

**Advisory Committee on Accessibility
Minutes
Monday, May 17, 2021
Zoom
5:00 PM**

Attendance: Barry Martin, Chair, Robert Hunn, Vice-Chair, Councillor Isa Lee, Jewell Lofsky, Nahid Verma, Mona Nazif, Senior Manager HR Client Services, Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator and Mary-Jane Courchesne, Council/Committee Coordinator

Regrets:
Kaushi Regunathan

Guests:
Shane Holten, Accessibility Consultant, SPH Planning and Consulting, Biju Karumanchery, Parvathi Nampoothiri, Abbie Kar, Richard Fournier, David Plant, Tanya Lewinberg

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Items
<p>1. Call to Order</p>	<p>The Advisory Committee on Accessibility convened at 5:05 PM with Barry Martin in the Chair.</p>	
<p>2. Accessibility Design Guidelines</p>	<p>Shane Holten, Accessibility Consultant from SPH Planning and Consulting provided a presentation of the City’s Accessibility Design Guidelines (ADG), a technical update to the guidelines first introduced in 2011. The Guidelines are being updated to incorporate AODA’s Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR), amendments to the Ontario Building Code and CSA Accessible Design for the Built Environment and other best practices.</p> <p>The following staff were in attendance to answer the Committee’s questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biju Karumanchery, Director, Planning & Urban Design, Planning & Urban Design • Parvathi Nampoothiri, Manager of Urban Design • Abbie Kar, Senior Planner, Urban Design • Richard Fournier, Manager, Parks & Open Space Development • David Plant, Senior Manager, Parks, Horticulture & Forestry • Tanya Lewinberg, Public Realm Coordinator <p>Shane Holten provided a background and overview of the ADG, project objectives, key updates and current project status. The ADG 2021 update is still in draft form and in order to finalize the updated guidelines, Committee’s feedback and Staff reviews</p>	

are required.

Committee provided the following feedback:

- The City should be consistent in regards to where it puts its door opener buttons;
- Those responding when the emergency button is pressed should be trained;
- Lived experience feedback is crucial;
- Photos should include people with actual disabilities (not actors or actresses);
- There should be access to a curb ramp and walkways from accessible parking spots within a reasonable distance;
- There should be signage that illegal parking will be enforced;
- Should educate the public that a picture could be taken of vehicles illegally parked in accessibility parking spots and sent to Markham Bylaw enforcement;
- Pedestrian signals are not long enough for those crossing in wheelchair;
- Should paint the curb cut yellow and add no parking signs;
- Having accessible parking spots specifically for larger vehicles such as vans with signage indicating that they are for this type of vehicle is beneficial;
- Need more accessible parking spots, universal washrooms, and accessible public telephones;
- Suggested rounded handrails are easier to grip than square handrails;
- Concerned that enforcement of the guidelines for private development was being encouraged rather than being enforced and questioned if the City was able to enforce the guidelines;
- Inquired if the new guidelines address the accessibility of all City walkways.

The following responses were provided to the inquiries from Committee:

Enforcement

Biju Karumanchery, Director of Urban Design and Planning, advised that Planning Staff will encourage developers to follow the guidelines, as the guidelines often go beyond what is legally

enforceable. An example of this is how Planning Staff will work with developers to incorporate age-friendly designs into their plans.

Mr. Karumanchery advised that staff can provide feedback on both the interior and exterior of a home/building, but that the Planning and Urban Design staff cannot regulate the design of the interior under the Planning Act and that the interior is regulated under the *Building Code*. When encouraged by staff, some developers will update their designs to make them more accessible. For example, a developer redesigned the interior staircases from a corner design to a curved design to allow a wheelchair lift to be added (if required), and to make their plans more accessible and age friendly. Planning Staff can play a role in encouraging Developers to incorporate accessibility designs into their developments early on in the application process.

Councillor Isa Lee mentioned that working with the developers to implement the guidelines as early as possible is great step forward. Comments and concerns can also be raised at Development Services Committee Public Meetings.

Parking Spots and Ramps:

The City's Parking By-law specifies a minimum and maximum number of accessible parking spots. The City's Comprehensive Zoning By-Law is also currently being amended and accessible parking spaces will be reviewed as part of this process.

Richard Fournier advised that pages 54 to 56 of the City's Draft of the updated ADG, shows a thorough review of upgrades to accessible parking.

Discussion included:

- minimum and maximum distances between an accessible parking space and ramp to access a walkway largely based on context, site design etc., and may be difficult and too specific as a guideline;
- illegal parking in front of ramps and accessible spaces (including van accessible parking spaces) is largely an enforcement issue.

Walkways and Trails:

- Standard for walkways are asphalt and concrete for newly constructed areas;
- Limestone trails are quite accessible when maintained ;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mona advised that she and Laura Gold will be meeting with IT to discuss adding the accessible features to the City’s trail map; • David Plant is also working with IT on identifying City parks’ accessible features, including trail entrances, parking, washrooms, splash pads, picnic tables and trail seating. <p>Barry Martin thanked all guests for attending and answering questions and thanked Mona and Laura for arranging Staff attendance.</p>	
<p>3. Approval of the Minutes</p>	<p>a) Approval of Minutes</p> <p>Moved by Bob Hunn Seconded by Jewell Lofsky</p> <p>That the Minutes of the April 19, 2021, Advisory Committee on Accessibility, be approved as presented.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p> <p>b) Review of Action Items</p> <p>Committee did not have previous action items to review.</p>	
<p>4. Diversity Action Plan Update</p>	<p>Mona Nazif, Senior Manager HR Client Services, provided a Diversity Action Plan Update. The RFP to update the plan closed May 5th. Six submissions were received which will be reviewed over the next month. Staff are hoping to start the community consultation in the fall.</p> <p>Committee was asked to provide Mona Nazif with the names of organizations in Markham (that they are aware of) that support the needs of persons with all forms of disabilities. The organizations will be added to a master list of community and service organizations. Organizations on the list will be contacted this summer to advise them that the City will be conducting a community consultation in the fall on the refresh of its Diversity Action Plan.</p> <p>Laura Gold commented that this list could be helpful when conducting recruitment for new members of the committee.</p> <p>Councillor Isa Lee commented that she is aware of several seniors’ organizations and service agencies.</p>	<p>Mona will be sending out a template this week to Committee to fill out and send back within two weeks.</p>

<p>5. Sub-Committee Reports</p>	<p><u>Did You Know Sub-Committee</u> Jewell Lofsky advised that the Did You Know Sub-Committee has been meeting. The Sub-Committee has compiled a list of approximately 20 Did You Knows that it would like to start promoting. There are also “Did You Knows” that were presented to the Committee prior to the pandemic in their final format that could be used.</p> <p>Mona Nazif to send the three Parking “Did you Knows” (created prior to the pandemic) to the Sub-Committee for review and confirmation, and more focus will be placed on the recruitment Did you Know.</p> <p>Mona Nazif asked Committee if the current Did You Knows can be sent to Staff.</p> <p>Moved by: Councillor Isa Le Seconded by: Nahid Verma</p> <p>That the Advisory Committee on Accessibility provide permission for the City’s Corporate Communications Department to move forward with the “Did You Know” campaign.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p> <p><u>Website Sub-Committee</u> Jewell Lofsky advised that the Website Sub-Committee has continued to actively review the City’s website including the main headings.</p> <p>Committee suggested that the Sub-Committee should focus on the content of the website versus the structure of the website.</p>	<p>Follow Up with Maxine Roy on Did You Knows.</p> <p>Mona to send parking ones to Jewell, Rita and Kaushi.</p> <p>Rita to send Mona list of 20 Did You Knows.</p>
<p>6. Round Table Discussion</p>	<p><u>Future Focus</u> Committee discussed what it should focus on in the short-term, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things that residents are relying on and have access to right now/this summer, rather than amenities that cannot be presently enjoyed such as community centres; • Trail maps; • Communicating to residents that they should contact the Contact Centre when they have a question; • Website navigation. 	<p>Trail Maps meeting</p>

	<p>The following suggestions were provided:</p> <p>Barry Martin emphasized that Sub-Committees should continue to provide Staff with ideas and lived experiences. More members, more volunteers and accessibility tents at events in the future are important to improve accessibility awareness and future improvements.</p> <p>Moved by Councillor Isa Le Seconded by Jewell Lofsky</p> <p>That the Advisory Committee on Accessibility provide permission to Mona Nazif to request a representative from the Library to attend the next meeting to discuss website recommendations.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p>	<p>between Mona, Laura and IT.</p>
<p>7. New Business</p>	<p><u>New Chair</u> Barry Martin, Chair advised that today is his last meeting as Chair and that a new Chair must be elected.</p> <p>Laura Gold advised that Committee must appoint a new Chair or at least an interim Chair.</p> <p>Robert Hunn and Nahid Verma agreed to be Co-Chairs.</p> <p>Appointment of Co-Chairs:</p> <p>Moved by: Councillor Isa Lee Seconder: Jewell Lofsky</p> <p>That Robert Hunn and Nahid Verma be appoint as Co-Chairs of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p> <p><u>Auditor General</u> Mona advised that the City’s Auditor General, MNP, will be conducting a review of the City’s progress of the AODA compliance Guidelines to identify any gaps before the end of the year compliance checklist is required to be sent to the Ontario Provincial Service.</p>	

8. Next Meeting Date	The next meeting of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility will be held on June 21, 2021.	
9. Adjournment	The Advisory Committee on Accessibility adjourned at 6:56 PM.	