

Meeting Minutes

City of Guelph

Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

Tuesday, June 16th, 2015

City Hall, Meeting Room 112

3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Meeting Chair: Jennifer Popkey Bergen

Present: Brooke Sillaby, Laurie Lanthier, Janice Pearce Faubert, Tanya Davis, Mary Grad, Cathy McCormack, Brad Howcroft, Michael Greer, Sarah Mathison, Malcolm McLeod, Julian Murphy, Julia Phillips, Leanne Warren (Liaison), Megan McKay (Co-op student), Mara Engel (Operations), Geoff Walker (Operations), Nancy Button (Transit).

Regrets: John Alves (Transit), Missy Tolton, Nello Violin (Operations)

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Welcome to all

2. Approval of Agenda

- Motion to approve the agenda by Brooke and seconded by Janice
- All in favour – Carried

Approval of Minutes of April 21, 2015

- Motion to approve the minutes from April 21st by Mary and seconded by Julian
- Vote: All in favour – Carried

3. Curb Ramp and Sidewalk Repair Budget Request – For Discussion – Leanne Warren, Operations Staff: Mara Engel and Geoff Walker

- Operations reported:
 - Operations staff are working towards ramp repairs.
 - This year operations is hoping to have new software in place that will be able to capture the location of step discontinuities and other sidewalk issues that are not necessarily only maintenance standard issues.
 - They are hoping that the inspections (done by summer students) will give a greater assessment of the conditions of the sidewalks, and give them more information to give to council about not just immediate failings, but possible long term failings and deterioration.
 - Operations also aims to identify all curb ramps and whether they meet current AODA requirements by the end of this or next year.
 - At the last AAC meeting, Operations asked the committee to list and prioritize the locations of ramps that need to be installed or repaired. Operations reminds the AAC that they are still interested in receiving that list soon.
- AAC members input:

- A number of locations were mentioned that members believed should be prioritized.
- Operations will provide the AAC with a list of locations to prioritize. Once prioritized, it will help operations determine how to prioritize in the future.
- It was suggested that the focus for prioritizing should be on high usage areas, such as hospitals and schools.
- The list should include ramps that are required and ramps that are not currently meeting the AODA standards, on a priority basis.
- Concern was expressed that operations would have a cut back to their budget. It was resolved by operations expressing that they did not foresee further cutbacks.
- The committee explored ways to help operations express to council that they need more money in the budget for repairs. AAC members were asked to relay to council their individual stories about what sidewalk failings mean for individual, to give a voice to the issue.
- Operations suggested creating a survey to assist the AAC in sharing their stories about how unrepaired sidewalks and ramps have affected them.

- **Follow Up:**

- Leanne will gather information about people's experiences with deteriorating sidewalks and ramps as well as note these locations and send to Operations.
- The AAC will reach out to their networks for people to share their experience with Guelph's unrepaired sidewalks and ramps.
- Operations will set up an accessible survey to allow members to share their experience with Guelph sidewalks and ramps.

4. Curb Ramp and Sidewalk Repair Budget Motion- **For Recommendation**- Jennifer Popkey Bergen

- Members recommended developing a motion for the ramp and sidewalk repair budget to be a separate annual fund from the lump sum.
- There was concern that if the separate fund is depleted no more projects could be completed. This was resolved with acknowledging the emphasis that having a separate fund would put on accountability and visibility to the public and media.
- It was determined that stories on specific areas in Guelph from citizens could be used anecdotally to be applied to the locations that operations will later determine to be problematic.
- There was also concern that this separate fund would be used across departments instead of for its intended purpose. It was then confirmed that infrastructure is operations only, and would not be accessed by other departments.

- **Action:**

- The AAC will draft a motion over email that will request the budget be separated from the lump sum. Suggestion to use "critical accessibility infrastructure fund" as a basis for the budget name.
- This motion will be voted on over email.
- Members will contact Leanne their locations of interest for operations to prioritize.

5. Sidewalk Markings Motion- **For Recommendation** – Jennifer Popkey Bergen

- Mara reported:
 - In the last meeting it was decided that paint is the most visible and Operations would rather spend money on fixing sidewalks than purchasing stickers.
 - The paint made people more aware that there is a trip hazard, not just impending service and served as a good tool for educating the community.

- Operations will continue to use yellow traffic marking paint.
- AAC to develop a motion in support of the yellow traffic paint markings through email and report this motion at the August meeting.

6. Transit Mobility: Trapeze Software and Ridership Concerns- **For Information- John Alves, Supervisor of Mobility and Community Bus Services**

- **Deferred**

7. Transit Conventional Buses; Proposed Guelph Transit Priority Project – **For Information – Nancy Button, Supervisor of Scheduling**

- Nancy reported:
 - Public consultation on the transit priority project closes on June 17th.
 - A town similar to Guelph in Oregon has successfully implemented a similar project to the transit priority project.
 - Transit is hoping to have their draft done by the end of June, and have their short term items in the 2016 budget.
 - They are hoping to receive provincial and federal funding for this project.
 - A number of changes will take place in this project, including: roundabouts, transit priority signals and restricting turns.
 - Roundabouts are proposed to help with the flow of traffic and increase safety. A number of benefits about roundabouts were listed including increased pedestrian safety due to lower vehicle speeds and a reduction in collisions.
 - The transit priority project proposes introducing two lane roundabouts into Edinburgh and Gordon, Stone Road and the University of Guelph Entrance as well as Woolwich and Speedvale.
 - Nancy expressed that roundabouts are pedestrian safe, as they are done one portion at a time and have less opportunity for collision than a normal pedestrian crossing. They have a yield to pedestrian sign so that traffic should stop for the pedestrian. It does, however, require you to be alert.
 - Signalizing the roundabout will take away the benefit of the roundabout, so an alternate measure was needed to make it accessible to those with visual/hearing/mobility impairments; however, this was not included in the design stage of the roundabout. Having a traffic light near a roundabout does not hinder the efficiency of the roundabout and allows a flow of traffic better.
- AAC input:
 - The AAC asked whether the studies cited by Nancy separated city and rural roundabouts. It was determined that they were not separated.
 - Concern was expressed for the roundabout proposed to be put at Woolwich and Speedvale, as the area has high pedestrian traffic and many people with mobility limitations and visual impairments. There are also concerns for the Gordon and Edinburgh proposed roundabout.
 - The AAC emphasized that roundabouts are not built to successfully include universal design and most measures to make them accessible are automated (controlled lights as at standard intersections).
 - Reference was made to a case where a guide dog was injured and succumbed to its injuries as service dogs are not typically trained to properly navigate a roundabout. To do so would be difficult as the dog is not able to discern when to stop at the sidewalk and when to stop on an island. At this point the person would have to determine when there is another break in traffic from the other direction.
 - It was also noted that all studies regarding roundabouts and visual impairments have been not conclusive.
 - It was suggested that a straight pedestrian crossing located away from the roundabout seems to be the alternative for people with a disability to use. These

usually require a person with a disability to travel further than an ambulatory person. This is not an acceptable solution for the AAC members.

- AAC members have seen the speed of cars leaving the roundabout as they speed up as they approach the pedestrian crossing.
- There was also concern about how having a traffic light near a roundabout would influence its efficiency.
- It was emphasized that the public needs education on the roundabouts to avoid the learning curve of when they are first introduced and an increase in collisions. Members can also view roundabouts themselves in Kitchener and Waterloo to further educate themselves on the safety and practices of roundabouts.
- The committee inquired if they could connect with other organizations or municipalities to see what they have done to make roundabouts accessible.

Nancy put forth examples of roundabouts in high pedestrian areas that were successful. It was emphasized that roundabouts have a learning curve. She also claimed a properly designed roundabout should be very clear for pedestrians to use. Traffic should also be going very slowly through the roundabout, as they are designed this way. She suggested contacting the Grand River Accessibility Committee to see what they had done to make roundabouts accessible.

Nancy was not able to demonstrate safe crossings of a roundabout for a person who is blind.

8. Recommendation Regarding Guelph Transit Priority Project – For Recommendation –
Leanne Warren

- The AAC will draft a motion that roundabouts in pedestrian areas are not accessible.
- Members will register their comments. Some members may talk to their individual councilors about their concerns with the roundabout as they have a sense from the presentation that their feedback will not be taken into account in this process.
- Suggestion that plans such as these should have to go through the AAC in a similar fashion as site plans.

9. Route Changes- For Information- Nancy Button, Supervisor of Scheduling

- **Deferred**

10. Transit Recommendation Regarding Changes to Bus Route- For Recommendation –
Jennifer Popkey Bergen

- **Deferred**

11. Riverside Park Play Structure- For Information- Leanne Warren

- **Deferred**

12. Site Plan Sub-Committee: Report – For Information – Brad Howcroft

- **Deferred**

13. Other

14. Nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair Positions- Outcome: Nominations– Leanne Warren

- It was determined that nominations will be done by proxy, by July 15th.

- There will be a proxy vote available for the new Chair and Vice Chair during the August meeting. The proxy vote should be in to Leanne at least one week before the meeting.
- Leanne will send the committee a list of member's appointment periods.

August Agenda Items:

Site Plan Sub-Committee Report

Next Meeting:

August 18, 2015 from 3 – 5 p.m. City Hall 112