



## Minutes

### ACCESS ABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

3:00 pm, Thursday, June 9, 2016

Council Chamber

#### VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Councillor Patrick Johnstone           | Chair                        |
| Ms. Karla Olson (arrived at 3:10 p.m.) | Community                    |
| Ms. Janet Taylor                       | Community                    |
| Mr. Michael Wilson                     | Community                    |
| Ms. Tracey Block                       | Community                    |
| Ms. Colleen Vogler                     | Community                    |
| Ms. Anne B elanger (left at 4:47 p.m.) | Community                    |
| Mr. Paul Butler                        | New West Chamber of Commerce |

#### VOTING MEMBER REGRETS:

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Mr. Chris Nicholson   | New West School Board |
| Ms. Hayley Sinclair   | Community             |
| Ms. Julia Schoennagel | Community             |

#### STAFF:

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Ms. Lisa Leblanc     | Manager, Transportation<br>Engineering Services                   |
| Ms. Antonia Reynolds | Coordinator, Active Transportation<br>Engineering Services        |
| Mr. Fan Jin          | Transportation Technologist<br>Engineering Services               |
| Ms. Carilyn Cook     | Recording Clerk, Engineering Services                             |
| Ms. Joan Drabyk      | Senior Plan Reviewer<br>Development Services, Building & Plumbing |

#### GUESTS:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Ms. Janet Hanevelt  | Barrier Free BC   |
| Ms. Rob Sleath  | Barrier Free BC   |
| Ms. Joanna Brownell (arrived at 3:18 p.m.)<br>(left at 4:23 p.m.) | Manager (Acting), Access Transit<br>Planning, TransLink |
| Ms. Sarah Chung (arrived at 3:18 p.m.)<br>(left at 4:23 p.m.)     | Access Transit Coordinator, TransLink                   |

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m.

## **1.0 ADDITIONS TO AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

### **1.1 Adoption of the June 9, 2016 Agenda – Committee**

**MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the Agenda of the Access Ability Advisory Committee held on June 9, 2016 be received and adopted with the addition of Item 5.3 Under New Business: Canadian Disability Participation Project (CDPP).*

**CARRIED.**

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

## **2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

### **2.0 Adoption of the Minutes of April 28, 2016**

**MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the Minutes of the Access Ability Advisory Committee held on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016 be received and adopted.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

## **3.0 PRESENTATIONS**

### **3.1 Barrier - Free BC – Ms. Janet Hanevelt/Mr. Rob Sleath**

Ms. Hanevelt introduced herself stating that she is participating in the Barrier - Free BC ("BFBC") movement as she has 90% sight loss and this initiative would greatly enhance her quality of life and the lives of many other BC residents. Ms. Hanevelt then introduced Mr. Rob Sleath, who is the official spokesperson for BFBC.

Mr. Sleath informed the Committee that BFBC's British Columbians' with Disabilities Act ("the Act") is simply to have the BC Government remove access barriers which include barriers in public transit, libraries, parks, entertainment venues, government offices, etc. The Act would apply to all people regardless of whether their disability is visible or invisible to others, permanent or episodic, physical, sensory, cognitive, communicative, or mental health related.

First, BFBC is looking for support from the Access Ability Advisory Committee for this initiative. If the Committee supports the principles of the Act, they could be added to the

BFBC website as a community in support of the tenets of the Act. If the Committee supports the Motion (see attached), it can be taken to City Council for endorsement. Mr. Sleath advised members that a number of other communities and committees are currently considering endorsing the Act and becoming a part of the BFBC network.

Secondly, BFBC is seeking individual support of the Act. Mr. Sleath circulated a form for Committee members to sign as individuals if they would like to show their support for the initiative.

Please see attached Barrier Free BC supporting documentation: '*Barrier-Free BC Background Information*', '*10 Things You Need to Know About Barrier-Free BC*', and '*13 Principles for a British Columbians with Disabilities Act*.'

Members discussed:

- To participate in having this passed at a legislative level, members were encouraged to sign up as supporters; BFBC will keep advocates up-to-date on the progress of having the ACT passed.
- The Federal Government will be holding Canada-wide consultations with the objective of introducing a Canadians with Disabilities Act which would ensure goods, services, and facilities under Federal jurisdiction are fully accessible to everyone. As there are a number of items that fall under Provincial jurisdiction, and which the Federal Government has no control over, BFBC is working towards having the Provincial Government pass the British Columbians' with Disabilities Act.

**MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the Access Ability Advisory Committee endorse the principles as presented to us today by Barrier-Free BC.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the Motion.

Committee members agreed to move forward with the following Recommendation to City Council:

**WHEREAS** British Columbians with disabilities encounter a multitude of obstacles included, but not limited to, physical, sensory, and intellectual barriers; and,

**And WHEREAS** the aging population will experience physical and/or sensory limitations and, possibly, permanent life-altering disabilities as they grow older;

***THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT*** the Access Ability Advisory Committee ask Council to review the draft Barrier-Free BC motion for their consideration and support.

**CARRIED.**

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

In closing, Mr. Sleath asked that everyone use their social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to show their support of the BFBC initiative.

### **3.2 TransLink Q&A Period – Ms. Joanna Brownell/Ms. Sarah Chung**

After briefly introducing themselves, Ms. Brownell and Ms. Chung commenced with the Question & Answer Period.

#### **Members discussed:**

- Councillor Johnstone stated that since he's been on the Committee, there has been a lot of discussion regarding accessibility to TransLink venues. He explained that during the Committee's walkabout last summer (2015), the New Westminster Station was an active construction site; however, there were barriers before construction began which, we as a Committee, had hoped would be addressed during the rehabilitation of the Station.
- Ms. Chung informed the Committee that Mr. Wilson met with them previously to discuss a number of concerns including, but not limited to, reviewing standards for elevators, placing decals indicating wheelchair spaces inside buses, curbed handrails on the Canada Line, ensuring that maintenance/cleaning staff do not block access to areas, etc.
- Keeping bikes and strollers out of the flip-up bench parking area inside SkyTrains, in order to maintain access for wheelchairs and scooters, is very hard to enforce.
- TransLink has created a new training video for staff; it is currently in final production.
- It was clarified that TransLink is responsible for the pole and pole sign at bus stops; however, municipalities are responsible for everything else (i.e. bench, shelter, etc.).
- It's noted that some SkyTrains have a greater space and height between the deck of the train and the platform than others. This can be an issue for wheelchairs with smaller wheels as they tend to get caught in the void. The Commercial/ Broadway Station is particularly hazardous in this respect.
- There is an educational opportunity to teach other riders how to ride respectfully with wheelchairs/scooters and others with disabilities.
- It was suggested that the seat located behind the wheelchair spaces be designated for those who use canes or other walking aids.

- Signage should be placed requesting that elevators be left for the use of people with mobility aids or strollers.
- Poor location of the elevator buttons at the New Westminster SkyTrain Station has been an ongoing issue for years. Elevator buttons at all stations and emergency service bars in all SkyTrains should be low enough for people in wheelchairs and scooters to reach.
- For hearing impaired riders, there is real-time captioning at stations on the notification boards but not on the trains. It was noted that trains should have real-time captioning for situations when the SkyTrain stops in the middle of the track, for example, so all riders can be made aware of what is happening.
- Notifications at stations and on trains should be made in a variety of languages.
- There is a perception that TransLink is not testing these issues with disabled people before implementation.
- It was noted that the City, TransLink, and the property owner need to work together to resolve the accessibility issues at the Columbia Street SkyTrain Station. Ms. Brownell will follow up on this matter.
- Committee members were encouraged to email [access@translink.ca](mailto:access@translink.ca) with respect to systemic issues and to call 778.375.6864 with specific concerns.

#### **4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

##### **4.1 Front Street Mews Disabled Parking – Ms. Erika Mashig/Committee**

As Ms. Mashig was not in attendance, Ms. Leblanc reviewed the concept of instituting more creative disabled parking spots along the Front Street Mews other than what is currently assigned, as discussed at the April 28, 2016 meeting. An example brought forth was the possibility of having some spots designated as disabled until 5:00 pm and reverting back to regular parking after 5:00 pm. Currently, there are three spaces in the center of the Mews designated as disabled parking, however, it would be nice to have more.

##### Members discussed:

- If extra spots were provided, they wouldn't necessarily have to be widened.
- Ms. Vogler will forward some photos of creative parking spaces in West Vancouver to Ms. Leblanc and Ms. Cook.
- Staff can come back with some ideas as the Project progresses.

#### **5.0 NEW BUSINESS**

##### **5.1 New Construction Guidelines – Ms. Anne Belanger/Ms. Joan Drabyk**

Ms. Belanger informed the group that since moving into a new construction home in Victoria Hill, she's widened the door and modified the suite to accommodate her son's wheelchair. She stated that the City should have a certain number of fully accessible

suites considering that at some point in each of our lives any one of us could face being in a wheelchair. Other accessibility options that could be instituted at the time of construction could include but not be limited to:

- Having two elevators rather than one, so that in the event that one breaks down, residents in wheelchairs can still get in and out of the building;
- Lower the elevator call buttons (outside the elevator) as well as the inside elevator push button panel;
- Installation of lever door handles instead of knobs;
- Accessible pathways around the grounds of buildings.

Ms. Drabyk responded that the Provincial Government Building Code cannot be changed by the City; however, it is being enforced. Since approximately 2012, new buildings have a certain number of adaptable units in them. Adaptable suites have wider doorways and corridors, accessible bathrooms, etc. The intention of adaptable housing is to enable people to stay in their homes as they age and/or experience a life altering event.

Members discussed:

- These regulations are applied to brand new construction; there are no grounds for the City to make older buildings upgrade;
- New builds are inspected to ensure adaptability in the designated units;
- The City requires 40% of all single storey units (in multi-unit buildings) to be adaptable;
- Ideally, 100% of the suites would be adaptable.

**5.2 Bus Shelters – Ms. Lisa Leblanc**

Ms. Leblanc asked Committee members for their input with respect to bus shelters within the City. The City is committed, through the Master Transportation Plan (“MTP”), to provide more bus shelters throughout the City and we’d like to receive some feedback on what should be considered as we start to develop our bus shelter program.

Members discussed:

- Spacing between most bus shelters and bus stops is not wide enough for those who need to use the ramps. We need to ensure that riders who use the ramp are closest to where the bus stops.
- The best designed stops have the bus sign where the bus is actually going to stop, including space for a wheelchair to sit under the awning and still be lined up properly for the bus.
- There should not be a barrier wall under the shelter as it blocks drivers from seeing people waiting at the stop.
- Shelters should include wayfinding information for people who are lost or confused.

- Some people are not in favour of benches with dividers that would discourage homeless people from sleeping in the shelters.
- Lighting at shelters should be considered.
- Ms. Leblanc announced that the City will be launching a competition for a “fun” shelter that will be installed in Queensborough and asked members for details they would like considered in the design process of the shelter. Committee members made the following suggestions:
  - It was noted that we should stay away from stripes as they are too problematic and distracting, especially at night;
  - An emergency button may be helpful;
  - It would be useful to have knobs on which to hang shopping bags so that they don’t have to be placed on the ground when you need a rest from holding them.

### **5.3 Canadian Disability Participation Project (“CDPP”) – Councillor Johnstone**

Councillor Johnstone explained that the CDPP is an occupational therapy research group from the University of British Columbia who are working with Simon Fraser University. The group presented to Council at a recent council meeting; they are looking for people who use mobility devices to take part in a study over the summer. Ms. Cook will scan the CDPP pamphlet with the study information and email it to Committee members.

## **6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION**

### **6.1 Action List – Committee**

Mr. Jin explained to the Committee that he will leave TransLink items as “open” on the Action List open until they are resolved.

At this point in the meeting, Ms. Olson brought everyone’s attention to the fact that as of September 1<sup>st</sup>, the cost of transit passes for disabled people will increase from \$45 annually to \$52 per month. This is an increase of \$579.

### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the Access Ability Advisory Committee continue the discussion surrounding the increase in fees of the BC Bus Pass Program for people with disabilities at the next Committee meeting to be held on Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup>.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

**7.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

**8.0 NEXT MEETING DATE**

Thursday, October 6, 2016

**9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

Original Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Councillor Patrick Johnstone**  
**CHAIR**

Original Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Ms. Carilyn Cook**  
**RECORDING SECRETARY**



**AAAC – June 9, 2015 Meeting**

**Item 3.1**

**Barrier-Free BC**

**- Ms. Janet Hanevelt/Ms. Rob Sleath**

## 10 Things You Need To Know About Barrier-Free BC

- Did you know that British Columbia does not have a Disabilities Act which would serve to remove and prevent the creation of barriers for persons with disabilities?
- Barrier-Free BC is a non-partisan, grass roots movement calling for the enactment of a strong and effective British Columbians with Disabilities Act.
- Approximately 604,000 British Columbians with disabilities face unfair accessibility barriers in areas that the Provincial Government can regulate.
- A British Columbians with Disabilities Act would apply to all regardless of whether their disability was visible or invisible to others, permanent or episodic, physical, sensory, cognitive, communication- or mental health-related.
- A significant number of British Columbian's with disabilities still cannot access services and facilities that others in their communities can take for granted. A British Columbians with Disabilities Act would help ensure an equal playing field and enable everyone to fully participate in and enjoy community life.
- The Federal Government will soon be launching Canada-wide public consultations with the aim of introducing a Canadians with Disabilities Act that would ensure goods, services and facilities under federal jurisdiction are fully accessible to everyone.
- Ontario and Manitoba have already enacted disability legislation and Nova Scotia is working on introducing similar legislation later this year.
- In June 2014, the BC Government announced an initiative entitled "Accessibility 2024" aimed at "Making BC the most progressive province in Canada for people with disabilities by 2024". Unfortunately, this initiative is neither mandated nor legislated.
- Barrier-Free BC has developed 13 principles upon which a strong and effective British Columbians with Disabilities Act should be based.
- We cannot do this alone... we need your help! Please "Add Your Voice" at [www.barrierfreebc.org](http://www.barrierfreebc.org) to show your support for this movement and to get more information and updates on our progress!

## Barrier-Free BC Background Information

Barrier-Free BC is a non-partisan, grass roots movement calling on the BC Legislative Assembly to enact a strong and effective British Columbians with Disabilities Act – legislation that will not only benefit persons who have disabilities now but will likely have a positive impact on all British Columbians at some point in their lives.

Approximately 604,000 British Columbians with disabilities face unfair accessibility barriers in areas that the Provincial Government can regulate. These include barriers in areas such as public transit, education, playgrounds, provincial parks, library services, health care, retail outlets, restaurants, recreation facilities, entertainment venues and workplaces, to name but a few.

A significant number of our fellow British Columbians with disabilities still cannot access all aspects of these areas that others in their community can take for granted. We face too many accessibility barriers. We should not have to individually fight these barriers one at a time through endless human rights complaints. We need the Legislative Assembly to enact a British Columbians with Disabilities Act, providing authority for the Provincial Government to do all it can to ensure that persons with disabilities can live in a British Columbia that is accessible and barrier-free.

The Federal Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities will soon be launching Canada-wide public consultations with the aim of introducing a Canadians with Disabilities Act that ensures goods, services and facilities that fall within federal jurisdiction are fully accessible to all Canadians. Both Ontario and Manitoba have already enacted disability legislation and Nova Scotia is poised to introduce similar legislation sometime later this year. Now, even more than before, is the time for British Columbians to seize the opportunity to move forward on the road to a barrier-free BC for persons with physical, sensory, cognitive, communication or mental health disabilities, regardless of whether they are visible, invisible, permanent or episodic.

In June 2014, the BC Government announced Accessibility 2024, an initiative with the goal of “making BC the most progressive province in Canada for people with disabilities by the year 2024”. While we acknowledge this as a step in the right direction, the shortcoming of this initiative is that it is neither mandated nor legislated. We need to convince the BC Government to just say “YES!” to the enactment of disability legislation.

We have developed (and included) 13 principles upon which we believe a strong and effective British Columbians with Disabilities Act should be based. Obtaining your support for these principles and for the call to enact disability legislation will make even stronger the voice of the growing list of individuals, businesses and organizations that are already backing our campaign.

As a non-partisan, province-wide organization, Barrier-Free BC neither endorses nor opposes any political party or candidate. Barrier-Free BC is seeking to have all parties commit to the enactment of disability legislation. We are ready and eager to work with the Government of BC, with all MLAs, and all parties in the BC Legislature on the development of a strong and effective British Columbians with Disabilities Act.

Barrier Free BC was officially launched at the Legislature in Victoria on April 6<sup>th</sup> 2016 and publicly acknowledged in the House by The Honourable Michelle Stillwell (Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation) and by Opposition Critic Michelle Mungall. Now that we are on the radar of the Legislative Assembly, you can help us build momentum and increase awareness by adding your voice to the growing list of supporters. Visit our website at [www.barrierfreebc.org](http://www.barrierfreebc.org) for more information, updates and ideas on how you can let the Party Leaders and/or your local MLA know that you support the call for a British Columbians with Disabilities Act.

## 13 PRINCIPLES FOR A BRITISH COLUMBIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

### 1) **The Act sets a timeline:**

The goal of the British Columbians with Disabilities Act is to achieve a Barrier-Free province within a specific and clearly defined deadline set by the legislation; a timeline which begins immediately upon proclamation and will include checkpoints at regular intervals until existing and on-going barriers are removed.

### 2) **The Act applies to all:**

The Act will apply to all persons with disabilities whether their disability is considered physical, sensory, cognitive, communication or mental health related and will include visible, invisible, permanent or episodic conditions. The Act will apply to all government departments, crown corporations, companies, organizations and any other entity that is regulated under provincial jurisdiction.

### 3) **The Act sets the bar:**

A British Columbians with Disabilities Act will supersede all other legislation, regulations or policies which provide lesser protections or entitlements but will protect any rights which persons with disabilities have already earned and currently enjoy.

### 4) **The Act removes barriers:**

The Act will require the Government, including provincial and municipal regulated organizations, to be made fully accessible to all persons with disabilities by the removal of existing barriers and the prevention or creation of new barriers. These barriers may include but are not limited to physical, legal, information, communication, attitudinal, technological or other barriers.

### 5) **The Act champions barrier-free goods, services and facilities:**

The Act will require all provincially regulated service providers to ensure that their services and facilities are fully usable by persons with disabilities based on principles of universal design. Service providers will be required to develop and implement detailed plans to remove existing and to prevent the creation of new barriers.

### 6) **The Act champions barrier-free workplaces and employment:**

The British Columbians with Disabilities Act will require organizations to take proactive steps to achieve a barrier-free workplace and employment opportunities. Employers will be required to develop and implement plans for the removal of existing and prevention of new workplace and employment barriers.

### 7) **The Act charges Government with the responsibility to lead, educate, train, inform and review:**

The British Columbians with Disabilities Act will require Government to lead the province toward achieving the goals of the Act and fulfilling its mandate. It will further require Government to provide education, information and resources for provincially regulated businesses and organizations which must comply with the Act. The BC Government will be required to appoint an independent person to periodically review and publicly report (at regular intervals) on progress towards the goal of full accessibility.

**8) The Act is enforceable:**

The Act will provide for a prompt, independent and effective process for enforcement. This will include a comprehensive and clearly defined avenue for persons with disabilities who encounter barriers which are in violation of the legislation to raise and submit complaints to enforcement officials.

**9) The Act is made real through regulations:**

The BC Government will be required to make regulations that clearly define the steps needed for full compliance under the Act and that said regulations be independently reviewed a minimum of every four years. It will be open to recommendations made on an industry-by-industry or sector-by-sector basis. This will include a requirement that input be obtained from persons with disabilities and disability-related organizations prior to enactment.

**10) The Act will ensure public monies are not used to create or perpetuate barriers:**

The Act will require that the BC Government ensures that no public money is used to create or perpetuate barriers against persons with disabilities. Government departments, agencies, and crown corporations should be required to make it a strict condition of funding programs, transfer payments, subsidies, loans, grants, capital or infrastructure projects that no such funds may be used to create or perpetuate barriers. There should also be a requirement that procurement of goods, services or facilities be fully accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. The BC Government should be required to monitor and enforce these requirements and to periodically report to the public on their compliance.

**11) The Act is a lens through which to vet legislation:**

The Act will require the BC Government to review existing legislation and regulations identifying possible accessibility barriers and develop timelines to address the shortcomings. Government will review all future proposed legislation and regulations before they are enacted to insure accessibility barriers are not about to be created.

**12) The Act sets policy:**

The British Columbians with Disabilities Act will influence and affect the development and implementation of provincial policy thereby enhancing and improving access to a full range of goods, services and programs not currently available to persons with disabilities in BC.

**13) The Act has real force and real effect:**

The Act must be more than mere window dressing. It should contribute meaningfully to the improvement of the position of persons with disabilities in British Columbia enabling them to fully participate and enjoy community life. It must have real force through effective enforcement mechanisms which lead to real effect.