

Clerk's Note: Participation will be held electronically due to COVID-19 pandemic. Delegations have been notified of the virtual Council Meeting process and a maximum of 5 minutes shall be allotted for each delegation to present his/her position of support or opposition to the relevant item on the Agenda.

Below is the list of delegates appearing before Council regarding the Specialty/Non-Traditional Crosswalk Policy Report (PW-06-2021).

1. Loi & Fong Tran, Attending Via Zoom
2. Ian Swentek, Attending Via Zoom

Attached are the written submissions provided by residents (listed below) that were notified of the Specialty/Non-Traditional Crosswalk Policy Report (PW-06-2021).

- Loi & Fong Tran, Attending Via Zoom and Provided Written Submission
- Ian Swentek, Attending Via Zoom and Provided Written Submission
- Jeremy Palko, Provided Written Submission

To: Mayor Marc Bondy
Deputy Mayor Crystal Meloche
Councillor Mike Akpata
Councillor Mark Carrick
Councillor Sue Desjarlais
Councillor Jeff Renaud
Councillor Anita Riccio-Spagnuolo
Chief Administrative Officer: Joe Milicia
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer: Peter Marra
Director of Council Services/Clerk: Agatha Robertson
Legal Counsel: Dominic Dadalt
Director of Development and Strategic Initiatives: Larry Silani
Director of Corporate Communications and Promotions Office: Dawne Hadre

March 16, 2021

Dear LaSalle Town Council and Administration:

REVIEW of PW-06-2021 dated March 15, 2021

We are very disappointed that our concerns submitted and presented on February 9, 2021 to have transparency, equity and common good for all residents had not been addressed in the PW-06-2021 report dated March 15, 2021. **We are respectfully asking the Town Council not to accept or approve the PW-06-2021.** We request that the council reconsider these concerns and address them so that the specialty/ non-traditional crosswalk policy – SNTCP will be fair and equitable.

Since the last town meeting on February 9, we had opportunities to review the presentations made by Mr. Marra, Dr. Ian Swentek and subsequent input from Mr. Mayor, the councilors and everyone else as well as the town meeting summary regarding the amendments of the policy.

We acknowledge the LaSalle Council and Administration have addressed a few items we listed out in ours and others written submissions included in the addendum for the February 9, 2021 meeting, however, we did not see the majority of them addressed at all. We would like to bring them to your attention again and respectfully request that these be carefully given consideration in your decision.

Section 2:7 and 2.9 of Exhibit 2 -The lack of equality and cause for disunity

“No proposal will be approved that represents commercial, religious or political organizations.”

“No proposal or markings shall be those of trademarked symbols or words.”

Anyone who has followed this policy development would recognize that the town is emphatically willing to exclude proposals from any religious organizations and their messages/symbols but yet willing to accept LGBTQ organizations and their symbols. That is in fact an act of systematic discrimination and experience has shown that it will lead to disunity and resentments in communities.

It is therefore not an equitable policy. As previously voiced, we now again recommend a stipulation be added to section 2.7 to include organizations with **ideological or moral causes** and that any proposal promoting only a group based **on their race, colour, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation and language** will not be accepted.

We have read the **Council code of conduct policy G-Gen-003** where it said members of council **shall at all times seek to advance the common good of the community which they serve**. We think this is one of those times that the council can display such integrity for the sake of the town.

Section 2.0 Initiation process:

There is still a lack of protection for the town from any potential lawsuit as a result of a specialty crosswalk. We recommend the SNTCP must ensure LaSalle is indemnified from any liabilities arising from lawsuits due to any painted crosswalk.

Section 4.7: First come first serve policy

We have a concern with this point of the policy on potential conflict of interest based on the sequence of events that have already transpired and came to light when the media made public the news of the Rainbow Crosswalk in LaSalle in October 2020. We believe the community was not made aware at the time that the main crosswalk of the town was available for application and the Rainbow proposal was ready for the council approval without public consultation.

We recommend the town communicate the availability of the crossings to the public first and allow for a period of time for the applications to be submitted. This would eliminate potential for conflict of interest or misuse of position and/or authority.

SNTCP lacks public consultation during application and finalization processes.

Both Dr. Ian Swentek's and our submissions for the February 9 meeting stated the importance for community consultation and acceptance to ensure fairness and unity of the community. Also as mentioned below, the city of Windsor stressed in its policy the

importance for the applicants to involve the community to get its support and acceptance of 60% to be considered as a successful application.

It would be disappointing if a smaller community such as ours missed this opportunity to implement its strategic goal for strengthening LaSalle community's engagement with the Town.

We strongly recommend that public consultation be included in the policy with adequate time for feedback before further work be done and proposal approved.

Questions on the reasons for City of Windsor Street Space Painted crosswalk policy not used in SNTCP development.

In Mr. Marra's presentation on February 9, 2021, he mentioned that the town was able to obtain the City of Windsor policy but the town did not consider it in the development of LaSalle's policy citing that the City of Windsor's policy has not been used to date and opted to follow the lead from City of London's policy instead.

From our research, the City of Windsor's policy had been in place with **no known disunity or contentions from the general public since February 2019.**

Please see the link below for the City of Windsor policy and how it is effectively communicated with the public in a non-biased, fair and equitable manner.

<https://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/Culture/Pages/Street-Space.aspx>

<https://citywindsor.ca/residents/Culture/Documents/Street%20Space%20Program%20Guidelines.pdf>

Mr. Marra cited that the City of Windsor Policy has not been used to date which we find contradictory to the newspaper article of Feb 5, 2019 where at least three different proposals were awaiting to get out the gate as long as it satisfies the framework within the policy as cited by Mayor Drew Dilkens. Did Mr. Marra mean to indicate that no special crosswalk proposal was approved on its city streets as none has met its qualification process? (The only two Rainbow Crosswalks in Windsor are on private property at the University of Windsor)

Here is the link to newspaper article about the city of Windsor policy

<https://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/city-approves-new-policy-for-painted-crosswalks/wcm/fcfa12cd-d5b7-43f3-848a-fd4eba7d16d6/amp/>

Mr. Marra indicated LaSalle SNTCP most resembles the City of London policy for specialty crosswalks (We were not able to locate this specific policy on the internet and found only the Complete Streets Design Manual – City of London dated August 5, 2018). We know that the city of London has implemented a few Rainbow crosswalks.

It appears that the town's choice of which policy to adopt depends on whether or not it would produce predetermined outcomes. If that is the case the premise for LaSalle's SNTC Policy development is biased and would not enhance the public confidence in our local government.

We are very thankful for Mayor Bondy and the council decision in asking for a policy to be developed in October 2020 and be revised in February 2021 and we are asking that the above points be considered and adopted. However, if LaSalle is unable to develop a policy that is truly unbiased, fair and equitable, then we respectfully ask the council to reject this Policy completely.

We understand that developing a SNTCP is no small task, but in the long run a good policy can save everyone (both the Requestor and residents) a lot of grief, and precious resources. This is a worthy exercise even if it only plays a very small part in achieving the LaSalle 2050 Strategic Goals. Our town of LaSalle Vision for the next 30 years can only be achieved through collaborations with the whole community.

May our fine Town of Lasalle thrive on its excellency in service at the helm of our current administration and council.

Thank you again for your time and service to our community.

Respectfully,

Loi and Fong Tran

To: Mayor Marc Bondy
Deputy Mayor Crystal Meloche
Councillor Mike Akpata
Councillor Mark Carrick
Councillor Sue Desjarlais
Councillor Jeff Renaud
Councillor Anita Riccio-Spagnuolo

March 18, 2021

Regarding PW-06-2021 and the proposed Specialty/Non-Traditional Crosswalk Policy

Dear Mr. Mayor Bondy, Mrs. Deputy Mayor Meloche, and Lasalle Town Councillors,

I continue to advocate for the complete rejection of any specialty/non-traditional crosswalk policy; Option 3 as listed in report PW-06-2021. Disallow any special interest group from foisting their symbols, objectives, and sub-culture upon our fine community. Having already communicated my position and provided much logical and systematic reasoning toward this conclusion, I will not repeat my previous statements. Instead I present new arguments and considerations that should allow you to come to similar conclusion.

First, thank you for considering some of the past concerns. Requiring any request to be originating from our town, adding term limits, and clarifying the financial requirements are an improvement, but not a full solution. The policy continues to be vague, insufficient, and continues to drive toward disunity. However, since the administration appears determined to enact such a policy, I have again provided several proposed amendments to minimize the societal damage.

What is the motivation for a specialty crosswalk policy? Has the community come forth with singular voice to indicate that this is needed or required for us to grow in unity? If the community supports this decision, why is my voice not being drowned out by the mass of people speaking in favor of such a policy – where is the realized support? And

speaking of unity, why can a specialty crosswalk be approved by the town engineer without any community input? Also, as stemming from the 9-February town council, the argument that 'other communities have done it' is a bandwagon fallacy – we need to independently and soundly determine what is best for our town based on the people living here.

I am curious how the town council selects which policies will best engage the community in a positive manner, and which will cause more harm than good. For example, if a single resident arose to dispute a policy, would the town listen? What about two or three residents? At what point would the council follow the voice of the community? I would argue that there has already been sufficient negative feedback by the absolute number of people speaking against this policy, the relative number compared to those speaking in favor, and by the total word count of all letters written to council as a reflection of the time and commitment to oppose this issue. Thus by democratic process, there is a growing body of evidence to warrant rejecting the policy outright. Further, I would suggest if the current level of overall opposition to the policy were any indication of the community disposition, the council is likely to face continued, if not increased, opposition on each and every specialty crosswalk request.

As akin to civil law, the burden of proof for implementing an optional policy should be on the requestor of such a policy. For example, not everyone is in favour owning a pet, but pets have been shown to provide great personal comfort and benefit, therefore a pet policy is warranted and justified. Like other personal choices, pets need to be appropriate, not cause neighbourly distress, and kept within designated areas. Policies that benefit broad public safety, such as the fire bylaw, apply universally since we all gain equally, even if this imposes a certain level of restriction on an individual. Similarly, crosswalks that are part of our public works and safety systems should be designed universally and neutrally for all, or should be reserved for private use on private property. To date, no evidence has been made available of the benefit of a specialty crosswalk policy for our town, nor has any argument been made for universal benefit. Moreover, already existing policies, such as the sign policies, heavily restrict the use of any form of advertisement or sign to private or commercial property and with many imposed limitations. Therefore I contend that specialty crosswalks, having no documented universal benefit and acting as a privately funded sign, should only be allowed on private or commercial properties, if at all.

However, if such a universal benefit could be demonstrated, why would the town not be willing to fund such a development? Already LaSalle is engaged in many community

projects worth millions of dollars for community benefit, so community crosswalks represent a small budgetary consideration. These larger projects are seeking community feedback that help maximize the value of the dollars spent through platforms like *PlaceSpeak*. I contend that not including the provision for public input within the specialty crosswalk policy and requiring private funding indicates the awareness of council that specialty crosswalks do not have broad community appeal.

Covid aside, community groups can already organize and celebrate their uniqueness in temporary and transient events. Parades, festivals, gatherings, and annual traditions are already among the many options for organizations to interact in the whole community in part because they are limited. Any special interest group, by definition does not represent the whole community, and thus any policy that creates the allowance for a semi-permanent recognition of a special interest group does not represent the whole community. So in consideration for the whole community that is already at peace with our current functional, generic, and neutral crosswalks, I urge you to maintain this present state of acceptability.

In my original letter I raised 8 arguments against this policy; here I raise an additional 5 arguments and provided multiple examples of inconsistencies, fallacies, and challenges against enacting a specialty crosswalk policy. Supposing that a policy is still deemed necessary, I would propose to adopt these amendments:

1. Strike 'religious' from section 2.7
2. Add 'discrimination' to the list in section 2.8
3. Add 'or make use of any copyrighted material' to section 2.9
4. Insert a new section 3.1: " Once a proposal has advanced beyond the Initiation Process outlined in Section 2.0, the proposed specialty crosswalk and final artwork must be open for public comment for a period no less than 30 days"

I reiterate my call that your reason prevail and you select *Option 3 – to not have a policy altogether*. There should be no remaining doubt that having a specialty crosswalk policy would in itself create community ire, as I here personally attest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I Swentek', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ian Swentek

2490 Kevin Street, Lasalle, Ontario, N9H 2R3

Specialty/Non-Traditional Crosswalk Policy PW-06-2021 Recommendations

Jeremy Palko
370 Fields Ave
LaSalle, ON N9J 3S6

LaSalle Town Council
5950 Malden Rd
LaSalle, ON N9H 1S4

March 22, 2021

Dear Members of LaSalle Town Council,

Policy PW-06-2021 regarding specialty/non-traditional crosswalks has the potential to benefit the people of LaSalle, however, there is concern regarding the objectivity in its present state.

Verbiage contained in the latest draft references there being no religious meanings allowed, which is not clarified within the policy. In order to ensure proper interpretation, such critically important terms need to be properly defined. It is presumed that Council is attempting to ensure organizations primarily composed of people of faith do not apply, which is understandable due to the diversity of values, beliefs, and principles within our population, including between the various religions and faiths represented.

The request that prompted the drafting of this policy is concerning as well in that the LGBTQ community is attempting to speak on behalf of LaSalle residents who tolerate their lifestyle, but do not accept it as one that is beneficial to society. It is evident that the LGBTQ community is as religious as any other organization that exists in that they speak, write, and advocate for their values, beliefs, and principles as superior to others. Although we tolerate our differences that are in opposition, there should not be the expectation that they be accepted.

Residents of LaSalle who do not agree with use of the rainbow by the LGBTQ community to politicize an intersection and crosswalk to impose their personal priorities on others will find it offensive. For example, the rainbow is a reminder given in the Bible that God promises to never again cause a global flood, not the symbol of gender diversity that contradicts the fundamental teachings for many people of faith. Would it be agreeable to the LGBTQ community for their to be painted on the sidewalks and intersections the silhouettes of the typical father, mother, and children family?

Who pays is irrelevant. Council needs to protect against tyranny of the minority by ensuring special interest groups are not given preferential treatment that would surely prove offensive and divisive.

Please define religion and ensure that our infrastructure is not misused in attempting to promote controversial and contentious matters.

Your time and consideration in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Regards, Jeremy Palko