

To Director of Roads: City of Greater Sudbury.

I attended the Minnow Lake CAN meeting this past Thursday August 14th in my capacity as President of the Minnow Lake Restoration Group, one of the two parties who requested a Part Two Order with in response to an MOE Order of Completion notice with respect to the Second Avenue Project.

It was obvious from audience response to your presentation that while some were in favour of the “five lane” proposal there remained a number of concerns expressed by others including environmental aspects, actual need, cost relative to benefit, plus considerable interest with respect to a roundabout instead of the proposed signaled intersection.

A few of our submitted questions were answered but many were not and we will bring some of these to your attention again in this correspondence and attached.

Some presentation points we would question.

While you agreed that the reconstructed road surface area would be close to three times more than at present, you argued that the overall effect would be not significant considering the whole watershed area involved. However we maintain that this is another example of “death by a thousand cuts” to our major recreational and drinking water source. You acknowledged that no remedial storm water measures were planned for the project and that none could be guaranteed in the future. Therefore our concern as expressed in this regard to the MOE remains.

The project you felt did not qualify for MOE Schedule C status. You mentioned a figure of \$850,000 for road work out of the over six and a half million dollar project. That was the amount quoted to council for the value of road work for the approved second phase of the project which was estimated at a million and a half dollars. The road work for the first phase would be around two and a half million dollars according to what you had advised us earlier, less than what you previously indicated was the 2.7 million inflation adjusted figure required for Schedule C. However, with the added second phase project expense, the total for road work would appear to be approximately three and a half million for the entire project which would qualify for Schedule C consideration?

As you are aware, many projects that involve road widening and new signaled intersections are recognized as Schedule C endeavors. A recent example from the City of Brampton: “The City of Brampton has initiated a Class Environmental Assessment Study of (Name of Project). As part of this study, a number of alternatives will be examined as part of the study including the potential widening of (Name of roadway) to four lanes, cross-sectional elements, and intersection improvements including traffic operations and signalization, and the overall impact on the social, cultural and natural environments”. This is what we would have expected for this project and still feel is necessary.

Many questions that we submitted went unanswered, in particular those concerning traffic flows now and predicted (see attached). One of the reasons given for the road expansion was new housing developments and population growth. While new residential developments are planned for the area east of Second Avenue it would seem that three signaled intersections at the Kingsway could more conveniently serve these developments?

The question of how much traffic flows through from Third Avenue and other cross streets to Second was not answered. To get some idea for ourselves we sampled traffic on Second Avenue at the Scarlet Intersection and also at Highgate and Kenwood on Third Avenue. As far as could be determined there was little flow through traffic. You can check the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hdLq0LDomUU> which was recorded recently during “rush hour” on Second at Scarlet. Note the large truck using the small strip mall parking lot

which will under the current plan become the major parking area. Also note the considerable mall activity which will be impacted by the proximity of the new roadway, a figure you did not supply, however you did indicate the five lane roadway would be up to 12 feet closer to one of the local social housing units, which we regard as an environmental consideration with respect to air quality.

Examples were provided of road widening throughout the city, however virtually all were on major roadways and none on secondary arteries such as Second Avenue. To save costs a number of municipalities (Waterloo as an example) are reducing road widths and creating roundabouts for their many advantages, including especially cost. Overall population growth in Sudbury, according to city planners is not expected to be significant over the next several decades and already lower growth figures have reduced city revenues and put pressure on budgets including roads which is the largest city financial expenditure.

While you admitted the many benefits of a roundabout you felt a two lane version would be necessary due to peak traffic volumes, therefore the expense would be too great and too much area taken up, two factors that we question. Nevertheless, a single lane roundabout can accommodate up to 26,000 vehicles per day, far in excess of any reasonable projection, but could experience congestion during rush hours. However “metered” signals operating as needed during these times can actually increase roundabout capacity. The cost for these signals would be far less than a regular signaled intersection. While extensively used in other countries they are not common in North America, however recognizing one of our cities core value statements of “encouraging innovation and accepting risks” this would be an opportunity to positively demonstrate this value and consideration of another option for this project.

In summary we remain convinced that our expressed concerns demonstrate the need for a part two order for this project or a recommendation for a Schedule C review to consider environmental aspects and alternative design concepts for preferred solutions.

Respectfully,

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