's Back and the Carleton traffic lights because nobody lives in this stretch.
- As a general recommendation, ***the OECA would like to see safe crossings (meaning at least a pedestrian refuge island or adaptation of an existing lane divider) every 0.5K.*** Let it be clear to motorists that they should be regularly aware of pedestrians may be crossing at regular intervals, not just at "signalized" spots.

Specific Recommendations for Crossings in Old Ottawa East

- **Echo Drive Steps / Southern/Riverdale - CBD (shared with OOS):** We recommend that **efforts be made to create a “pedestrian refuge island”** and that the waiting (“storage”) area at the base of the steps be enlarged. This is a key point for skaters to get onto the canal. In terms of “stairway/access improvements” this idea is supported, especially to make it possible to take a bike up to Echo. Indeed, if a ramp is not possible then ramp-rails (like at the stairs near the Plaza Bridge at the NAC) should be installed. The visual pleasure of the steps (reconstructed some years ago) should be maintained.
- **Clegg - CBD:** Given its heavy use and importance, **this should be one of the first crossings to have improvements made. The community supports a signalized crossing rather than a pedestrian refuge island** because of the greater safety of the former.

A pedestrian-activated light should be installed immediately, given the long-standing requirement for a safe crossing at this busy and dangerous intersection. When the footbridge is built there may be a need for adjustments to the location of the signalized crossing but the Old Ottawa East community does not want to delay action on installing signals until the footbridge goes ahead.

We also recommend that **the NCC immediately improve sightlines for motorists turning onto CBD from Clegg**: a number of low-level branches and some recently-planted coniferous trees block part of the view making drivers more anxious or less aware which, in turn, has the potential of making them more dangerous to pedestrians who cross there.

- **Hazel/Herridge - CBD: A pedestrian refuge island should be constructed at either Herridge or Hazel.** People have always crossed here and will continue to so let's make it safer. The proposed vegetation barrier would be a waste of money. The idea of a refuge island here is in line with the association's general recommendation of having a safe crossing every 0.5K.
- **Main Street - CBD: The proposal to extend the existing lane divider so that it becomes, in effect, a pedestrian refuge island makes good sense.**

- **Concord - CBD:** As per our recommendation for Hazel/Herridge, it makes sense to **also have a pedestrian refuge island here**. It is a key point for people to access the canal and is in line with having a safe crossing every 0.5K.
- **Fifth - QED:** Although this is obviously more a Glebe issue than one affecting Ottawa East, many Ottawa Easters use this crossing. While **the signalized crossing is the preferred option** there may be merit in the single-lane roundabout as was explained by Brian Harris of Stantec.

Key Recommendations OECA/SLOE

1. **Give priority to pedestrians and cyclists using the parkways**, rather than perpetuating the car-centric bias of the parkways.
2. **Make the safety of the Clegg/CBD crossing a priority** and create a signalized pedestrian crossing as soon as possible. Do not delay this improvement until the second canal footbridge is built.
3. **Ensure there is a safe pedestrian crossing approximately every 0.5K** along the portions of the canal parkways that border communities (OOS, OOE, Glebe / Dow's Lake, Centretown, Sandy Hill) or that have a heavily used crossing.