

**SENIORS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(SAC)**

**November 14, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.
Committee Room 2, City Hall**

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor Chinu Das	- Chair
Wayne Benitez	- Alternate Chair/Community Member
Joy Davies	- Community Member
Calvin Donnelly	- Sapperton Old Age Pensioners' Association Representative
Tim Hicks	- Community Member
Betty McIntosh	- Senior Services Society Representative
Carole Wylie	- Century House Association Representative

MEMBER REGRETS:

Deanna Cavanagh	- Community Member
Tracey Dermirbas	- Fraser Health Authority Representative
Rosemary Dunne	- Community Member
Val MacDonald	- Community Member
Donna MacLean	- Queensborough 50+ Social Club Representative

GUEST:

Frances Blake	- Incoming President of Century House Association
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STAFF PRESENT:

Lisa Leblanc	- Manager, Transportation
John Stark	- Supervisor of Community Planning
Carilyn Cook	- Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

1.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

1.1 MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the November 14, 2019 Seniors Advisory Committee meeting agenda be adopted with the addition of Item 6.5: Civic Participation: Beyond Volunteering by Tim Hicks, Community Member.

CARRIED.

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

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of September 12, 2019 Minutes

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the September 12, 2019 Seniors Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

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

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Transportation and Seniors

Lisa Leblanc, Manager of Transportation, provided a presentation on sustainable transportation which is a part of the City's Strategic Plan in response to the climate emergency.

In response to questions, Ms. Leblanc advised:

- Great streets invite people to linger and window shop or patronize local cafes, stores, etc., along wide and inviting landscaped sidewalks;
- Pedestrian travel behaviour and safety could be addressed with students during the Ride the Road bicycle training that is provided in New Westminster schools each year;
- Developers are expected to provide electric vehicle (EV) ready spaces with chargers and on-street charging stations will help places that cannot install EV charging stations due to utility restrictions; and,
- In order to accommodate the future installation of a bike lane from the Pattullo Bridge to Agnes Street, reallocation of street space from parking may occur, the lanes may be narrowed, etc., changing how people use the street.

Discussion ensued, and the Committee provided the following comments:

- In order to improve accessibility on the City's streets and sidewalks, Committee members made the following suggestions:
 - Sidewalk ramps could have distinguishing features to warn senior pedestrians and others with vision limitations that a slope is coming up;
 - Divots, which could be installed in and around transit stops when the concrete is being poured, would alert people with vision limitations of the nearby stop;
 - The Canadian National Institute for the Blind and TransLink may be able to provide input with respect to tactile barriers; and,

- A Committee member stated that he has heard from a number of people that the Seventh Avenue Crosstown Greenway has become inconvenient with the removal of parking spots, cyclists riding down the road, etc., while another Committee member expressed gratitude that the Greenway provides a safe route to school for kids going across town as it slows the traffic and has controlled crossings, among other things.

In response to questions brought forward from the last meeting, Ms. Leblanc advised:

- Regarding parking in the area around Royal Columbian Hospital (RCH):
 - The roads will not be widened as narrower roads slow traffic down;
 - The City is open to requests for resident permit parking;
 - The new Richard McBride Elementary School is required to have a drop off and pick up area on site, although parents are being encouraged to not drive their kids to school;
 - RCH is asking staff, appropriate patients, and visitors to use sustainable modes of transportation whenever possible; and,
- With respect to extended crosswalk times for seniors and those with mobility issues, the City has coordinated a number of crossings already, however, the more challenging crossings require additional time to adjust.

Carole Wylie, Century House Association Representative, introduced Frances Blake, incoming president of the Century House Association, who will be sitting on the Committee next year. Ms. Wylie conveyed her gratitude to Committee members, sharing that she will miss being at the meetings.

4.0 NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Emergency Shelter Services and Homeless Seniors: Ensuring Access to Services

John Stark, Supervisor of Community Planning, reviewed the on-table handout titled, “Seniors and Homelessness in New Westminster” that outlined his recent experience with a homeless senior which confirmed the need for accessible and inclusive emergency shelters, as well as transitional and supportive housing resources for those with disabilities and other health issues that are experiencing homelessness. The handout included a proposed recommendation to Council.

In response to questions, Mr. Stark advised:

- Approximately 78% of homeless seniors are men, although the number of homeless women is growing;
- There are not a lot of co-ed shelters for seniors couples;

- If the proposed recommendation is adopted by Council, it is intended that the following issues, amongst others, will be addressed:
 - Retrofits to make the Extreme Weather Response Shelter and Stevenson House accessible;
 - Request that BC Housing have their funded program attend to the aging population;
 - Ensure that care is in place for those that suffer from issues such as incontinence; and,
- The recommendation mostly about ensuring that our current shelters are accessible and can accommodate seniors and their varying abilities and needs.

A Committee member stated that the waitlist for affordable housing is very long; however, the Seniors Service Society will assist people in finding housing.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Seniors Advisory Committee, given the increasing numbers of older persons and seniors who are experiencing homelessness in Metro Vancouver and New Westminister, recommends that Council direct staff to prepare a letter to the senior levels of government calling for more targeted programs and services for older persons and seniors in temporary housing situations including additional affordable housing options which facilitate aging in place, enhanced accessibility, and safety related to emergency accommodation.

CARRIED.

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

5.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5.1 Seniors’ Festival Recap

Ms. Wylie shared that a number of Committee members volunteered in the planning the event as well as helping out on the day of the Festival. She noted that everyone enjoyed the event, and that artist and keynote speaker, Robert Bateman, was a very popular attraction at the event.

5.2 Social Isolation and Seniors Next Steps

Mr. Stark provided a short update on food insecurity and social isolation as they relate to seniors. He stated that these are pervasive issues and their profile needs to be raised in the community. He further stated that one way to raise their profile is through articles in the “As We Age” section of the New Westminister Record.

6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

6.1 Seniors Services Society Report

Betty McIntosh, Senior Services Society Representative, announced that the Rotary Club's Age is Just a Number fundraiser was very successful, raising \$27K in just one night and shared that the next event is the annual Santa for Seniors.

It was proposed that the new CEO of the Seniors Services Society be invited to one of the Committees meetings next year.

6.2 Century House Association Report

Ms. Wylie announced that Century House is in full swing preparing for the Christmas Season and invited Committee members to purchase tickets for upcoming events such as the Christmas lunch, the dinner and dance, and the Yule log dinner.

Ms. Wylie shared that with Robyn McGuinness's upcoming retirement, the Association will be working with a new person who will be responsible for seniors services in all of New Westminster, including the running of Century House.

6.3 Sapperton Old Age Pensioners Association Report

Calvin Donnelly, Sapperton Old Age Pensioners' Association Representative, shared that the Sapperton Pensioners' Hall continues to be very busy as there is a lack of other facilities in the area and that the Thursday afternoon exercise class has proven to be very successful.

6.4 Queensborough 50+ Social Club

No report was provided.

6.5 Civic Parks Participation Beyond Volunteering

Tim Hicks, Community Member, passed out a document entitled "Civic Participation: Beyond Volunteering," which included a web link outlining the benefits of civic engagement for seniors.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 Letter and Survey Report re Seniors Care for LGBTQ2S+ Persons (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Two-Spirited & others) Living in New Westminster – Seniors Gay-Straight Alliance

Wayne Benitez, Community Member, summarized the above-noted letter and report, adding that next steps include securing funding to provide queer competency training for entities such as Fraser Health, noting that having an in-house trainer would reduce costs.

Councillor Das advised that Welcoming and Inclusive New West (WINS) Local Immigration Partnership Council includes all facets of inclusion and suggested that Mr. Benitez contact Janet Goosney of the Purpose Society as she has a number of contacts who may be able to assist with this matter.

Councillor Das thanked Committee members for being a part of the Committee this year and reminded everyone that the deadline to apply for this or any other of the City's advisory committees is Monday, December 2nd, 2019.

8.0 NEXT MEETING

To be determined.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 3:44 p.m.

Certified correct,

Original Signed _____
Councillor Das
Chair

Original Signed _____
Carilyn Cook
Committee Clerk