

BEACH: Bicycle trail closer to becoming parkland

Trail runs along Lake Shore Boulevard

March 13, 2008 03:14 PM

DAVID NICKLE

The bicycle trail along Lake Shore Boulevard between Coxwell Avenue and the Don Roadway is on the road to becoming an official linear park, Toronto Council decided last week.

The trail, which was built after the 1999 tear down of the Gardiner Expressway off-ramp, was built with all the characteristics of a park - with copious greenspace, a two-way paved bicycle trail and a winding walkway - but legally it remained a road.

Ward 32 (Beaches-East York) Councillor Sandra Bussin brought a motion to Toronto Council to close the loophole, requiring the Toronto and East York Community Council hold public hearings prior to designating the land a park.

Bussin was unavailable for comment before The Mirror presstime Thursday. However, Ward 30 (Toronto-Danforth) Councillor Paula Fletcher, whose ward shares the western portion of the bike trail, said the change is overdue, and the best way to protect a contiguous pathway.

"With this there's a level of protection for the right-of-way (for cyclists)," Fletcher said.

"It's not to say there'd never be anybody putting a driveway across it, but you don't have the right-of-way in the same way. The way it is now, Canada Post could put a driveway across it, Loblaws could cross it or the city could extend Woodfield Avenue across it."

The path also crosses the southern-most portion of the Toronto Film Studios site, which is currently the subject of an Ontario Municipal Board battle between the city and SmartCentres.

The SmartCentres proposal would require a signalized intersection on Lake Shore Boulevard, with a drive crossing the bicycle path, in order to manage traffic.