

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Letter to Council: Full safety evaluation needed of Dundas alley

From: Harry Shannon
Sent: June-26-17 5:17 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca; Pilon, Janet
Subject: Letter to Council: Full safety evaluation needed of Dundas alley

Please include this in the package of correspondence for the Council meeting on Wednesday.

Thank you.

Harry Shannon

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

In the letter I sent earlier for inclusion as correspondence for the Council meeting on June 28, I thought I was clear. However, Councillor VanderBeek has replied, and it seemed she missed my main point. So I am sending this follow-up to try to make my point clearer.

Councillor VanderBeek stated safety was a major concern. I can't imagine anyone having an argument with that. But the issue is the *overall* safety in the area, especially any displaced risks resulting from the closure of the alley. Removing the risk on Alma is all very well, but if the result is an increase in risk elsewhere, you need to be sure that *overall* you haven't made the problem worse. I appreciate the changes made on Sydenham to improve safety. But, as I noted, the situation for cyclists has certainly been worsened.

Councillor VanderBeek stated the posts currently on Sydenham will be removed. I had heard that, but not 'officially', so I simply wrote about the current situation. But she now tells me that the longer-term 'solution' is to widen the sidewalk on the east side of Sydenham. This only means that the problem for cyclists – the narrower lane on Sydenham – will be made permanent!

To paraphrase what Councillor VanderBeek herself wrote: What do you think would happen if in the event of a tragic accident on Sydenham, the City – who have now been made aware of the problem for cyclists – had still insisted on preventing cyclists from using the alley? Why, a lawyer could argue, if you were so concerned about safety at the end of the alley on Alma, didn't you leave the alley open, put in stop signs and a crosswalk at the Alma end of the alley, and forbid vehicles from stopping within 10 metres of the signs?

Now I'm not claiming this is necessarily the best answer. I am simply urging Council to hit the pause button and fully evaluate all alternatives to closing the alley.

The vulnerability of child cyclists was tragically illustrated only a couple of hours after Councillor VanderBeek wrote back to me, with life-threatening injuries to an 11-year old cyclist in the east end. And notably, the police stated that neither speed nor driver impairment were factors.

So please, suspend this decision and make sure you are doing the right thing before it's too late.

Harry Shannon