

MINUTES OF THE
ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP
MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2015

1. THE CHAIR CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 4:00 P.M.

Working Group Members Present: Linda Bartram
Susan Gallagher
Jon Breen
Ernie Stigant
Steve Bertrand

Regrets: Chris Dobbie

Councillors: Councillor Alto
Councillor Loveday

Staff: Brad Dellebuur, Transportation Department
Christine Brinton, Recording Secretary

Guests: Tom Dekker

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: It was moved by Susan Gallagher, seconded by Jon Breen, that the agenda of Monday, December 7, 2015 be approved.

CARRIED

3. MINUTES

Motion: It was moved by Susan Gallagher, seconded by Jon Breen, that the minutes from the Accessibility Working Group meeting held November 9, 2015 be approved.

CARRIED

4. BUSINESS ARISING

- a. Johnson Street Bridge Project / Janion frontage – Brad Dellebuur provided an update on the pathway connection in front of the Janion development, and advised the AWG of the next public realm session, which is scheduled for January, 2016. Jon Breen asked about the possibility of including a public elevator in the bridge project – it was stated this would be extremely difficult at this point. The existing contract / drawings do not currently include plans to do this, therefore would have a significant cost implication. Jon asked if there are other options to improve accessibility.

Steve Bertrand arrived at the meeting at 4:10 pm.

The AWG discussed having a motion go forward for Council's consideration. Accessibility to the David Foster Harbour Pathway needed to be built into the project

up-front – not having access from all points makes it seem as if accessibility was an afterthought. If there is a set of stairs at one location, then an assessment on the impact of finding another way to access the Harbour Pathway needs to be done.

The AWG discussed identifying the “what”, not the “how” - it should be up to the project team to come up with solutions for the northeast quadrant of the bridge project (in front of the Janion Building).

Motion: It was moved by Jon Breen, seconded by Susan Gallagher, that AWG recommends the City acknowledges its responsibility to ensure that all access points and routes through the Johnson Street Bridge project be accessible to all.

CARRIED

- b. Curb Cuts – The Chair asked if members had time to review the document titled “The effects of truncated dome detectable warnings on travelers negotiating curb ramps in wheelchairs” (<http://www.biomedsearch.com/article/effects-truncated-dome-detectable-warnings/256777938.html>). These warning systems work well with transitioning from the curb/sidewalk to the street. AWG members noted truncated domes are currently being used in Richmond, Surrey and many other cities. Following discussion, the AWG made the following motion:

Motion: It was moved by Susan Gallagher, seconded by Jon Breen that truncated dome mats be installed on all new curb cuts, and that the City retrofit all existing ‘no-lip’ curb cuts on an immediate basis.

CARRIED

Ernie requested information from staff regarding existing curb cuts needing improvement. Staff advised that there is an email address to report hazards directly to the Public Works office, and there is also a Service Request Form link on the City’s webpage, which will create a work order/review request for issues.

Action: Staff will provide the email address and the Service Request Form link.
Email address: (pw@victoria.ca)
Service Request Form link: (<http://www.victoria.ca/EN/meta/contact/service-request-form.html>)

- c. Council Request for \$250,000 to be allocated for accessibility each year - The AWG has begun its task to identify, prioritize, and make recommendations to Council, for changes required to make Victoria a fully accessible city for its citizens with disabilities. Although some recommendations will focus on adopting best practices to ensure future accessibility, many will require physical changes to existing infrastructure.

Accessibility Working Group members felt it is important to engage the wider disability community in the process of determining barriers, priorities and solutions, possibly facilitating participation through town halls, surveys and social media.

The process of engaging the disability community, and carrying out recommendations, will require funding. The Accessibility Working Group is grateful for Council’s decision to allocate \$250,000 in the 2015 budget for this purpose, but felt it would be prudent to include ‘accessibility’ as a regular line item in future city

budgets. Working Group members felt a budget of \$250,000 per year would assist in ensuring that British Columbia's capital become a model city, perhaps the best in Canada, when it comes to ensuring accessibility for all its citizens.

Motion: It was moved by Jon Breen, seconded by Steve Bertrand that Council annually allocate \$250,000 for accessibility.

CARRIED

5. NEW BUSINESS

AWG members discussed the following:

- John met with Doug Hohenstein, Island Community Mental Health, who expressed interest in being involved with this working group.
- Drafting an on-line survey, to request feedback on concerns around the City. Steve may prepare something for discussion at the next meeting.
- Possible innovative projects:
 - Indoor navigation - there are apps available for your phone than can improve navigating through malls.
 - Providing a 'clicker' at traffic signals, to give people the option to trigger audible pedestrian signals when needed, rather than have them activate every signal phase.
- Tom Dekker recommended AWG members visit <http://www.barrierfreebc.org/> to learn more about ongoing efforts to achieve a barrier-free province.

Sidewalk Café Bylaw Update – staff noted Council had referred this item to the AWG for feedback, as part of the public consultation process. Council has directed staff report back to Council with a proposed bylaw in February 2016. Background information will be forwarded to AWG members, and this item will be added to the January 11th meeting agenda.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Graeme McCreath, Treasurer of the Canadian Federation of the Blind (CFB) - this item was moved to the January meeting, so Councillor Loveday could speak to the issue.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The AWG adjourned at 5:05 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, January 11, 2016 at 4:00 pm.