

**Town of Markham  
Advisory Committee on Accessibility**

**Wednesday, March 21 2012, 3:30 p.m.  
Canada Room**

**Minutes**

**Committee Members Present:**

Councillor Valerie Burke  
Councillor Don Hamilton  
Councillor Alan Ho  
Jaqueline Bell  
Kristen Hayes  
Robert Hunn, Vice-Chair  
Joan Jenkyn  
Cindy Jones Shrek  
Arlene Juanillo  
Sidney Polak, Chair  
Margit Swift

**Staff Present:**

Warren Rupnarain, Accessibility Coordinator  
Kitty Bavington, Council/Committee Coordinator

**Regrets:**

Don Taylor, Manager, Executive Operations

**Regrets:**

Brian Lynch

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility convened at 3:40 p.m. with Sidney Polak presiding as Chair.

**1. MAIN STREET MARKHMA ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT UPDATE**

Dale Mackenzie, Senior Capital Works Engineer gave a presentation on the design concepts for the reconstruction of Main Street Markham. Discussions involved the curb design and ramping.

The Committee pointed out mobility and access concerns regarding the curbs and discussed options for continuous curb cuts and the use of poured concrete. Safety aspects for entering and exiting parked vehicles were analysed. Mr. Mackenzie advised that the preferred design includes the heritage feature of stone effects; however, he assured the Committee that every driveway, crosswalk and access point will be designed for accessibility. The design will be considered further and finalized next year.

Mr. Mackenzie reviewed the timing schedule of the Main Street project from July to October, 2012, for two phases: from Highway 7 to Robinson Street; and from Robinson Street to Bullock Drive. He also advised the Committee of additional road construction projects: Main Street, 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Major Mackenzie Drive (same time frame); Main Street, Bullock Drive to 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue (2014-2015); Main Street, Highway 407 to Highway 7 (2014-2015); and Don Cousens Parkway, from Markham Road to Major Mackenzie Drive (2015-2016).

With respect to the number of lanes, Mr. Mackenzie advised that public consultation and the Environmental Assessment process determined there will be two lanes, one in each direction. The Committee discussed the location of accessible parking and Mr. Mackenzie will be discussing this aspect with the BIA before the locations are established.

The Committee thanked Mr. Mackenzie for his informative presentation, and reiterated the importance of portraying disabled person in the presentation photographs. Mr. Mackenzie will provide a copy of the presentation to Warren Rupnarain for distribution to Committee members.

## **2. ACCESSIBLE SCHOOL YARDS**

Jeanette McLellan, a teacher at James Robinson Public School at 90 Robinson Street, along with a parent representative and a Landscape Designer with Evergreen, gave a presentation regarding proposed accessibility initiatives at the school. Ms. McLellan, a Special Education Resource Teacher, advised that in the school of 220 students, they have 1 ½ classes of multi-exceptionality students, plus one transition class for students with autism. Brochures from the school were provided.

The interior of the school is completely accessible, and the school is a Gold-Certified EcoSchool with an EcoSchoolyard; however they would like to create an accessible schoolyard and make it a flagship project. This would help to address the current issue of social isolation of the community class students, and make sun safe areas (under shade trees) accessible. Students with mobility issues now require the physical assistance of teachers to reach these areas. There are problems with slope, asphalt, thick grass coverings, and poor drainage in the yard.

The design of the project was a collaboration of input from students and teachers. The main elements are trees, seating areas, swings, and accessible pathways for the mobility of all students. In 2011, the conceptual plan was presented to the community, with a wish list of accessible items: paved learning trail; outdoor classroom; play structure; wooden stage; loose parts play area; kindergarten raised planters; chain link fence mural art; and community and demonstration gardens. These would be available to community neighbours after school hours.

The first phase of the project, a wheelchair-accessible Sensory Garden, created with funding by the Markham Environmental Sustainability Fund, was opened in the fall of 2011. The cost estimate for the entire project in the ten-year phasing is over \$250,000.

The Committee discussed funding sources such as the School Board, and contacting the local MPP. It was suggested the school get in touch with Councillor Carolina Moretti with respect to applying to Markham's Environmental Issues Committee for funding support. Markham's Public Realm Committee would be interested in the fence mural, as well. Another suggestion was made to contact the manufacturers of the playground material and request donations in exchange for the promotional opportunity.

The Committee congratulated the presenters for this exciting project.

### **3. DISABLED PARKING RESERVE**

Andrew Fisher and Ashleigh Macaskill of Richmond Hill Mobility Accessibility Foundation, and Richard Olwyn of Med+, were in attendance to make a presentation regarding the benefits of having a disabled parking reserve. They provided pamphlets and an information sheet. The Foundation is striving to make Richmond Hill a barrier-free community.

Richmond Hill passed the Disabled Parking Reserve By-law in 2004, designating that 50% of the proceeds from tickets for parking in disabled parking spots go into a reserve fund for accessibility projects. Since that time, over \$300,000 has been raised. The projects must conform to defined criteria, and some of the projects include the development of Crosby Park which is a fully accessible park, sponsoring Family Fun Day at Crosby Park, a program that provides financial help in obtaining assistance devices, an accessible fitness studio, and business improvement projects.

The Committee discussed the funding programs in Markham and the current budget for accessibility capital projects. It was agreed that the Chair and Council members on the Committee, and the Accessibility Coordinator, would discuss this matter further.

The Committee congratulated the presenters on their successful initiative.

### **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A correction was made with respect to the Site Plan Review Checklist, to reflect the comments of the Committee.

Moved by Joan Jenken

Seconded by Councillor Don Hamilton

That the Minutes of the February 15, 2012 Advisory Committee on Accessibility be adopted as amended.

CARRIED

### **5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

- a) National Awareness Week Discussion – deferred
- b) Recreation Advisory Committee of Persons with Disability in Markham – deferred
- c) Tim Hortons (Kennedy & Major Mackenzie)

Councillor Alan Ho reported on a field trip to the Tim Hortons located at Major Mackenzie and Kennedy Drive to review the location of handicapped parking spaces. The owners have agreed to

relocate the spaces to an appropriate place, upon receipt of clarification from the Town. Warren Rupnarain will be following up on this matter.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

- a) Jaqueline Bell advised that she has been hired by the Town to teach cooking class, and will remain on the Committee without voting privileges. The Committee wished her well.
- b) Correspondence was provided:
  - i) E-mail from W. Wiles, Manager, By-law Enforcement & Licensing dated August 23, 2010 regarding “No Parking” zones for persons with disabled parking permits.
  - ii) “Customers with Disabilities” information sheet from Petro-Canada
  - iii) “Refuelling for Drivers with Disabilities” information sheet from Shell
  - iv) Application for Excise Tax on Gasoline
  - v) “Policy on Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities” information sheet from Imperial Oil

## **7. NEXT MEETING**

The Committee was requested to reschedule the April meeting due to a timing conflict with a Councillors’ Workshop. Thursday, April 19 was suggested as an alternate date. The Committee Clerk will send a notice to the members.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility adjourned 5:35 p.m.

**Attachment: Outstanding Items List (updated September, 2011)**

**1. Promotions and Business Initiatives Subcommittee**

- a) Board of Trade Awards: invite winner to AAC meeting to celebrate the achievement.

**2. Promotions Subcommittee**

**3. Barriers Subcommittee**

- a) The developer of the new development on Highway 48, south of Major Mackenzie Drive, has agreed to implement the Committee's suggestion regarding its accessibility concerns - Warren Rupnarain will provide update in 2012

- b) Biju Karumanchery is to add Warren Rupnarain to the distribution list for site plan reviews. The email should include the completed site plan checklist – February 2012

**4. Lack of accessible parking on Main Streets in Unionville and Markham.**

Markham BIA has attended to discuss parking issues. AAC members were encouraged to attend a future BIA meeting and submit an article for their newsletter. (Sidney to attend)  
- Upcoming Markham Seminar

Unionville BIA attended in September, 2010 and encouraged AAC to work on parking and washroom issues with the Town – Upcoming Unionville Seminar

**5. Main Street Environmental Assessment**

Warren and Markham BIA to coordinate efforts to ensure accessibility issues are not missed.

Dale MacKenzie will present digitally enhanced drawing at the next stage in design process – March 2012

Town engineering staff will encourage existing business owners to explore accessibility opportunities – Dale Mackenzie, throughout 2012

Committee plans to make presentation to the BIA in 2012.

**7. Heritage/Accessibility**

- Staff to provide info on coordination of accessibility (Warren) - ongoing
- Update on the BIA mandate to be provided following Council/BIA workshop
- email the committee the meeting minutes from the meeting when the Manager of Heritage Planning presented to the Committee on accessibility retrofitting of heritage properties – Laura Gold– Complete by March 21, 2012

## **8. National Access Week Event**

- Start the Planning and Execution of a larger scale event for the 2012 National Access Week in the fall of 2011 – All Committee Members.
  - Invite Wayne Chang from Primerica Financial to have a booth at 2012 National Access week – Warren Rupnarain
  - Email or phone ideas for the National Awareness Week event to Warren – All Committee Members
9. Provide update on accessibility concerns at the Hilton Hotel – Warren Rupnarain
  10. Obtain clarification regarding whether the Recreation Advisory Committee would like to be part of the Committee or a Sub-Committee of the Committee – Warren Rupnarain
  12. Investigate standards for super mailboxes in Markham – Waste Management Staff
  13. Investigate having door-to-door mail service for persons with a disability in Markham – Warren Rupnarain
  14. Discuss the Committee's concern regarding the site plan process with Staff – Warren Rupnarain
  15. Decide what the Committee next steps are with respect to accessibility retrofitting of heritage properties – All Committee Members
  16. Email the Committee the Board of Trade nomination form when it becomes available – Warren Rupnarain
  17. Schedule a date to present the benefits of making businesses accessible with the UBIA and MVBIA – Warren Rupnarain
  18. Discuss the pros and cons of Markham having a disabled parking reserve - Chair and Council Liaison's

19. Provide the Tim Horton's located at Major Mackenzie and Kennedy with clarification regarding where the accessible parking spot shall be located – Warren Rupnarain
20. Add to April Agenda National Awareness Week Discussion and Recreation Advisory Committee of Persons with Disability in Markham – Committee Clerk