

Meeting Minutes

City of Guelph

Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

Tuesday, August 18th, 2015

City Hall, Meeting Room 112
From 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, Missy Tolton, Leanne Warren (Liaison), Megan McKay (Co-op student)

Regrets: John Alves (Guelph Mobility), Ruth Russell

AGENDA ITEMS

Welcome to all

1. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Sarah and seconded by Janice
Carried

2. Approval of Minutes of June 16, 2015

Motion to approve the minutes from June 16th by Julia and seconded by Julian
Carried

3. Transit Mobility: Trapeze Software, Stop Calling and Ridership Concern – For Information – John Alves, Supervisor of Mobility and Community Bus Services

- Leanne reported in John's absence:
 - John sends his regrets.
 - Transit is testing out the Trapeze software for conventional busses; Mobility scheduling software within Trapeze is called PASS. This software is also being tested. The testing includes a comparison against the regular schedule.
 - No shows and last minute cancellations:
 - It was hoped that an increase to the hours that Mobility buses were on the road would reduce the number of no shows/last minute cancellations for mobility services. However this has not been the case as the number of cancellations and no shows has increased.
 - John is planning on put a policy into place designed to greatly reduce the number of no shows and last minute cancellations that are beyond the passenger's control. Leanne send the American's with Disabilities Act document regarding procedures for and entitled "No Shows". This will be a good resource document as John develops the policy.
- AAC Comments:

- Concerns were raised regarding what proportions of “no shows” are made by repeat offenders versus total bus users.
- Tasks:
 - Leanne to ask John to determine the number of “no show” repeat offenders versus the total proportion of mobility bus users.

4. Curb Ramp and Sidewalk Repair Budget Motion Entitled: Critical Accessibility Infrastructure Fund- For Recommendation - Jennifer Popkey Bergen

- Motion:
 - The Guelph Accessibility Advisory Committee is very concerned about the number of curb ramps needed at intersections throughout the city as well as sidewalks in need of repair. Both of these conditions create a barrier for people with a disability. Children with a disability walking with classmates on school outings, seniors who walk with an assistive device or who are blind making their way to the bus stop, or visitors walking in residential and commercial areas of our city are at more risk of injury because of these barriers. They may not be able to see the markings on the sidewalk if they are blind, may roll their wheelchair off of a curb that has not been ramped yet, or tip out of their wheelchair on an old steep curb ramp. These barriers have become a critical accessibility infrastructure concern. The Guelph Accessibility Advisory Committee is in support of Operations’ report entitled: (To be added when motion is used in a report) as funding these repairs will make city sidewalks and intersections safe and accessible for residents with a disability.
- AAC Comments:
 - At the June AAC meeting the committee identified that there is a critical accessibility infrastructure issue that Council should be aware of. As a result, this issue has significant impact on people with a disability living and visiting our community.
 - Include a statement of support of the “sidewalk discontinuity and curb ramp report” by Operations; report name is *to be confirmed and added by Leanne once known*.
- Motioned by Mary and seconded by Cathy
Carried

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

- Motion:
 - The Guelph Accessibility Advisory Committee studied the six test styles of sidewalk markings from October 2014 to May 2015. The result of that study is the following recommendation: That the use of yellow traffic marking paint be used to mark sidewalk discontinuities. This treatment provides the “pop of colour” that can be seen by committee members with visual limitations. The purpose of the markings is to call the discontinuities, or potential trip hazards, to the attention of pedestrians. The AAC believe that out of the options provided that yellow traffic marking paint does this.
- AAC Comments:
 - Concerns were raised about a lack of visibility of yellow caution paint on sidewalk discontinuities that are elevated and therefore not visible from both sides and cause safety risk.
- Motion by Brooke and seconded by Julian
Carried

6. Transit Priority Project Motion Including Roundabouts- For Recommendation- Jennifer Popkey Bergen

- Motion:
 - The Guelph Accessibility Advisory Committee has specific concerns related to accessibility and the proposed Guelph Transit Priority Project draft report. The proposed traffic roundabouts are the main barrier in this report and will greatly reduce accessibility at two intersections that currently are accessible and create a barrier at a third location yet to be developed for pedestrians. During 2009 the City of Guelph Accessibility Advisory Committee presented to Council their concerns regarding the installation of traffic roundabouts in pedestrian areas. While committee members at the AAC table have changed since that time, the message has not. Current AAC members are opposed to traffic roundabouts on pedestrian routes. Looking for a gap in traffic and making eye contact with drivers before crossing at a roundabout is impossible for many pedestrians with a disability. The ebb and flow of traffic that is used as a cue for safe pedestrian crossings is not present in a traffic roundabout. In the absence of the ebb and flow of traffic, accessible pedestrian crossing signals provide the needed auditory and visual prompting at intersections. In light of City staff stating that signals take away the benefits of the roundabout the AAC know that pedestrians with a disability will not be able to access these intersections safely as roundabouts do not provide a safe and reliable routes/crossing points for many pedestrians with disabilities.
- AAC Comments:
 - A number of concerns were raised including:
 - Whether the motion would actually influence council decisions regarding the Transit Priority Project.
 - Worry that the project had been presented as though it was already set in motion.
 - Roundabouts put vehicles as a priority over pedestrians.
 - The possibility of a roundabout slowing down emergency vehicles and placing people at risk.
 - Concerned about the effects of Guelph Transit passengers as they ride the conventional bus system, as they are all pedestrians.
- Tasks:
 - Leanne will keep the AAC updated as the Transit Priority Project moves forward.
- Motioned by Brooke and seconded by Laurie
Carried

7. Guelph Transit Route Changes – For Information – Leanne Warren

- Nancy has reported to Leanne that route changes that were proposed will not take place.
- A new process is taking place in 2016 with public engagement, with the goal of changes taking place in September 2016.

8. Parks Engagement for Riverside Park Play Structure – For Information – Leanne Warren

- Parks Planning have finished their community engagement for the new play structure in Riverside Park.
- Feedback from the community has been in favour of the “Earthscapes” design which encourages creative play. A similar design can be found in Exhibition Park.
- There are concerns this design will not be as accessible compared to standardized equipment.

- The AAC were invited to comment on their expectations for accessibility within the playground, specifically whether they were in favour of creative play that may not be entirely accessible if other structures are accessible.
- After viewing the design plans the AAC commented:
 - An emphasis on inclusion is the most important. Even if children are not able to physically use the equipment, they should still be able to access it to be socially included.
 - Physical inclusion is the ideal (being able to use the equipment), but social inclusion is the minimum expected.
 - Concerns were raised whether the colour scheme of Earthscapes met the FADM contrast requirements, as well as the replacement of an accessible “bucket swing” with a “saucer swing” that would not provide as much physical support. A wheelchair accessible swing (that does not require transfer of person) is an ideal addition to any playground and strongly supported by AAC members.
 - Play equipment that provides movement and a tactile experience is particularly stimulating to people with visual limitations.
 - Wheelchair accessible ramps are an important aspect of accessible play, and should lead to play structures instead of “ramps leading nowhere.”
 - A variety of accessible activities will ideally be available to all age groups.
 - The AAC acknowledged the broad spectrum of disabilities, and emphasized both children with a disability as well as parents with a disability being able to access the equipment is of primary importance.
 - A zip line would be supported
 - Accessible parking and seating as well as other amenities to meet the Facility Accessibility Design Manual.
- The AAC determined they would take a best practices approach, and provide the City with a list of best practices to make a playground accessible.
- Actions:
 - The AAC will continue to brainstorm best practices for an accessible playground and inform Leanne of these ideas.
 - Leanne is meeting with Rory Templeton and Janet Sperling (Both Parks Planning Staff) on August 27th. During this meeting, Leanne will make the AAC’s expectations regarding accessible play structures be known.

9. Engineering Drawing for Traffic Island – For Discussion – Leanne Warren

- The AAC was provided with a site plan drawing from Waterloo region that showed a pedestrian island that is two meters in width.
- Comments were made that a similar layout was tested with a guide dog in Guelph and the guide dog did not stop at the pedestrian island as guide dogs are trained to lead their owner from continual sidewalk to continual sidewalk and not stop.
- Pedestrian islands are often not noticeable to guide dogs unless there is a step up.
- A truncated dome design proposed in the site plan drawing would not be noticeable to a guide dog in winter if it were trained to stop.
- Questions were raised whether plans such as these should be dealt with through the AAC, or only the site plan committee.
- It was determined that due to the quick turnaround time required, in the future, plans such as these will be sent out via email to AAC members before the site plan committee meeting. Member’s comments will then be considered during the site plan meeting.
- If it is determined that a given plan warrants a higher level of discussion or the site plan committee cannot reach an agreement, then it will need the full engagement of the AAC.

10. Parking Engagement for On-Street Parking – For Discussion – Leanne Warren Deferred

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

- Brad reported:
 - The site plan committee continues to meet every other Monday alternating between a 1:00 pm or 6:00 pm meeting time, which will be re-evaluated in September.
 - Four new AAC members have joined the site committee.
 - The site plan committee has met each scheduled time and seen a definite increase in the number of plans that they have reviewed.
 - The police station is now under review, the front door is going to be on Wyndham Street close to Farquhar. The committee is asking for two accessible parking spots, one of which would require the removal of a tree in order to be closest to the entrance. However, some staff members are opposed to the removal of the tree.
 - The site plan committee is requesting direction about which next steps to take.
- Tasks:
 - Leanne will send a picture of the tree and parking spots to AAC members the following day.
 - Leanne will also determine the rationale of why the city is opposed to the tree removal and the next most accessible parking spot, and share this with the committee.
 - The site plan will develop a motion and bring it to the AAC.

12. Committee Business

- AAC Manual – For Information – Leanne Warren
 - The AAC Manual has no updates this year and therefore did not require review
- Election for Chair and Vice-Chair Positions- Leanne Warren
 - Votes were taken in person and also taken by proxy
 - Nominees were given the opportunity to speak
 - Brad Howcroft was elected Chair
 - Julia Philips was elected Vice-Chair
- Confirmation of AAC Member`s mailing addresses for Clerk`s office

October Agenda Items:

Site Plan Sub-Committee Report

Next Meeting:

October 20, 2015 from 3 – 5 p.m. City Hall 112