

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – JUNE 23, 2009

ENSURING PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ALONG A PORTION OF REGIONAL ROAD 7 – WARD 2

Recommendation

Councillor Tony Carella recommends:

1. That the attached letter---from Mr Luigi Tucci, Chair, Holy Cross Catholic Academy School Council, regarding the impact of the cessation of school bus service between the Kipling South neighbourhood and the school---be received, and
2. That Engineering staff be directed to meet with appropriate staff of the Region of York, to discuss the placement of pedestrian safety barriers along the south side of Regional Road 7 in the vicinity of Rainbow Creek prior to the commencement of the school year on September 8, 2009, and
3. That as part of the 2010 capital budget process, a feasibility study be conducted to determine the cost of developing a pathway or trail from the entrance to the open space at the intersection of Angelina Avenue and Sara Street, through the open space to the west, across Rainbow Creek at the most appropriate location, and through the open space on the far side of the creek, ending in the general vicinity of the Ontario Soccer Centre, Vaughan Grove Park, and Holy Cross Academy.

Contribution to Sustainability

Any initiative that encourages pedestrian travel is a contribution to sustainability.

Economic Impact

Nil

Communication Plan

Corporate Communications will issue a media release once this recommendation is adopted by Council

Background – Analysis and Options

The York Catholic District School Board recently wrote separate school supporters living in the Kipling South neighbourhood, informing them that the busing of students from Kipling South to Holy Cross Academy on Martin Grove Road would be discontinued as of September 2009. According to the circular (see attachments), the distance from the neighbourhood to the school is such that the continuation of busing would be in contravention of board policy, notwithstanding the fact that the cessation is not the result of a change in board policy.

The parents of Holy Cross students are concerned that the cessation of bussing will expose to danger those children who will be walking to school along Regional Road 7, especially along that portion of the roadway that traverses Rainbow Creek where the boulevard and the sidewalk are especially narrow. They are thus requesting that pedestrian safety barriers be erected at this location, in time for the start of the school

year on September 8, 2009.

In light of the recent tragic death of a secondary school student as a result of a "freak" vehicular accident at an intersection in Ward 3 where the victim was waiting to cross a signalized intersection, the concerns of the petitioners---about the safety of children walking along a busy regional road where the roadway narrows to four lanes from six and speeding traffic is often "squeezed" as a result---cannot be viewed as unreasonable.

In addition, it has been suggested that a long-term solution to the problem may lie in the construction a pedestrian walkway or trail, linking the neighbourhood---from the entrance to the open space at the west end of the subdivision (near the intersection of Angelina Avenue and Sara Street), through the open space, across Rainbow Creek, and continuing through the open space along the west side of the creek to the Ontario Soccer Centre, Holy Cross Academy, and Vaughan Grove Park. In discussion of this potential solution, the City of Vaughan's commitment to the development of pedestrian and bikeway systems in two official plan amendments can be cited:

OPA No. 240 (the Woodbridge Community Plan) states "A system of pedestrian walkways/bicycle paths linking the park system, school and open space lands, and providing connections to major facilities shall be provided, the precise location being determined at the subdivision approval stage."

OPA No. 700 (on Open Spaces) states "A network of pedestrian and bicycle paths shall be located within the greenway corridors incorporated into Block plans, with linkages between neighbourhoods to ultimately create a continuous system throughout Vaughan."

In the view of many of the residents, they live in a "land-locked" neighbourhood. Their only vehicular exit is via Kipling Avenue at Regional Road 7, and when, as some assert, the plan for their neighbourhood was developed, a walkway from the Kipling Parkette to Vaughan Grove Park was included. In their view, a walkway/bicycle path will improve the neighbourhood in many ways and increase the options for safe travel around their community.

To that end, a feasibility study is in order, especially as the topography on the west side of Rainbow Creek will present a significant challenge in respect of the location of any crossing and the height of the tableland on the west side of the creek.

Regional Implications

As the highway in question is a regional road, and as the Region of York has addressed similar concerns in other parts of Vaughan (e.g., along the south side of Major Mackenzie Drive, west of St. David's Church in Maple), the participation of the Region will be key to addressing the concerns of the residents of the Kipling South Area.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Conclusion

Valid concerns regarding pedestrian safety have been raised by residents of the community and action is required.

Attachments

Letter of Luigi Tucci, Chair, Holy Cross Catholic Academy School Council
York Catholic District School Board: Important Notice/Transportation Service Changes for
September 2009

Report prepared by:

Councillor Tony Carella, FRSA

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Carella, FRSA
Councillor – Ward 2

Holy Cross School Council
Holy Cross Catholic Academy
7501 Martin Grove Rd.
Woodbridge L4L 1A5
holycrossschoolcouncil@hotmail.com

May 21, 2009

Mayor Linda Jackson
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario
L6A 1T1

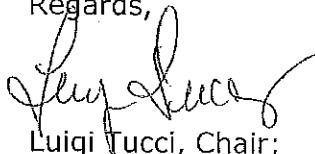
Dear Mayor Jackson:

RE: SAFETY ISSUES FOR STUDENTS WALKING ALONG HIGHWAY#7

York Catholic District School Board Trustees recently voted to eliminate busing to Holy Cross Catholic Academy from the Kipling and Highway 7 area. The elimination of busing affects 125 Holy Cross Students. Many parents have expressed concern with this change, primarily with respect to the safety of students. The only walking route available to students takes them along side Highway 7, between Kipling Avenue and Woodstream Blvd. This sidewalk is very close to the road, with virtually no easement. There are no barricades, such as those along the north side of Highway 7 between Islington and Kipling. And, there are numerous trucks and cars travelling at a high rate of speed along Highway 7, despite the 60 km. speed limit. Further, there has been an application to build a 17-storey condominium on the south-west corner of Kipling and Highway 7. If this application, or some variant of that application, is approved, construction will increase the safety issues that our students will face.

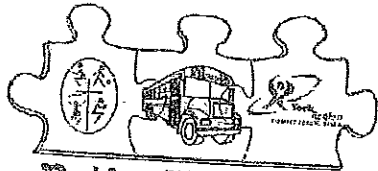
We ask that you review the current state of Highway 7 and consider adding pedestrian barricades between the road and the sidewalk, as well as develop the previously-proposed pathway between the Kipling Parkette and Martingrove Regional Park. Safety is our primary concern and the elimination of buses in our area without regard to improvements in infrastructure is hasty. Please ensure that our students have a safe route to school.

Regards,



Luigi Tucci, Chair;
Angela Nimpo, Treasurer; Lynn Amanda Di Iorio, Secretary Holy Cross Catholic Academy School Council.

cc: : Mario Ferri, Regional Councillor; Joyce Frustaglio, Regional Councillor; Gino Rosati, Regional Councillor; Tony Carella, Councillor; Nick Pinto, West Woodbridge Homeowners Association; Lucien Rotino, Principal, Holy Cross; Mary Cosentino, Superintendent, YCDSB; Dino Giuliani, School Board Trustee, YCDSB.



Better Together!
Student Transportation Services of York Region

320 Bloomington Road West
Aurora, Ontario L4G 3G8
FAX: 905-713-2533
Web site: www.schoolbuscity.com

Important Notice: Transportation Service Changes for September 2009

A recent review of service levels in the Holy Cross boundary have identified several areas that have historically been provided with transportation that are not consistent with Board policy.

In order to qualify for regular transportation to their school of enrolment, the YCDSB Transportation Policy indicates any Grade 9 – 12 students must:

- **Live within the school's boundary area**
- **Live further than 4.8 km from their school**

Students who live within their school's boundary area and are further than 4.8 kms from school are eligible for regular transportation. Students who live within 4.8 kms from school are not eligible for regular transportation. In some circumstances transportation may have been provided in the past due to other circumstances, such as no access to public transit.

Effective September 2009, school bus transportation will no longer be provided to Holy Cross students who utilize the following bus stop locations.

<u>Route Stop Description</u>	<u>Route Stop Description</u>
✓3112 8040 Kipling Ave	✓3140 Clarence and Rosebury Lane
✓3112 Kipling and Coles	✓3140 Ellerby Square E. and Rainbow
✓3112 Nadia and Kipling	✓3140 Ellerby Square W. and Kipling
✓3112 Nadia and Angelina	✓3140 Veneto and Dalmato
✓3112 Angelina and Coles	✓3140 192 Veneto
✓3113 Wallace and Woodbridge	✓3140 Kipling and Villagewood
✓5261 Cheltenham and Kipling	✓3140 Veneto and Starview
✓5261 26 Bruce Street	

A service alternative for parents and students is to access York Region Transit at www.yorkregiontransit.com or dial 1-866-668-3978 for further information.

Further information may be found by going to the following link: "Understanding Transportation Services", <http://www.schoolbuscity.com/UT.pdf>. This notification is being sent to all affected families to ensure understanding of the Board Policy and to provide you the opportunity to adjust your routines for September 2009.

Should you require further clarification please contact the school or Student Transportation Services at 905-713-2535.

Thank you for your co-operation.