



MINUTES – ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 10, 2022, 4:33 P.M.

ESQUIMALT NATION ROOM, CITY HALL, 1 CENTENNIAL SQUARE

The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees and Esquimalt People
Meeting conducted electronically via Zoom

PRESENT: S. Hough (Chair), L. Bartram, N. Moss, C. Paisley, J. Scott, P. Singh

ABSENT: S. Jennings, C. Marks

STAFF PRESENT: A. Galiev – Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Lead, S. Webb – Manager of Sustainable Transportation Planning & Development, B. Crowder – Transportation Technician, B. Roder – Committee Secretary

A. Call to Order

S. Hough assumed the role of Chair and called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

B. Land Acknowledgement

The Chair acknowledged the City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations communities, and thanked them for allowing us to live, work and play on their lands.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved By L. Bartram
Seconded By J. Scott

That the agenda be approved with the addition of items **F.3 Helping Hands, F.4 Action Log, F.5 Initiate Conversation for Feedback Mechanism, F.6 Clover Point Accessibility** under New Business and the remainder of the agenda be reordered accordingly.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

F.1 **Patio Bylaw Update (25-30 minutes)** **Level of Engagement: Consult**

Manager of Sustainable Transportation Planning and Development and the Transportation Technician provided an update to the Committee regarding the patio bylaw update and consulted with the Committee, receiving feedback on accessibility recommendations and improvements.

Committee discussed the following:

1. Suggested a minimum of one accessible table or a percentage of the number of tables, whichever is higher
2. Could businesses consider having 2 or 3 accessible tables in case 1 or 2 are already occupied and that the location and distance of accessible tables from the entrance and the maneuverability to the table be considered
3. Discourage the use of high tables as they reduce the number of tables which might be used and if used, limit number
4. Furniture placement, size and height as well as number must be considered
5. Challenging for people who are blind to navigate around a sidewalk patio when delineated by bollards or planters with spaces in between . All patios should have a continuous railing delineating the perimeter.
6. Temporary tables and chairs become obstacles for persons who are blind and therefore something delineating a perimeter should be used such as stanchions with heavy cords strung between. this needs further discussion.
7. .
8. There is concern about the City suggesting that businesses consult with agencies and suggested that the City provide some funding or a fee-for-service to individuals or agencies to provide feedback.
9. Might staff consider accessible parking locations be linked to applications for new sidewalk patios?
10. Recommended that menus should be available online if possible.
11. Could recommend a braille or large font menu for patio guidelines, but not mandate
12. A patio is more accessible if the designated entrance and exit are the same. Remove separate entrance and exit requirement.
13. Applauded incorporating Opals Ratings – Allergy Friendly Plants into patio guidelines
14. 90 patios currently participating in Build Back Victoria program, and staff anticipate about 30 businesses will apply for the new Sidewalk Café program which will be available in the spring
15. Patios participating in the Sidewalk Café program will be required to comply with the new bylaw and guidelines
16. Rectangular wheeled planters might work as the patio perimeter
17. Sandwich boards and signs can impair wheelchair maneuverability and be an obstacle for blind persons.
18. Noted the importance of reporting sandwich boards and sign infractions to the City, and indicating whether they are licenced (sticker displayed on sandwich board). Observed more barriers with increased number of sandwich boards since more patios have opened during the pandemic
19. Suggested that sandwich board advertising be replaced by signage attached to building or patio structures
20. Patios must abide by the City's electrical requirements, including that electrical cords cannot run along the ground
21. Staff will bring the patio bylaw updates back to the Committee within the next couple of months as it will be going to Council at the end of March

D. READING OF MINUTES

D.1 Minutes from the meeting held December 13, 2022

Moved By L. Bartram
Seconded By J. Scott

That the minutes from the meeting held December 13, 2022 to be adopted with the following revisions:

F.1 Accessible Parking

Committee discussed the following:

1. This is part of a multi-year project with \$350,000 from the Accessibility Reserve Fund.
2. Staff assured the committee that new stalls are sized to meet accessible van needs.
3. Staff will provide the committee with a similar update at the end of 2023 and outline the 2024 roster of new parking stalls and a long-term goal to review all current accessible parking stalls.
4. Staff requested suggestions for Priority areas in Victoria for further accessible parking upgrade consideration.

F.2.a. Review Action Log

The Committee reviewed and updated the action log and tentative schedule for 2023. The following was noted:

1. Need for log to reflect current status of scheduling for discussion of issues.
2. Schedule annual updates for accessible parking retrofit program.
3. On-going concerns regarding the Douglas Street washroom design being used as an example for future washroom designs.
4. Still awaiting an update from staff on the changes to the Residential Solid Waste Helping Hands program application form proposed by AAC. Original form still on website.
5. Challenges when using the accessible voting machine during the election, and that election staff were not trained on how to use the machine so could not help.
6. Members can provide feedback on their voting experience by emailing elections@victoria.ca
7. Awaiting response to staff-requested questions posed by committee regarding scent reduction policy.
8. Follow-up from staff to plan a field trip to visit curb cuts and tactile dome locations in the City
9. Importance of rescheduling discussion of accessible sidewalk café guidelines.
10. Need for the City to have a feedback mechanism in place, as required by the Accessible British Columbia Act
11. Determine which department will lead the feedback mechanism project
12. Need for Accessibility Accommodation Policy to be created
13. Concern regarding off-leash dog area pilots
14. Status of Beacon Hill Park's accessible washrooms and access to top of the hill

15. *C. Paisley, to provide status of her submission of a service request regarding an unsafe ramp at Clover Point.*
16. *requested that staff provide a current draft copy of the Engagement Framework to the Committee*
17. *Committee's involvement in the review of the Meeting and Event Toolkit*
18. *Website redesign in progress and members of Committee have provided feedback to staff*
19. *Can remove Garden Suites Guideline from Action Log as Committee's consultation is completed*
20. *Protected bike lanes and safe transit access to be added to action log.*

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

E. Remarks from the Chair

The Chair thanked the Committee for their participation in the first meeting of 2023, and looks forward to the Committee's contributions in the coming year.

F. NEW BUSINESS

F.2 Snow Plowing and Accessibility

Committee discussed the following:

1. *Noted that when streets were plowed, the snow blocked sidewalk corners and bus stops*
2. *Mentioned that bike lanes were quickly cleared*
3. *Providing direct feedback to the Assistant Director of Public Works and requested that he attend a future meeting to discuss suggestions*
4. *Usage of a specific device to clear the sidewalks*
5. *Noted that snow frequently gets piled in accessible parking spots and that the City should improve awareness to businesses and parking lot operators keep accessible spots cleared*

F.3 Helping Hands

Committee discussed the following:

1. *Concerned that the form's wording is not clear enough that a physician's note is not required*
2. *Members have already provided feedback to staff to ensure that the form clearly states "Part 1 or Part 2 must be completed"*
3. *Noted that the form should replace the term "physician" with "healthcare professional" to include occupational and physical therapists, etc.*
4. *Interested in the form allowing the ability to self-declare disability rather than requiring proof*
5. *Opposed to people over the age of 80 years old also having to provide proof with their application as the updated form now regulates both groups*
6. *Actioned for individuals to draft a letter to staff to ensure feedback is received in a timely manner*

7. *Noted that the form should include staff contact information if individuals need assistance and have concerns will completing their application*

F.4 Action Log

The Committee noted that they would like to see an updated version of the Action Log prior to the next meeting.

F.5 Initiate Conversation for Feedback Mechanism

Committee discussed the following:

1. *How the Committee will interact and engage with the consultant on the public's feedback mechanism to the City*
2. *The City's progress in compliance with the Accessible British Columbia Act*
3. *Suggested a focus group of members, including N. Moss, L. Bartram, S. Hough, and J. Scott, who would like to participate in a discussion on what the feedback mechanism should include at the end of February*

F.6 Clover Point Accessibility

Committee discussed the following:

1. *Upcoming walk/roll event with transportation, engineering and parks staff to address barriers for people with disabilities at Clover Point*
2. *Noted it is being held on January 23 at 11:30 a.m.*
3. *Specified a concern about the sidewalk lip leading to the washrooms*

F.7 Committee Updates – Roundtable

C. Paisley provided an overview of the Action Committee's project work, and their partnership with Volunteer Victoria to encourage more volunteers with disabilities. They are requesting participants for a focus group of people with varying disabilities, to provide recommendations to all local non-profits.

L. Bartram requested that floating bus stops be added to the action log. She noted that the installation of flashing amber lights at floating bus stops has been added to Provincial Active Transportation Design Guidelines despite the fact that this mitigation has not been proven effective or been requested by persons who are blind. TransLink and CNIB are conducting studies and a review of this and other existing guidelines for inclusive (floating) bus stops next to bike lanes in the next six months.

G. Next Meeting Agenda & Date – February 14, 2023

The Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Lead notified the Committee that the City Clerk will be attending the February meeting to discuss the Advisory Committee's processes and procedures, and will provide clarification on their role and responsibilities. The Committee requested the City Clerk provide an update on the accommodation policy.

H. ADJOURNMENT

The Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.