SUBJECT: Request for a Pedestrian Barrier - John Sopinka Courthouse, 45 Main Street East (PW05127) - (Ward 2)
Public Works, Infrastructure & Environment Committee Outstanding Business List Item

RECOMMENDATION:

(a) That the proponent for the installation of a sidewalk pedestrian barrier in front of the John Sopinka Courthouse, 45 Main Street East be advised that Traffic staff will investigate the feasibility of implementing “on-street” parking meters as a possible means of further enhancing pedestrian safety in this area.

(b) That the item relating to the Letter from A. Wynperle, President of the Hamilton Law Association re: John Sopinka Courthouse exit safety concerns be removed from the Public Works, Infrastructure & Environment Committee Outstanding Business List.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff has received a request from Mr. Allen J. Wynperle, President of the Hamilton Law Society, that a pedestrian protection barrier be installed on Main Street East directly in front of the John Sopinka Courthouse, 45 Main Street East.

A review of the collision history revealed there have been two reported pedestrian collisions in this area in the past 5 years. The details of both incidents were
extraordinary and do not support concerns of inherent unsafe conditions for pedestrians in this area, nor does the actual sidewalk width in this area. The sidewalk is 2m which is 0.5 m wider than the city standard of 1.5m. While extraordinary measures such as the installation of permanent pedestrian barriers are not warranted at this location, staff note that the installation of "on-street" parking meters at this location may enhance pedestrian safety to some degree, and as such will pursue the feasibility of this alternative measure.

**BACKGROUND:**

The information/recommendation contained within this report primarily affects Ward 2.

Staff has received a request from Mr. Allen J. Wynperle, President of the Hamilton Law Society, that a pedestrian protection barrier be installed on Main Street East directly in front of the John Sopinka Courthouse, 45 Main Street East.

A review of the collision history revealed there have been two reported pedestrian collisions in this area in the past 5 years. The courthouse opened in 1999. One of the collisions involved a 35 year old male robbery suspect running from capture southbound across Main. The other involved a 24 year old male who was charged with crossing illegally. He was struck in the 3rd lane from the north curb so it is unlikely he "accidentally" ran into the roadway. Neither collision occurred directly in front of the new courthouse. The sidewalk width in this area is 2m which is 0.5 m wider than the city standard of 1.5m. There were no reported pedestrian collisions in front of the former Provincial Courthouse for the five year period before they relocated in 1999.

There are many businesses along Main and other downtown streets that are the same distance, or less, from the travelled portion of the roadway. People can become emotional, distraught or judgment impaired at several locales for a variety of reasons, such as at bars, doctors, hospitals, legal aid, unemployment offices, lawyers, etc. There is more of a spatial buffer zone at this new court house than was provided at the Provincial Courthouse, 125 Main Street East.

Staff have concerns regarding the City's liability if a pedestrian crossing Main midblock, illegally from south to north and due to the barrier location, can't complete the crossing and gets struck by an eastbound motorist on Main. In light of the favourable collision history, and potential liability, staff do not support the request to install a pedestrian barrier in front of the John Sopinka Courthouse.

**ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:**

Although there has not been a documented pedestrian collision problem, one alternative to a pedestrian barrier would be to install parking meters in this area. Staff have discussed this matter with a representative from the Parking Services Division and they have advised they would support the installation of parking meters in this area, which may serve a dual purpose of providing a buffer zone between the sidewalk activity and moving traffic.

John Street will be converted to two-way traffic later this year and staff would need to provide an eastbound left turn storage area for motorists wishing to proceed northbound on John. With the installation of proper signal clearances, it might be possible to install several meters in this area. There are existing parking meters on the north side of
Main, just east of John such that the north curb lane is not required for through traffic. Parking meters were in place in front of the former Provincial Courthouse at 125 Main Street East. However, before proceeding with this course of action, staff would want to have the new traffic patterns established and reviewed upon converting John to two-way traffic.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

Once traffic patterns have been established following the conversion of John to two-way traffic, the possible installation of parking meters on the north side of Main between Hughson and John might be considered.

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

No funds have been budgeted for the installation of a pedestrian barrier in this area. There is a potential for additional revenue if and when parking meters are installed.

**POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:**

There are no policies affecting this matter.

**RELEVANT CONSULTATION:**

Staff contacted a representative from Parking Services to determine if they would support parking meters on the north side of Main between John and Hughson and have been advised they would support parking meters in this area. Staff also contacted a representative from Risk Management for their comments and they have advised they agree with staffs’ assessment of this matter.

**CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:**

By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment, economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

- Community Well-Being is enhanced.  ☑ Yes  ☐ No
  
  Public services and programs are delivered in an equitable manner, coordinated, efficient, effective and easily accessible to all citizens.

- Environmental Well-Being is enhanced.  ☐ Yes  ☑ No

- Economic Well-Being is enhanced.  ☐ Yes  ☑ No

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines?  ☐ Yes  ☑ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants?  ☐ Yes  ☑ No
Pedestrian Barrier
CITY OF HAMILTON
Public Works Department

LEGEND

Requested Pedestrian Barrier

REFERENCE FILE NO: PW05127