

**MINUTES OF THE
ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP
MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2016**

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

Working Group Members Present: Linda Bartram
Susan Gallagher
Jon Breen
Steve Bertrand
Keith Kroeker

Regrets: Chris Dobbie
Ernie Stigant
Councillor Alto

Councillors: Councillor Loveday

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

Guests: Shannon Jamison, Interdisciplinary Planner

2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The following items were added to the agenda:

- “Sidewalk Safety”, under the heading New Business (Susan Gallagher); and,
- “Date of Next Meeting”, this will be added as a regularly occurring agenda item.

Motion: It was moved by Keith Kroeker, seconded by Susan Gallagher, that the amended agenda of Monday, January 11, 2016 be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3) MINUTES

Motion: It was moved by Susan Gallagher, seconded by Jon Breen, that the minutes from the Accessibility Working Group meeting held December 7, 2015 be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

4) BUSINESS ARISING

Additional AWG Members – The Accessibility Working Group welcomed Keith Kroeker. A discussion took place regarding the need for acknowledgment from the City of Victoria when applying to serve on any advisory committee.

Action: Staff will provide application information to existing AWG members, for distribution to others interested in joining the AWG.

David Foster Harbour Pathway – Shannon Jamison (Interdisciplinary Planner, Citizen Engagement and Strategic Planning) provided the AWG with a project overview on the

David Foster Harbour Pathway – Heron Cove and Raymur Point Bridge. AWG members discussed the following:

- The best way the AWG can be involved.
- John Breen – the technical issues are beyond most members at this table. The AWG should not review technical drawings, as there is most likely a lack of technical abilities around this table. Projects should be screened through an accessibility lens. This should become a matter of course and the City must pay attention to these issues.
- Shannon suggested providing a one page accessibility statement for this project.

Steve Bertrand arrived at 4:14 pm

- Linda – discussed these multiuse pathways whether or not bikes will be permitted. If bike use is permitted, maintaining a safe environment for people unstable on their feet is important.
- Steve – hope the City will consider accessibility in the early stages of design, rather than reviewing at the end of the design stage (too late to make changes)
- Susan – adjustments to the width, is this what input the City is looking for?
- Linda – is the City asking us if 5m is enough for people with accessibility issues? For context, the Galloping Goose trail at Burnside is 3m wide, approx. 5m wide over Selkirk Trestle and at the Railyards Development it is approx. 7m wide.
- Steve asked what the proposed railings would look like, what is the space between railings, and what the pathway surface material would be. Steve also mentioned grade is important, as that can make access difficult.

The AWG discussed this being still early in the process, and these questions and input can help with future planning. AWG members were made aware of the City's Strategic plan for 2015 – 2018, and how the objectives and actions may be relevant to the work being done by the AWG.

Action: Councillor Loveday will do a presentation on the City 2015-2018 Strategic Plan. This will be added to the February 1, 2016 agenda.

AWG members agreed they would like to continue to work with Shannon, and suggested having a consultant with technical expertise on accessibility matters work on the project. Jon Breen suggested an accessibility consultant be paid from the accessibility fund for this project. AWG members discussed contacting organizations, groups, and cross disability groups to look for good accessibility consultants, and perhaps vetting consultant selection through AWG. Brad noted there is an established City process to select a consultant - including accessibility in a Terms of Reference for retaining a consultant would be more appropriate.

Following discussion, the AWG made the following motion:

Motion: It was moved by Jon Breen, seconded by Steve Bertrand that Council direct staff to ensure accessibility best practices are incorporated into the project design.

CARRIED

Shannon Jamison left the meeting 4:44 pm

On Line Survey – Steve is working on this and will send a “test” survey to this group prior to the next meeting.

Graeme McCreath Letter (re: Taxis) – with Councillor Jeremy Loveday, the AWG discussed the letter from Graeme McCreath, Treasurer of the Canadian Federation of the Blind regarding some taxi drivers refusal to respond to a call that involves a guide dog, that some taxi drivers refuse to take guide dogs, which is against the BC Animal Act. The AWG discussed the following:

- Is there not a fine already?
- Bill 17 has just been passed and should be enacted this month.
- Taxi companies should not hire drivers that will not accommodate dogs into their taxis. Although severe allergies could also be an issue.
- Is it ok to call a taxi and say you have a guide dog?

Action: Councillor Loveday will respond to Graeme McCreath, after the February 1, 2016 AWG meeting and Steve Bertrand will draft a motion regarding the taxi companies. This will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

5) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Sidewalk Café Bylaw Update – Sustainable Planning and Community Development Department provided a report to the Planning and Land Use Committee on November 12, 2015. The report included a proposed approach for updating the Sidewalk Café Bylaw, possible improvements to the process associated with establishing sidewalk cafes, and a request for Council direction on proceeding with focused public consultation for feedback on the proposed changes.

One of the recommendations was that this issue be referred to Accessibility Working Group for feedback.

The Accessibility Working Group discussed the following:

- Why are enclosed sidewalk cafes no longer permitted? Councillor Loveday – Because that is public space and it should remain public space. Sidewalk cafés are to enliven public space.
- A 1m clearance from the edge of the sidewalk is not enough, should be more.
- Sandwich boards, particularly on narrow sidewalks make it difficult to get by. Fort Street, Government Street and Pandora Avenue were noted as examples.
- For people with disabilities, it would be nice to have a straight clear path.
- Sandwich boards can be a tripping hazard – is there a threshold for incidents that would prompt having the boards removed or relocated?

After discussing, the AWG offer this feedback:

- Approval of any sidewalk café should require a consideration of accessibility similar to any other new construction, including wheelchair access.
- No fixtures, overhangs or other materials or structures that are deemed to be part of a sidewalk café will restrict or cause risk to the movement of any person with a mobility or vision limitation.
- Maintain a straight clear path on any sidewalk past any obstruction.

Action: Brad Dellebuur will forward this feedback to Planning staff

Sign Posts in Sidewalks – carried forward

Sidewalk safety (Susan Gallagher) – carried forward

Portable Ramps at Heritage Buildings (Steve Bertrand) – add to February agenda as a new item

Invitation to January 19th Council Advisory Group Orientation Session – City of Victoria will be having a Council Advisory Group Orientation on January 19, 2016.

6) CORRESPONDENCE

7) ADJOURNMENT

The AWG adjourned at 5:25 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, February 1, 2016 at 4:00 pm.

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