

PRESENTATION TO CITY COUNCIL, COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE · Nancy Mitchell
MARCH 14 2016

Concerned that the Newcastle Brechin Neighbourhood plan is being ignored; that we are way behind on the implementation of its policies and strategies; and that community input is not seen as a priority.

Plan was adopted a part of the City Official Plan in May 2011

One of the Plan's short term action items was the preparation of a comprehensive street plan for Terminal, Estevan and Stewart in order to provide efficient pedestrian and vehicular access through the neighbourhood (policy, page 40; action item, page 140)

We now have three engineering projects being carried out by the city that affect this action item in the Neighbourhood Plan:

1. The analysis and design of road and sewer upgrades to Terminal Avenue is underway;
2. Some design decisions have already been made about Townsite at Terminal in another project.
3. Estevan is also proposed for some safety upgrades after a death at a crosswalk in December.

I'm going to talk about Terminal Avenue and Mike Harrison is going to talk about Estevan.

The Newcastle Brechin Neighbourhood Plan has some excellent policies that relate to Terminal Avenue regarding enhancement of the street character to provide for greater pedestrian and bicycle safety and giving priority to crosswalks, landscaping and other traffic calming measures. (page 41).

But while the plan has some good policies, some of its strategies fall short when it comes to the reality of implementation and this may be hampering the Engineering department in its vision of what is possible on Terminal Avenue. For example, let's face the facts:

1. This portion of Terminal Avenue (particularly between Townsite & Cypress) will never become the shopping "high street" envisioned in the plan.
2. The back lanes proposed in the plan to support a shopping street will never be built and their implementation was not even supported by the community.
3. This portion of Terminal Avenue will also never support on-street parking which is another strategy recommended in the plan to calm traffic.
4. Contrary to what City engineering staff might think, the neighbourhood plan did not envision a "road widening project" along Terminal Avenue. (email from: Phil Stewart, Feb 17 2016)

Therefore, what can we possibly do to achieve the policies in the plan in a realistic manner?

What we can do is make it safer for pedestrians now ... this should be a key goal for the community, the city and the engineering department. With this engineering work underway, we have a once in a lifetime opportunity to effect some change in the relatively near future and reduce the anxiety for pedestrians along Terminal Avenue. If we wait for property redevelopment to occur ... we will be waiting forever. **Therefore, I ask that the following questions be the subject of immediate community consultation:**

1. How and where can we widen the sidewalk on Terminal Avenue between Stewart and St George so there is a safety strip type boulevard between the pedestrians and the cars?
2. There were two locations identified in the neighbourhood plan for possible crosswalks across Terminal Avenue at: Rosehill and at Mount Benson. For some reason, this engineering RFP only refers to the Rosehill and Terminal crosswalk. Is there some rational for ignoring Mount Benson?
3. How do we coordinate the current project on the Townsite/ Terminal/ Vancouver intersections with the Terminal Ave project?

City Council
☒ Committee of the Whole
☒ Open Meeting
☐ In-Camera Meeting
Agenda Date: 2016-MAR-14
Supplemental

In 2011, after two years of thought and planning, the Brechin/Newcastle Neighbourhood Plan was adopted into the OCP. Included in that Plan, we envisioned a more attractive and slower Estevan Road.

Estevan Road was originally planned to be an arterial road with 4 lanes of traffic. As traffic trends have developed, Estevan is no longer required as an arterial but 4 lanes of traffic remain partway along Estevan and vehicles drive too quickly along this stretch which also includes a sharp curve at the southern end, where visibility is poor. Estevan Road has crosswalks, but because of the speed of the traffic there have been numerous close calls, and now a pedestrian was hit and killed in a crosswalk at Estevan and Larch. Tragically the person killed was a member of our planning team.

The Neighbourhood Plan describes Estevan as an attractive 2 lane road with pedestrian amenities. The 2 lane road with curbside parking would slow traffic down and make a safer road.

Contained in the Neighbourhood Plan is an Implementation Strategy for ongoing development of the Plan which states: "create and implement a comprehensive pedestrian Connectivity Plan for the neighbourhood and initiate planning sessions with Neighbourhood associations". In 5 years we have not had any ongoing planning sessions. We were informed about redevelopment to Estevan through the newspaper. We used to be informed by staff about upcoming developments.

We want timely and more inclusive information about development in our neighbourhood.

Michael Harrison
Brechin Hill Com. Assoc.