



February 2, 2017

Vancouver Park Board Commissioners (by email)

Re: Bicycle and Pedestrian Paths in Kitsilano Beach Park

Dear Commissioners;

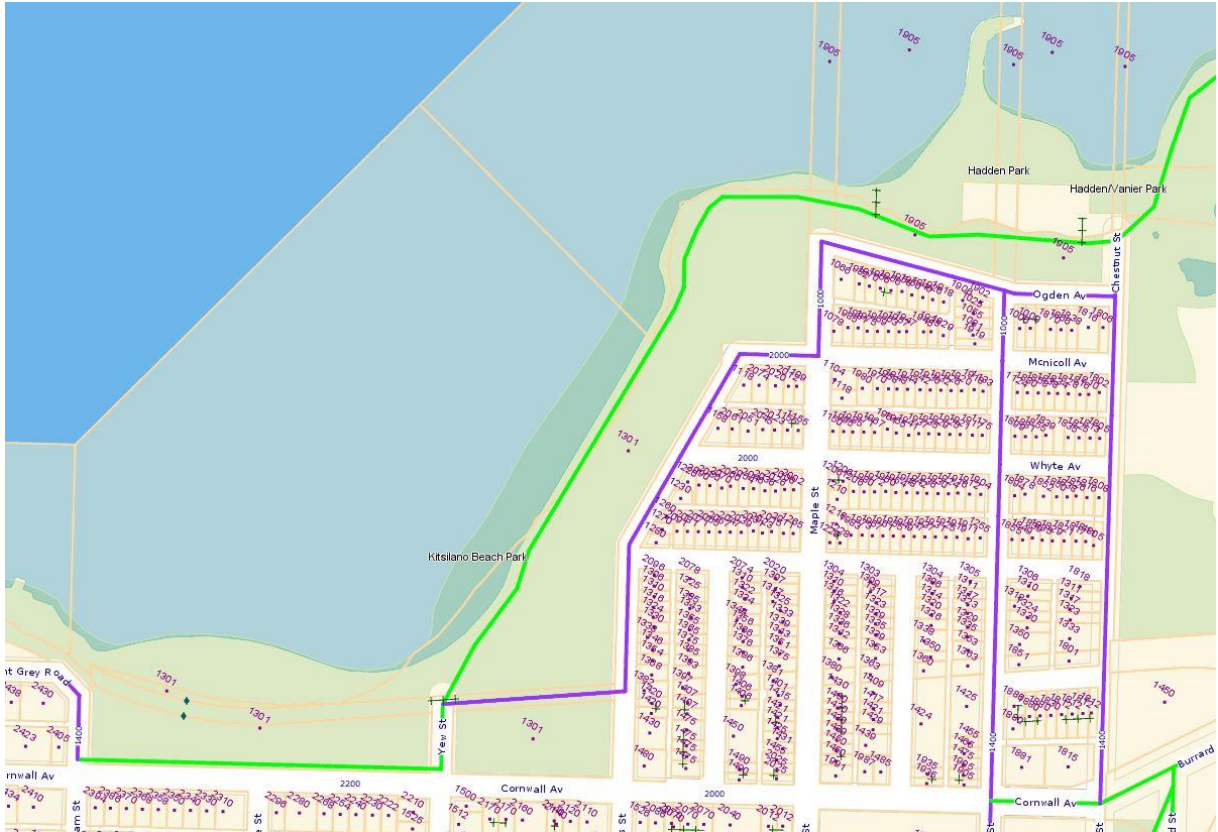
HUB Cycling is a charitable organization that works to make cycling better through education, events and collaboration. We are Metro Vancouver's leader in making cycling an attractive choice for everyone. In addition, the Vancouver UBC Local Committee of HUB Cycling has a Working Group of volunteers focused on the Seaside Greenway. We write today to follow up on the recent issue of "No Cycling" signs that were posted along the section of the Seaside Greenway within Kits Beach Park and Hadden Park. There are two key points we would like to make and some additional information we'd like to provide:

- 1) Thank you for the quick removal of the signs. As a senior citizen wrote to you, copying HUB Cycling, he "[does] NOT feel safe using the alternative route which is through a busy parking lot and along a very busy park-side street." The removal of the signs mean that he and his spouse can continue to cycle safely in the area.
- 2) We were copied on an email sent January 27th that was labelled "Confidential" and sent to you by Howard Kelsey. We have attached the email chain, below. HUB has serious concerns about the fact that Mr. Kelsey mentions that he and "several others have been working diligently in good faith with senior City / Park Board officials on a designated cycle lane(s) through Kits Point, hoping to soon help deliver an amicable solution for all Kits Beach users". HUB has been communicating with Park Board for years with concerns about this area and calling for a transparent public process to resolve the safety and comfort issues on the Seaside Greenway here. Our most recent letters on this matter area attached here. Mr. Kelsey's message as well as the fact that the "No Cycling" designation that suddenly appeared on the route apparently is supported by Mr. Kelsey and other groups copied on his email, indicate that a "confidential" process is being pursued by Park Board for this area. In our opinion, such a process would be a serious breach of trust for the Vancouver public which has a huge stake in this segment of the Seaside Greenway. Further to this point, we would like to know why your tweet (see below) of January 27th 2016 confirming the removal of the signs has since been deleted, along with other related tweets.

Vancouver Park Board @ParkBoard
in reply to HUB
[@WeAreHub](#) [@CityofVancouver](#)
[@ParkBoardWiebe](#) We spoke too soon -- the signs are now coming down! Thanks for your patience.

Additional Information to clarify misconceptions expressed in the email chain copied below:

Although some have opined that this path is in fact not a cycling path, that information is not consistent with the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data contained in VanMap, the City's public open data source. Not only is this route shown as a cycling path, but it is referenced in City Bylaw 2849, with a map. The GIS data is the source for the City's published bike maps, as well as multiple on line services such as Google Maps, Open Maps, etc. Please see the attached clip of the area in question, from VanMap, showing the on street and off street bike routes (purple, and green, respectively).



Until recently, there were also 15 km/hr signs posted for cyclists, erected by the Park Board along the path, further confirming the status. If the status changed through a new bylaw, or past actions of the Park Board, we would appreciate having a link to that decision, and to understand when the public consultation was held as part of making that decision. We agree with the commissioner who recently tweeted that any change to this bike path should include a public consultation. That should apply equally to a new bike path, or eliminating an old one, in our opinion.

We are aware of the posted Seaside Bypass route that exists on the roads through Kits Point. This path does not replace the path in the park. Just as with Charleson Park, and the South False Creek Seawall, the Seaside Bypass route provides an on-road alternative for faster and more confident cyclists. The benefit of further improving this alternate route is that it would attract some riders off the Kits Park beachfront path, thus reducing congestion

further. It should properly be signed as Seaside Bypass, not Seaside, to be consistent with other similar bypass routes in Vancouver.

The section in front of the restaurant at Kits Beach has been posted as a bicycle dismount zone using portable signs, during busy times when there were problems with congestion. We understand the reasons for that, but point out that those conditions do not exist at all times of the day or the year. We suggest learning from other groups in Vancouver that deal with similar situations, including the Dragon Boat festival held regularly at the foot of the Ontario bikeway along the False Creek Seawall. Temporary signs at that location were changed to include a bike symbol and the words "Proceed at Walking Speed" instead of instructing cyclists to dismount. We have found that these signs have better compliance, and accomplish the purpose of ensuring safety for people moving at different speeds. It isn't the act of riding a bike that can be dangerous, it is the potential speed differential between users when the path is congested. Similarly, we find that the 15 km/hr signs previously used are not generally effective, partly because bikes are not required to have speedometers. A sign indicating "Walking Speed when Path is Busy" or words to that effect provides a safer environment for all users. Until a more permanent solution is arrived at, it would be worth having such signs available for busy times. There are recently painted "No Cycling" signs on the pavement in that area that should be removed immediately as they are likely to result in unnecessary conflict between different park user groups as following the mapped bike route ride over them when the area isn't too busy. Mr. Kelsey makes note in his email of the conflicts that arise due to park user confrontations over the current signs.

We share your interest in providing a safe environment for all users. That includes park users on bicycles. The decision some years back to not provide upgraded safe and comfortable walking and cycling paths in this park area has left us in the situation whereby we are heading into the busy summer season, with the expectation of further conflicts between users. We believe that improvements to this outdated section of the Seaside Greenway need to be made from the Burrard Bridge through to the west side of Kits Beach Park. As we have seen with the recent process on the Seaside Greenway between the Cambie and Burrard Bridges, conducted jointly by Park Board and City Engineering staff, an excellent and transparent consultation and design process can result in a great improvement plan. This plan received strong support from local area residents, path users, City advisory groups, and Park Board commissioners alike. There is no reason why a similar approach cannot produce an equally positive outcome in the area west of the Burrard Bridge and we urge you to move forward with such a process as soon as possible.

We feel strongly that with the upcoming completion of the improved separated paths along the False Creek Seawall, the upcoming completion of the Seaside Greenway Phase II improvements along Point Grey Road, and the paving of the temporary path along the Arbutus Greenway, more people than ever will arrive in this area, looking to travel along the Seaside Greenway. Now is the time to address the shortcomings of these paths.

We note that some groups with ties to Kits Beach Park have been lobbying for an alternate route through this area, one we understand to be largely outside the park itself. Mr. Kelsey makes note of that work in an email in the attachment below. We believe that such advocacy

work would be far more likely to result in an excellent Seaside Greenway path if it included all stakeholders, and did not specifically exclude HUB Cycling, other active transportation groups and the public at large.

We remain committed to working collaboratively with you to improve conditions for all users in Kits Beach Park. We ask that you maintain the current multi use path along the beach, until an alternate path is constructed. If any change is to be made to existing paths, we ask that you enter a period of public consultation. If you convene meetings or workshops on this issue, we ask that you include HUB Cycling in your list of invitees.

Thank you for your work on this matter.

Jeff Leigh
Chair, Vancouver UBC Local Committee, HUB Cycling

cc: Malcolm Bromley, General Manager, Park Board
Howard Kelsey
Lynne Kent, Kits Point Residents Association

Attachments: Letter from HUB regarding removal of the No Cycling signs – Jan 26 2017
Email chain regarding letter on removal of the No Cycling signs – Jan 2017
Letter from HUB regarding path improvements near Balsam – Dec 7, 2016
Letter from David Hay regarding path improvements – Aug 16, 2016
Letter from HUB regarding Seaside Greenway paths – Aug 2, 2016