

Lionel Rudd, John Gaul, John Lindsay and Tom Price of Sudbury Citizens for Safety meet with a City of Greater Sudbury representative of the Road Safety Committee, together with an officer of the Sudbury Police Service and Councillor Mikael Vagnini on Wednesday Feb. 14th at Tom Davies Square.

The purpose of the meeting was to present the mandate of Sudbury Citizens for Safety and to discuss a number of issues the group feels relate to Road Safety including the possible introduction of red-light cameras, photo radar, electronic signage and road salt. The value of having a citizen representative on the Road Safety Committee was explored.

It was explained by Joe Rocco of the City representing the Road Safety Committee that their primary goal was citizen awareness and education, and that the Committee made up of various organizations including the police and health unit was not a committee of the city and does not report to council.

With respect to red-light cameras and photo radar it was revealed that progress is being made at the provincial level with respect to implementation and that most likely portable photo radar units would be employed initially to control excessive speeding. No indication as to where and when red-light cameras might be put into place. It could be several months, possibly even 2019 before any decisions are made by City Council to move forward towards implementation of either photo radar or red-light cameras. The police service endorse this initiative.

Considerable discussion took place with regards to the possible distraction to drivers caused by large electronic "bill board" signs now at various locations throughout the city. Particular concern with respect to the brightness of the signs which can cause drivers to have difficulty adjusting to night time environment after viewing the signs. Most messages contain too much information to be absorbed in a quick glance. It is recognized that taking drivers eyes off the road for more than just two or three seconds can be hazardous with sideswipe accidents being noted in various jurisdictions due to drifting from one lane to another while viewing the signs. Mr. Rocca is also on the Sign-By Law committee which is currently reviewing by-laws with respect to signage in the city and said he would address this matter with the committee.

The matter of road salt usage was briefly discussed with concerns related to road salt to keep roadways clear as mandated by the legislation. This is an important issue that is receiving attention not only locally, but in Canadian and US municipalities. It was felt that the Road Safety Committee could be involved in awareness and education with respect to safe driving on salted road ways and if salt use is restricted what affect this might have on driving behavior and safety.

Some time was spent in analysis of road safety, including not only driver behaviour but structural and systemic concerns. This included road way and vehicle design and primary accident causes, such as swerving to avoid a large pothole resulting in a collision with another vehicle. The driver would be charged with an infraction, but the accident may not have taken place had their not been a pothole. Different vehicles have dissimilar controls (lights – wipers etc.) which can cause confusion and potential loss of attention and control. Road ways in urban settings should be designed to limit speeds etc.

It was suggested that the Road Safety Committee have a broader mandate to include other aspects of Road Safety such as those discussed and Sudbury Citizens for Safety is willing to be involved.

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Attachments: Mandate of SCFS, Photo Radar, Electronic Signs, Road Salt Usage.