

ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP MINUTES

Monday, December 4, 2017

1. Roll Call:

Present: Linda Bartram, Robin Bayley (via skype audio), Chris Marks, Susan Gallagher, Chris Dobbie, Paul Jones (via speakerphone), Steve Bertrand (via Chris' cell on speaker) and interpreters

Staff: Christine Brinton

Presenters: Jim Handy, Senior Planner, Development Services
Robert Batallas, Senior Planner, Community Planning
City of Victoria

Guests: Christine Paisley (Director), Wendy Cox (Chair), Disability Resource Centre

Regrets: Councillor Thornton Joe, Councillor Jeremy Loveday, Brad Dellebuur

2. Motion to accept the agenda of December 4, 2017:

Susan added "Crystal Pool Discussion" and,

Robin added "New Development Regarding Allergy-Reduced Planting"

Moved: Chris M. Seconded: Chris D. CARRIED

3. Motion to accept the minutes of November 6, 2017:

Moved: Robin B. Seconded: Susan G. CARRIED

4. Consultation:

Off-Street Parking Regulation – Barrier Free / Accessible Parking

Jim Handy, Senior Planner - Development Services, Sustainable Planning & Community Development - Presentation:

Background

- The City of Victoria is undertaking a comprehensive review of off-street parking regulations (Schedule C of the Zoning Regulation Bylaw) for vehicles and bicycles
- The regulations have not had a significant update since 1981

- The regulations will establish appropriate parking requirements for development on private property
- This project does not include a review of public parking such as on-street parking, public parkades or parking lots.

Accessible Parking

- The provision of accessible parking is currently regulated through the BC Building Code
- The City's Zoning Regulation Bylaw can set out more stringent requirements than those set out in the BC Building Code

City staff are seeking feedback to determine whether requirements set out in the BC Building Code are sufficient or if additional requirements should be set out in the Zoning Regulation Bylaw.

BC Building Code Requirements

The BC Building Code requirements can be summarized as follows:

- applies to all types of development: residential, commercial, industrial, institutional
- where more than 50 parking stalls are provided, parking stalls for persons with disabilities shall be provided in the ratio of 1 for every 100, or part thereof
- 1 stall is required per 40 rooms in hotels
- For stadiums, theatres, cinemas (and similar uses):
 - Less than 500 seats = 3 stalls
 - 501 – 1000 seats = 6 stalls
 - More than 1000 seats = 6 stalls plus 2 stalls for each additional 1000 seats

Stalls must:

- be at least 3.7 metres wide
- be close and accessible to a building entrance
- be clearly identified as being solely for the use of persons with disabilities.

Further guidance is outlined in the Building Access Handbook 2014.

Find background on the City's parking project and the draft regulations at:

<http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/planning-development/off-street-parking-review.html>

The floor was then opened for feedback from the AWG:

- Unanimous agreement from AWG that BC Building Code rates for disabled parking are too low especially for Victoria in consideration that 12-14% of the

population has some form of disability, Victoria has a higher proportion of seniors

- The space at the end of a parking row often contains a landscaped area, suggestion that these areas should be kept paved and flat to allow for wheelchair ramps to extend out
- Concerns about the ability of the draft bylaw to accommodate non-standard bicycles and vehicles.
- Concerns about low visitor parking requirements for residential types where people with disabilities may be disproportionately found. Low vehicle ownership may lead to higher need for visitor parking.
- Best practice research recommends that approximately 5% of stalls (1/20) should be for disabled parking
- Several concerns raised with respect to the minimum stall width (3.7m) as this does not provide sufficient room to accommodate vehicles with wheel chair ramps. Ideally there should be a requirement for an additional buffer space on both sides of the stall
- Developers need to provide some resident accessible spaces, and not put all accessible parking spots in visitor parking areas
- A possible approach for determining the right number would be to look at the total number of disabled parking permits issued in Victoria in comparison to the number of registered vehicles or licensed drivers
- Identified that most new developments typically only provide the minimum amount of disabled parking that is required through the Building Code
- Consider design guidelines that address curb cuts and unobstructed access between disabled parking stalls and curb cuts
- Suggest exploring other universal barrier free design guidelines for reference
- Parking amenities such as EV charging should be designed for access and use by people with disabilities
- Consider design guidelines for mobility scooters as well
- Although the minimum requirements for motor vehicle parking may differ between condos, apartments and affordable housing, there should be a consistent requirement for disabled parking in all forms of development, especially multi family.
- Christine Paisley commented some accessible parking spaces have no cover or overhang, therefore a person in a wheelchair getting in and out of a car can get very wet from the rain, please consider covered accessible visitor parking if possible.

Robin had provided a document to the project in advance, through Brad, and Jim Handy offered to have a standalone meeting with Robin, email conversation or telephone conference. Robin would like comments from anyone interested on her paper and will share with the group.

ACTION: Robin will forward her paper “input and questions on parking regulations for Dec 4, 2017” to Chris Marks, Christine Paisley, Chris Dobbie. The committee will then send a written report (within the next month) with their recommendations to City staff.

Linda spoke regarding the need for a consistent number of accessible parking spaces. Staff reports noted that condos owners have higher rates of vehicle ownership than rental apartments and affordable housing. However, just because a person with a disability doesn't own a car or doesn't drive, that doesn't mean they don't have the need for an accessible parking space for their unit. People come to provide them with services and they need to park in accessible parking to pick up, not just visitor parking. These can be critical needs on a day to day basis, such as doctors' appointments, etc where someone else is picking up to drive or other various events, homemakers, nurses need parking. Just because its low cost housing, doesn't mean there isn't a need for accessible parking.

If anyone has a follow-up comment or question, please contact Jim Handy, Senior Planner – Development Services, City of Victoria at 250.361.0523.

ACTION: Linda will send a written report with the AWG's recommendations within the next month.

Chair, Accessibility Working Group

Motion to have Linda Bartram reconfirmed as Chair of the Accessibility Working Group until the end of 2018.

Moved: Chris M. Seconded: Susan G. CARRIED

5. Business Arising:

a) Red Paint on Curbs – **Action: Susan will send Brad an email to remind him about this. Linda will put on agenda for January.**

b) Updates check in items on the following:

- Financial Plan regarding replacement of sidewalk at Douglas Bus Stop at City Hall and installation of audible signals – updated request list attached. Linda still would like to know if the requested audible pedestrian signals will be completed in 2018. As it stands now, the City's plan is to have this done over the next 5 years according to the budget document.

ACTION: Request Brad report back on the status of when the attached list (attachment 1) of intersections will be completed.

- Crossing over Bike Lane on Pandora – Linda asked Chris M. if he in fact had followed up with the cycling coalition. Chris indicated he had met with head of the Victoria Cycling Coalition and discussed the importance of education. Also discussed cyclists announcing themselves to someone who may be waiting to cross. Chris also mentioned this during his media interviews.

- Fort Street Bike Lanes - Linda would like a commitment from the City that they will not do the same thing as Pandora with a bus stop in the middle of the street (with a crosswalk) ensuring that bus travellers do not have to cross over the protected bike lanes to get to the sidewalk. Please note: the picture story is NOT accessible on City of Victoria website, Linda cannot see where they plan to put the bus stops/crosswalks in future.
<http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/transportation/cycling.html>
Action: AWG members are encouraged to attend the public consultations for the bike lane project and express the need for the Pandora experience not to be repeated.

- Media Relations – please let Councillor Jeremy Loveday know if you are willing to speak or be a spokesperson for the committee’s work or regarding your disability. It is a challenge getting the media to recognize and report on the variety of disabilities that may result in barriers and require accommodation.

- Accessibility Impact Statements – The complete motion and background has already been distributed to AWG members, Linda would like this to be attached to the minutes.
Action: Christine to attach complete motion to minutes (attachment 2).

- AWG Minute Distribution - Robin pointed out that AWG minutes are circulated only to members, Council Liaisons and attendees and then posted online when approved. There is no automatic circulation to departments responsible for an issue discussed or other Council members or Senior City Management. Linda questioned whether this is standard with all committees?
(From Brad Dellebuur: AWG minute distribution is consistent with the distribution of minutes for the Advisory Design Panel, Heritage Advisory Committee and Active Transportation Advisory Committee)
 AWG needs to formally identify as an action item if we wish the minutes to be shared with other departments. This needs to be our policy.

- City Hall Environmental and Allergy Related Concerns – From September meeting – “Councillor Loveday will discuss with the City Human Resources Department and see what policies / training are currently in place regarding Accessibility Awareness” – Councillor Loveday did contact HR and they answered “no”. They are right now updating now and where they need to change their approach or policy, AWG should get involved now while opportunity exists.
ACTION: AWG to forward to Linda on what AWG will say to HR on how they

approach accessibility training. Linda will put something together and forward to HR. Chris Marks will help, he has been working with training in the same regard. Linda will follow up with Jodi Jensen in Human Resources.

- Truncated Dome Pilot – **Action: Brad to provide link to best practices in these minutes (see link below).**

From the United States Access Board:

<https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/streets-sidewalks/public-rights-of-way/proposed-rights-of-way-guidelines/chapter-r3-technical-requirements>

- Accessibility Framework – The 2018 draft budget includes a one-time \$40,000 request for an Accessibility Framework. During the Budget Town Hall November 30, staff responses to questions about the work entailed did not reference training/staff awareness or policy development. Robin and Linda are concerned that Staff's and the AWG's visions of the Framework are at odds and that Staff's vision does not reflect January 26, 2017 direction from COTW.

Action: Linda will circulate documents about the Accessibility Framework including the motion from the January 26, 2017 COTW and discussion from the budget town hall. AWG to review for discussion re: next steps at January meeting.

- Robin additional item: New development re. Allergy-reduced planting: Councillor Thornton-Joe's motion at COTW budget discussions, as amended by Councillor Isitt was approved. It was, "That Council direct staff to work with the Accessibility Working Group and Urban Food Table and report back in the context of the Parks Master Plan Implementation Plan update on options for balancing accessibility considerations with pollinator habitat, including in the vicinity of playgrounds." Robin is concerned that the motion will delay action because the Parks Master Planning process is due to take place in 2018/19.

Robin suggested that allergen-reduced planting pilots might be carried out in the interim, as pollinator gardens continue to be approved. Would like to discuss with Council Liaisons as they were not in attendance.

Linda pointed out that if no staff liaison nor council liaison will be in attendance, it would be helpful to know ahead of time so the meetings can be postponed until all are in attendance.

- Crystal Pool and Wellness Centre Replacement Project - Susan updated the AWG that the project remains in the "pre-construction" phase. A contract has been awarded to provide architectural and engineering services and are moving towards the next phase of planning for the new facility which includes further community engagement to develop a detailed design and construction schedule. Susan would like AWG members to think about and be aware this is in the design

phase and it's a good time to review on the website. There is also an invitation for City Staff from the Crystal Pool to attend an upcoming AWG meeting.

ACTION: Susan asked all members to consider the project in regards to the disability community you represent. See the Crystal Pool and Wellness Centre Replacement Project website including links at:

<http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/facilities/crystal-pool/crystal-pool-and-wellness-centre-replacement-project.html>

6. Next Meeting:

January 8th. 2018. Note: Paul will not be able to attend.

7. Adjournment: 5:52 pm

ATTACHMENT 1

Requested Audible Pedestrian Signals

As of November 22, 2017

1. Burnside at Harriet	CNIB	7-Jan-13
2. Gorge at Washington (this will be upgraded as part of the APS trial)	CNIB	24-Aug-12
3. Fisgard at Quadra	CNIB	6-Jun-16
4. Quadra at Yates	CNIB	6-Jun-16
5. Fort at Quadra	CNIB	6-Jun-16
6. Fort at Vancouver	CNIB	6-Jun-16
7. Government/Humboldt/Wharf	James Bay Low Vision	11-22-16
8. Menzies/Superior	James Bay Low Vision	11-22-16
9. Gosworth at Hillside (this will be upgraded as part of the APS trial) (also requested by another visually impaired resident 11-Aug-17)	visually impaired resident	17-Apr-17
10. Caledonia at Quadra	visually impaired resident	11-Aug-17
11. Bay at Richmond (existing audible ped signal – to be upgraded as part of the APS trial)		
12. Finlayson at Quadra	visually impaired resident	27-Oct-17

ATTACHMENT 2

Motion arising from November 6, 2017 meeting of the Accessibility Working Group regarding accessibility impacts. Dear Councillors Thornton-Joe and Loveday

Whereas a Committee of the Whole motion on January 26, 2017 directed staff to “Include accessibility impacts on all reports to Council”, and Council approved this, and

Whereas since that direction was given, numerous staff reports to Council have not contained any accessibility impact statement, have incorrectly stated that there were no accessibility impacts, did not fully report the concerns/recommendations made by AWG, or neither contained the results of serious accessibility analysis nor concrete plans for conducting consultation and analysis of accessibility implications, and

Whereas the AWG advises that the full breadth of disabilities be considered for all types of City decisions including policies, services, information and technology, as well as those for infrastructure and facilities, and

Whereas staff unfamiliar with accessibility issues can learn to conduct accessibility analysis if given the right tools, and

Whereas the AWG is now providing written reports to departments on accessibility implications of their initiatives, and

Whereas the AWG has the expertise and is willing to assist in the development of policy and guideline materials, and

Whereas further direction is needed from Council around its expectations for accessibility impact assessment reporting,

Be it resolved that:

The AWG recommends to Council that it direct Staff, in consultation with the AWG, to develop a policy and guidance material to implement Council's direction of January 26, 2017 that staff include Accessibility Impacts in all reports to Council.