

**SENIORS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(SAC)**

**May 13, 2021**

**Meeting held electronically under Ministerial Order No. M192/2020 and  
the current Order of the Provincial Health Officer - *Gatherings and Events***

**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillor Chinu Das	- Chair
Julia Schoennagel	- Alternate Chair/Community Member
Frances Blake	- Century House Association Representative
Calvin Donnelly	- Sapperton Old Age Pensioners' Association Representative
Rosemary Dunne	- Community Member
Tim Hicks	- Community Member
Donna MacLean	- Queensborough 50+ Social Club Representative
Lynn Radbourne	- Community Member
Brenda Southam	- BC Seniors Services Society Representative

**MEMBER REGRETS:**

Harbir Batra	- Community Member
Val MacDonald	- Community Member

**STAFF PRESENT:**

John Stark	- Supervisor, Community Planning
Jay Young	- Manager, Recreation Facilities
Jacklyn Altamura	- Recreation Supervisor, Seniors Services
Anur Mehdic	- Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst
Christine Edward	- Transportation Planner
Tristan Johnson	- Senior Planning Analyst
Nicole Ludwig	- Assistant City Clerk
Carilyn Cook	- Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m.

**1.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

**MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the May 13, 2021 Seniors Advisory Committee meeting agenda be adopted  
as circulated.*

**CARRIED.**

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

## **2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

### **2.1 Adoption of March 11, 2021 Minutes**

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the Minutes of the March 11, 2021 Seniors Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as circulated.*

**CARRIED.**

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

## **3.0 PRESENTATIONS**

There were no items.

## **4.0 NEW BUSINESS**

### **4.1 Pedestrian Infrastructure and Public Transportation in Queensborough**

Christine Edward, Transportation Planner, advised that she was attending the meeting in order to address concerns expressed by Committee members regarding pedestrian improvements and public transit in Queensborough.

Regarding pedestrian improvements, Ms. Edward informed members of a number of projects taking place over the summer to improve pedestrian infrastructure in Queensborough, such as:

- A temporary sidewalk and lighting from Salter Street at Howes Street to the entrance of Ryall Park. Permanent updates will be included in a future capital budget;
- Multi-use pathways and pedestrian crossings to be installed in relation to construction developments in the Port Royal area flanking Duncan Street;
- Intersection improvements at Furness Street and Duncan Street; and,
- A new traffic signal at Boyd Street and Duncan Street.

Ms. Edward advised of the City's transit priorities for Queensborough, noting that:

- Transit access and services in the Port Royal area is one of the top three priorities being discussed with TransLink;
- In 2019, the City brought the desire for better transit services in Queensborough to TransLink and the Coast Mountain Bus Company resulting in fit tests (buses on narrow streets, access, etc.) being completed on routes for consideration in the area with the potential to adjust the routes, along with the consideration of a longer route in the area; and,

- The City will be submitting Queensborough transit concerns for the Area Transportation Plan for Burnaby and New Westminster as key issues are addressed. The Plan, which will start either this year or next, will include the discussion of major issues such as service delivery in the Queensborough area.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Edward provided the following comments:

- Precautions will be put in place to ensure that there is a safe place for pedestrians to wait as the train passes by the development near Duncan Street and the railway crossing; and,
- Regarding the Pattullo Bridge bike lane connection along Agnes Street, the City is seeking a route which would be at a five percent grade and fully accessible. It is anticipated that the final design of Agnes Street will be complete at the same time the new bridge is completed.

Discussed ensued, and the Committee provided the following comments:

- The Q to Q Ferry may see more business if people could more easily get to it from around Queensborough; and,
- In addition to addressing some of the City's climate action goals, the implementation of a community shuttle in Queensborough would also support population growth in the area.

Ms. Edward shared the following web links which will be forwarded to Committee members after the meeting:

- City Road Works:  
<https://www.newwestcity.ca/planning-building-and-development/roadworks>
- Transit Priorities:  
[https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/ENG\\_2018\\_Transit\\_Priorities\\_Document\\_FINAL\\_May\\_7\\_2018.PDF](https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/ENG_2018_Transit_Priorities_Document_FINAL_May_7_2018.PDF)
- Interactive City Maps:  
<https://www.newwestcity.ca/discover-new-west/city-maps#interactive-maps>

## 4.2 Free-Standing, Self-Cleaning Toilets

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, advised that during the pandemic, access to toilet facilities has become even more difficult for vulnerable populations including seniors and persons living with disabilities, including those with Crohn's Disease and Colitis. Civic facilities were closed and many businesses and non-profits offered limited or no access to washrooms for a period

of time and, due to concerns about hygiene and safety, community members did not utilize the portable toilets which were installed to address the needs of the unsheltered.

As a result, the City began research into free-standing, self-cleaning toilets to determine if this is an appropriate option for the City to address business and resident complaints regarding the increasing presence of human waste, particularly in the Downtown area, as well as to meet the needs of seniors and persons living with disabilities. Research will include staff contacting municipalities with these types of washroom facilities to ask questions as to costs and experiences associated with these facilities including servicing (utility hook up), monthly maintenance, issues associated with the toilets (illegal acts, loitering, etc.) and interventions to address those issues, other lessons learned, alternatives considered, and any other advice and/or information to assist in determining the viability of this washroom option for New Westminster.

In response to Mr. Stark's question, "Are there other questions, particularly related to seniors the persons living with disabilities, that we should be exploring?" Committee members provided the following suggestions:

- Staff could reach out to San Francisco, European, and Japanese cities who have these types of washrooms for information;
- Where, in their city, have municipalities located these washrooms?;
- Special considerations should be made with respect to washroom location, security, and safety lighting; and,
- Costs of storage for the washrooms should be calculated if it is determined that they are not needed for certain periods of time.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Stark provided the following comments:

- Accessibility to business and civic facility washrooms is subject to business hours and, when businesses are open, they may only provide washroom access to paying customers;
- The Access Ability Advisory Committee did discuss the possibility of an initiative wherein participating businesses could post a decal on the frontage of their business indicating that they had an accessible washroom open to the public; however, there was not much interest expressed by the business community in the initiative so it did not move forward; and,
- The Economic Development Committee is looking at signage to direct people to publicly available washrooms and could revisit the accessible washroom decal initiative with the Downtown Business Improvement Association and the Chamber of Commerce as we are in need of strategies that will meet a diversity of needs.

Further discussion ensued, and the Committee provided the following comments:

- The City’s Open Data set which provides a list of publically accessible washrooms would not be useful to seniors and/or those with disabilities who do not use technology; therefore, the decal initiative is a good, more accessible option;
- Lack of public washrooms is an ongoing problem and three portable washrooms will not serve a lot of people; and,
- The Crohn’s and Colitis Society offers the “GoHere” washroom locator app.

### **4.3 Information Dissemination to Isolated Seniors**

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, stated that, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City has developed a number of informational documents to assist community members, particularly those who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic such as seniors and persons living with disabilities. Mr. Stark shared that the list of documents includes:

- Financial Assistance and Government Benefits Bulletin;
- Food Resources Calendar;
- Friendly Support Caller Program Bulletin;
- Survival Guide;
- Tenant Supports and Resources Bulletin; and,
- Trusted Links and Resources related to COVID-19 Bulletin.

Mr. Stark advised that this information is made available by City staff to faith-based and non-profit organizations who are represented on the COVID-19 At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations and COVID-19 Seniors and Persons Living with Disabilities Task Forces for distribution to their clients, guests and tenants. In addition, the information is also included in food hampers distributed at the five food security and resource hubs, and to tenants of the Ross Tower, a potential pilot site for the Hey Neighbour Collective Initiative, which is intended to facilitate social connectedness and resiliency among tenants.

In response to Mr. Stark’s question, “What are your ideas and suggestions to distribute this and other information to isolated seniors, who may not be connected to Century House, the Queensborough 50+ Social Club or the Sapperton Old Age Pensioners’ Association, as well as to faith-based and non-profit organizations?” Committee members provided the following comments:

- The library and mobile library program;
- Vaccination centres;
- Through other food hamper programs and Fraser Health;

- HandyDART drivers and in-home care providers, from either private or non-profit organizations, may be able to share information; and,
- Via an information sharing app which provides information based on what someone is looking for (Tristan Johnson, Senior Planning Analyst, to determine what app this is and share it with Committee members).

## **5.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **5.1 COVID-19 Case Counts and Vaccination Update**

Tristan Johnson, Senior Planning Analyst, shared his presentation regarding COVID-19 and vaccine statistics which included:

- COVID-19 cases by week and month in New Westminister;
- Cumulative cases of COVID-19 in Metro Vancouver and Fraser Valley local health areas;
- COVID-19 vaccinations given to BC residents by week; and,
- Immunization progress in BC by age group.

Mr. Johnson noted that, currently, most of the vaccines given have been first doses, with second doses starting soon, and that a low rate of serious side effects has been experienced with the vaccines. He encouraged Committee members to visit the Fraser Health website for up-to-date vaccination information.

In response to a question from the Committee, John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, advised that staff will follow up with Fraser Health to determine if the Anvil Centre will be used as a second dose vaccination centre, acknowledging that use of the Centre may become limited as programs start to resume.

### **5.2 Seniors Transportation to Vaccination Sites**

Jay Young, Manager, Recreation Facilities, shared that TransLink has partnered with Fraser Health to assist seniors and other vulnerable groups get to vaccination centres. Mr. Young advised that once you have registered to get the vaccine you can then register for transportation through the Fraser Health website at [www.fraserhealth.ca/bookaride](http://www.fraserhealth.ca/bookaride) .

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Young and John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, provided the following comments:

- Clarity will be provided to Committee members after the meeting with respect to parking at Anvil Centre for vaccination appointments and the City's Citypage online newsletter will be updated to reflect this information;

- Fraser Health has not indicated that they would like to use Century House as vaccination centre for second dose immunizations; and,
- Ride information can be included in the hardcopy of city resources that is being shared through the food hamper programs.

Discussion ensued, and the Committee provided the following comments:

- Having transportation to a vaccination centre will alleviate a lot of stress for some seniors; and,
- Publishing the Fraser Health ride information in the New Westminster Record will help spread the word.

## **6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION**

### **6.1 COVID-19 Seniors and Persons Living with Disabilities Task Force**

Jay Young, Manager, Recreation Facilities, provided the following information:

- The Friendly Support Caller Program, which will soon be transitioning to the Seniors Services Society, currently has 37 clients, and 15 volunteers, with each call lasting approximately 20 minutes; and,
- The Tuesday and Thursday Dinner Program continues with about 10 people picking up approximately 30 meals; however, since running the Program out of Century House may not be viable over the long term, other options to provide the service elsewhere are being sought to ensure that the service continues to be provided to those who need it.

Councillor Das noted the benefits of the Friendly Support Caller Program, the Tuesday and Thursday Dinner Program, and Coffee Break with Shelly, sharing that the good work being done by volunteers and staff is much appreciated.

### **6.2 Century House Association Report**

Frances Blake, Century House Association Representative, shared that

- Century House continues to offer a number of online programs such as writing, yoga, knitting, etc., for which internet access is required and, in order to facilitate this for seniors, the Association is working on this issue through the Seniors Embracing Technology (SET) Initiative; and,
- Volunteering with the Friendly Support Caller Program has been gratifying and a lot can be learned from the clients.

### **6.3 Sapperton Old Age Pensioners' Association Report**

Calvin Donnelly, Sapperton Old Age Pensioners Association Representative, shared that while no programs are taking place right now, the Pensioners' Association is looking forward to getting back to their regular activities.

### **6.4 Queensborough 50+ Social Club – Donna MacLean**

Donna MacLean, Queensborough 50+ Social Club Representative, shared that currently the Club is not holding meetings nor events and that everyone is looking forward to getting back to normal once the pandemic is over.

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, advised that with the City's recent Supreme Court success regarding renovictions, links to resources with respect to tenant protection will be circulated to Committee members in order to circumvent misinformation and ensure that everyone knows their rights around this very important issue.

## **7.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items.

## **8.0 NEXT MEETING**

Thursday, September 9, 2021

## **9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

**ON MOTION**, the meeting was adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

Certified correct,

Original Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
**Councillor Das**  
**Chair**

Original Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
**Carilyn Cook**  
**Committee Clerk**