

Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition – Vancouver/UBC Advocacy Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, September 28, 2011

1. Quick introductions-
2. Adoption of July minutes (no meeting in August)

No objections

Next meeting: Wednesday, October 26th

Circulation of welcome letter (for new members) that explains:

- What we do
- How to get involved
- Contact information

3. Committee Activities/Directions

Update:

Seems to be lots of interest among those in attendance in pushing for more cycling infrastructure.

We currently have no sub-committee (SC) for infrastructure.

Background for the newbies in attendance: VACC already has a few SCs working on a range of issues.

The direction and activities of this committee tend to revolve around those issues that its volunteer members consider important – often these can begin as one's own selfish interests, such as improving a route that you yourself use often.

If anyone is interested in creating an SC for this issue or any other one, it is important to think about what aspects of the problem need addressing/improvement.

Discussion:

SC proposal: Public bike share system- Brian and Kyle interested

- City is currently reviewing a number of expressions of interest, and, according to their website, a decision will be made by fall.
- The city did not request bids and proposals, so there is little commitment at this point to see the project move forward any time soon. NOTE: Lisa had a communication from a Councillor post-meeting who says that the City is communicating with bid respondents now and the City still thinks it will be ready for spring
- It would be a good time for the committee to keep the issue prominent
- Questions: Is bike share in Vancouver feasible considering our helmet laws? Is there time to have bike share in place in time for Velocity?

SC Proposal: New bike route – Strathcona (Union & Gore) → 2nd Ave. E. Clark (to communicate with Gertjan and Michael)

- Quite a few dodgy sections to be navigated
- There is currently a proposal to build a car and bike overpass in this area, so there is already interest in improving transportation routes there.
- The city has plans to study the whole False Creek/Flats area, which could also have an impact on this route.
- Completion of the Central Valley Greenway could also have an impact.

4. Ironworker's Memorial Bridge (2nd Narrows)

Update:

The committee working on this location presented a document calling for a comprehensive study to be carried out so that changes can be made

The document outlines all of the VACC's concerns with the bridge, for example:

- sidewalk currently serves as a two-way bicycle/pedestrian path but is less than two handlebar-widths wide

The document also proposes a number of specific recommendations, for example:

- widen bike/pedestrian path
- create a new crossing under the bridge for safer, easier access

so far there has been some willingness to improve access to the bridge for cyclists, but no plans to fix the actual cycling infrastructure on the bridge.

Discussion:

Regarding the content of the document, there is a concern in the committee that highlighting the low railing on the bridge as a potential safety issue could lead the authorities to try and restrict cycling on the 2nd narrows.

There has been talk of the installation of a suicide barrier on the bridge – perhaps the path could be widened at the same time?

5. Assessment Rides

Update:

These group rides are done to investigate specific routes and write up notes on our impressions of them.

They are casual, slow rides that can provide good information to City staff on what is working well and what still needs to be done.

Heather has asked for help in organizing the rides – Jacint to look into assisting- anyone else out there want o help with organizing, writing up notes etc?

Discussion:

One potential route to be assessed in the near future is Kent Ave.

- Well used east/west route connecting to Burnaby, to get to the Canada Line Bridge and into the city.

Also in need of assessment is the UBC area

- So much free parking that cars block the “bike lane”
- Has there been any effort to recruit students? Is there a club recruitment day? Note: Jens is our committee’s new UBC “rep”

Another route of particular interest right now is Comox/Helmcken

- City has been holding open houses for public input – but nothing is final yet.
- The VACC needs to draft a letter with our recommendations
- This is the most urgent assessment ride to do as it is on the city’s agenda right now.
- Ride Sunday, October 2nd @ 9:30 am. Meeting place Tim Horton’s on Davie at Howe .

Possibility of doing Kent Ave. ride before next advocacy committee meeting.

6. Response to City’s Capital Plan

Update:

The VACC wrote two letters in response to Vancouver’s capital plan, which earmarks \$16 million in funding for both walking and cycling initiatives and infrastructure over the next three years. The letters note that, based on the city’s own goals (i.e. “Greenest” city, etc.), this amount is insufficient.

Based on our calculations, the figure should be closer to at least \$33 million over three years. The committee will need to do some significant lobbying

in the next 3 years to help realize appropriate funding for future capital plans

Discussion:

We should lobby for percentages, not numbers. The standards for building/fixing bridges and roads should always include a percentage allocated to cycling.

Currently the amounts for cycling infrastructure must be fought for with each new initiative – this should be a given.

Problem is systemic.

What are Vancouver's traffic standards?

VACC has a member on the bicycle advisory committee that works with the municipal government. This link can help to bring VACC ideas to the table there.

7. City Election November 19th – Candidate Questions/All-Candidate Meetings

Update:

Need to compile the VACC's questions so that they are ready to be sent out to candidates.

Need to determine when are the all-candidates meetings so we can encourage cyclists to get involved.

There are a number of positions to be filled, including: mayor, councilors, school board, park board, etc. We should try to reach them all.

We need to determine what are their positions on cycling issues so that cyclists can make informed decisions. This information will be broadcast through VACC site and social media sites.

Discussion:

A newly formed sub-committee will oversee the information gathering from candidates (Aaron, Aaron & Jacint).

VACC does not endorse a specific party, but we can help compile information about candidates that is relevant to cyclists.

Ideas for getting information out: Youtube videos, Newspaper ads (potentially with a QR code that links to VACC page), Hand out flyers along bike route.

There is a \$400 budget that could potentially be used to promote information about the candidates running.

8. Stanley Park Cycling Consultations

Update:

The city recently held an open house asking for public input on improving cycling infrastructure in Stanley Park.

Some of our recommendations:

- Commuter route through the park
- Better access to the overpass

VACC needs to get our recommendations to the Stanley Park Consultation Committee by early next week.

The VACC's 2007 submission of recommendations regarding Stanley Park was important in getting the current consultation process going – Important to note that our work is making a difference even if things move slowly.

9. Arbutus Corridor

Update:

There is an old, unused railway line that runs from False Creek to the Fraser River. This would make an excellent north-south connector route. The land is owned by CP. The City and CP are currently, and have been for some time, negotiating re this land.

The VACC SC working on this issue has done some amazing lobbying

work on this already and helped generate interest within the CITY to move on this.

It is recommended that we continue to lobby aggressively on this, and if anyone is interested in joining the SC and trying to raise the profile of this issue, please contact Lisa Islakov@telus.net.

10. Broadway Connector

Update:

There is currently a proposal to create a rapid transit system along Broadway.

There are a number of options on the table (see <http://www.translink.ca/ubcline>) but the project will not likely be implemented until roughly 2020.

How will cyclists be considered as this plan unfolds?

There is a newly formed SC on this- Henny, Jens, Jacint, Dean Brian.

11. BAC/BNSC Update

Update:

The Bicycle Advisory committee (BAC) is volunteer-based and advises the city on cycling related matters. The Bike Network Sub-Committee (BNSC) is a sub-committee of the BAC advising on detailed infrastructure issues

There will soon be a call for new volunteers, and VACC is guaranteed a spot, so VACC advocacy committee members should consider.

Some current areas of interest:

- Yukon bike route – potential separated lane
- Separated lane running the length of Richards

- Many new developments for the near future (ex: massive Telus development) = new requests can be made for cycling infrastructure improvements
- Also working on a number of other initiatives

Note: The following talking points were skipped for lack of time.

12. VACC/VPD bike light initiative
13. City Transportation 2040 Plan Update
14. VACC archives for assessment ride notes, meeting minutes, etc.

Announcements:

- The VACC is currently going through a complete rebranding: new colours, logo, tagline, etc. If anyone is interested in suggesting a new tagline, please send your ideas to: erin@vacc.bc.ca.
- All are welcome to participate in the cross-region advocacy committee workshop that will take place in Burnaby on Saturday, October 15th in the afternoon. This workshop will be a great opportunity to exchange ideas and strategies with members of other committees.
- Bike to Work/School week is coming up soon: Oct. 31 – Nov. 6. You are encouraged to visit <http://www.biketoworkmetrovan.ca/>, to learn more and register your team. The data gathered goes to municipal leaders and can help to promote cycling initiatives and infrastructure.
- SaltSpring Island- June 21-23, 2012 – 3 days of cycling fun on the island prior to Velo-City Conference in Van. Please set the days aside now!