

Traffic Meeting Summary and Next Steps

December 2, 2016

Traffic concerns have been raised by many – we convened a public meeting on December 2nd. The City, Police & Josh Matlow attended, as did many concerned residents. Please review the following summary of the meeting and actions coming from the various parties.

Thank you for those who were able to join yesterday's meeting – we spent over 2 hours on the topic of traffic safety and heard from a number of concerned residents. Our aim to work together on a concerted plan to combat some these issues together. Our aim is to follow through and hold each other accountable on the items discussed so that we can demonstrate to the RARA membership that we are taking the concerns seriously and making best use of the solutions available. I will be in touch to book a follow-up meeting in late February – this will hopefully give all involved some time to push the actions forward.

Concern #1 – Safe Passage for Brown School Students

High-level overview

- Generally viewed to loud and dangerous to walk kids up Avenue Rd from the neighbourhood to Brown school, which means most opt to walk up Poplar Plains Rd.
- Heavy rush-hour traffic and speeding on Poplar Plains Rd. Made worse by the Mabin kiss & ride, construction & wrong way driving
- Lack of side walk on Poplar Plains Cres, made worse by cars parking on both sides
- No stop sign or cross walk means that we cannot have a crossing guard
- No sidewalk on the east side of Poplar Plains Rd – forcing kids to cross
- Net result is that parents do not feel that their kids can safely walk to our community school. There have been near misses – general sentiment is that this is getting worse & we have signed up over 50 families who are effective and looking help.

What is possible

- The residents of Poplar Plains Cres will not support a sidewalk as it would cut in to their properties and create a major project – we agreed not to continue to raise this as it would never get approval without their support.
- The City will need to explore the suitability of adding a stop sign at Poplar Plains Cres & Poplar Plains Rd – Some study would be required
- The City will also look in to a cross walk, though this was generally viewed as less likely to be accepted due to the flashing lights
- The City would investigate the status of adding a physical barrier at Poplar Plains Rd & Russel Hill Rd (this was raised by South Hill to prevent wrong way driving & near misses at that intersection.)
- We will also explore options for getting a crossing guard through the police service (would be unlikely before the cross walk)
- While enforcement is limited the police will visit the area when possible to show visible enforcement during the school walk

Actions Assigned

Troy – Will walk the route & begin the process of investigating options – We expect to hear back from Troy on likely timeline and the support he needs from RARA in the next two weeks.

Claire – Will contact Brown School to discuss the crossing guard situation, There is likely nothing immediate, but we want to ensure this in on their radar.

Claire – Will update the Parents concerned on the plan.

Kendra – To coordinate with the South Hill Association on their progress & reinforce the items related to Poplar Plains Road

Bert – To look at enforcement options during the morning Rush hour

Concern #2 – Speeding

- Speeding, especially on the East / West Streets is a concern
- We discussed that Bumps can only be added when sidewalks are present
- We heard some of the history of bumps not working, because they were too low
- We discussed Signage & the eventual possibility of Photo Radar in the neighbourhood because of Wynn's announcement
- We discussed, and eliminated more drastic measures, like creating dead-ends
- We discussed the limited effectiveness of 'please slow down signs'
- Enforcement is viewed as the best option – Constable Dean did share the investigation completed by Constable Swain
- Grace, Josef & Bill represented the Poplar Plain Cres neighbours and brought their signed petitions – these will be shared as part of any submissions made to the city

Actions Assigned

Blake – To continue to investigate new options such as photo radar & keep RARA up to date on what is possible

Blake – The source of so much of this issue is really the congestion on Avenue Rd leading to frustrated drivers – please do let us know what if anything is being considered for improving that situation

Troy – Walked the neighbourhood and saw first hand the signage issues. Please suggest game plans for better signage, Speed bumps on Cottingham & the first block of Poplar Plains Cres – again, we would like an update in 2 weeks time on what you expect is possible & what time frames any associated investigations, planning might take.

Bert – If there are opportunities to visit the neighbourhood for enforcement, please do so during the afternoon rush hour – We have asked for your team to report back to us at the highest level on the results of any enforcement

Kendra – We discussed reinforcing better behavior from residents through communication – we will feature a series in our upcoming newsletters to drive home the point

Concern #3 – Wrong way Driving

- We went through options related to signage Improvements, including in the lanes and at the corners
- We discussed the physical barrier suggested for the corner of Rathnelly & Macpherson and review renderings
- We raised a desire for exploring other locations where a barrier could be employed (Cottingham & Rathnelly perhaps)
- It was raised that the expectation had been set that the island at Macpherson & Poplar Plains Rd would be extended to prevent illegal turns
- We spoke about the commercial tenants and their employees being a big part of the problem on MacPherson with high-speed reversing
- It was generally agreed that enforcement was the best option, though by this stage in the meeting we had heard numerous times that the resources for enforcement are extremely limited with only 1 traffic cop on duty for all of 53rd at any one time.

Actions Assigned

Troy – As a priority, we would like to move forward with the next steps for the bump out at Macpherson & Rathnelly – please come back to RARA with what is required to confirm community support & make this happen. We want to fully understand the impacts to parking on Rathnelly.

Troy / Blake – follow up on the Island at Macpherson & Poplar Plains Rd – sounds like this was last with Randy. We want to see this completed as agreed.

Troy – to come back with further options for signage & physical barriers – again we will want to associated timelines and actions needing RARA's support

Bert – To look in to enforcement, especially on Macpherson & Rathnelly

Kendra / RARA – to approach owners of businesses on Macpherson to discuss the impact of the wrong way driving and concerns related to parking

Concern #4 Drivers missing Stop Signs

- Josh commented on how common this issue was with up to 80% of drivers rolling through stop signs
- Pippa shared some created walk-way painting seen in Cabbagetown
- We talked through examples where stop signs were not well placed and hard to see
- Specific concern was raised on the dangerous intersections with Rathnelly

Actions Assigned

Troy – Follow up on sign fixes & painting of our lines

Troy – to investigate if there is a way to add painted walkways as well

Troy - Study the Rathnelly / Macpherson & Rathnelly Cottingham intersections to see what can be done to make them safer

Bert – to add this to the list for any upcoming enforcement

Concern #5 Hardy's Corner / sidewalk driving / Rathnelly Parking

- We discussed the negative impact of ongoing construction of the residence at Rathnelly & Macmaster – and the illegal parking associated with it – some context was shared on the limits related to the Building permit & issues causing such an extended delay
- We discuss the impact of Rathnelly having parking on the west side, making it a one-lane street and the fact that doing away with that parking is not an option, nor is turning Rathnelly in to a one way street – as there would not be necessary support from residents – we agreed not to pursue these options
- We discussed bollards to block people going on the sidewalk, but concluded that with the road being so narrow and the occasional time needing trucks to go on the sidewalk, this was not ideal
- This landed on enforcement & communication with neighbours
- We discussed issues with the Green P and the need to reinstate the day rate

Action Assigned

Bert – to connect Kendra with the Parking enforcement lead so that we can further discuss parking enforcement on Rathnelly (mid day for the 1-hour parking) and enforcement on trades

RARA – to explore Creating a list of parking spots for rent / lease that could be shared with the businesses on Macpherson – trying to alleviate illegal parking

Kendra – To contact the parking authority to discuss changes to the rates at the green P

Blake – to update RARA on the progress related to the construction delays & anything the community can do to help resolve the associated effects of this work & the trades parking nearby

Bert – any enforcement on this concern is best between the hours 8 -10am or 5-7pm

Troy – to walk this section and make suggestions on how to improve drivers visibility, ability to yield, etc.

Other items raised:

- Claire raised concern about the crossing guard at Avenue & Cottingham for the Cottingham School kids – Bert, please connect me to Constable Lau
- Josh raised recommendation that we do not rush to actions that create the impression of safety, but instead focus on the best solutions long term
- Generally it was noted that these issues have been on the agenda for years, going back to 1976 in fact and that follow through was not likely – we all agreed to holding each other accountable and to working together to change that reality.
- Troy and a few residents walked the neighbourhood following the meeting so that he could see for himself the issues that were discussed. (please send the summary of that walk to me so that I can add it to the above)
- Kendra would like to work with Josh & Staff Sergeant Moyer on raising the lack of enforcement up the chain – we realize this is not a simple topic, but would be willing to work with you to get more visibility for what is clearly a service gap today!