



CITY OF VANCOUVER

OTHER REPORT

Report Date: January 17, 2007
Author: Larry Cantrell c/o
Tina Hildebrandt
Phone No.: 604.873.7268
RTS No.: 6626
VanRIMS No.: 08-3000-11
Meeting Date: April 5, 2007

TO: Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets
FROM: Advisory Committee on Disability Issues
SUBJECT: Annual Report for the year 2006

RECOMMENDATION

THAT this report be received for information.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager submits the foregoing for INFORMATION.

PURPOSE

To provide Vancouver City Council with a report on the activities of the Advisory Committee on Disability Issues for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2006.

BACKGROUND

The Advisory Committee on Disability Issues was established by Vancouver City Council on December 11, 2003. It is a direct continuation of the Special Advisory Committee on Disability Issues, established by Vancouver City Council on November 22, 1977.

Objective

The objective of the Committee is to work to enhance access to City services for persons with disabilities, and to identify and suggest solutions to gaps and barriers that impede their full participation in all aspects of City life.

Terms of Reference

The Committee:

- advises on matters which affect persons with disabilities, including, but not limited to:
 - consulting with City staff during the design stage of planning to ensure that accessibility and the needs of people with disabilities are addressed in facilities design and renovation;
 - providing City staff with information on issues related to disabilities - e.g., taxi cabs, transportation;
 - providing input on disability issues for inclusion in Council reports - e.g., recent changes to building bylaw;
 - working collaboratively with staff on initiatives/projects to enhance accessibility for people with disabilities - e.g., upcoming initiative to make Vancouver the most Disability Friendly City possible;
 - advising on issues related to accessibility for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games;
- contributes to City programs and policies to ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities are considered;
- views City programs and policies through a variety of lenses, including gender, racial origins, income levels, sexual orientation, age and levels of ability;
- works co-operatively with other civic agencies whose activities affect persons with disabilities;
- engages in outreach to the community of persons with disabilities to disseminate information and encourage participation;
- acts as a conduit for feedback from persons with disabilities on civic matters affecting them;
- acts as a resource for staff doing public involvement processes involving persons with disabilities;
- supports groups endeavouring to initiate and develop projects to assist persons with disabilities;
- attends City-sponsored public forums to provide information on City programs and receive public input on disability issues;
- produces an annual work plan with specific objectives by no later than March of each year, in consultation with its Council and staff liaisons, for distribution to Council and civic departments for information;
- submits an annual report to Council describing its accomplishments for the year, including reference to each objective set out in the work plan and any arising issues to which the Committee has responded.

DISCUSSION

1. Membership

In 2006, the following individuals served as members of the Advisory Committee on Disability Issues:

Tasia Alexis	Craig Langston
Jeanette Andersen	Sofia Sciaretta
Sheryl Burns	Kathleen Shiels
Larry Cantrell, Vice-Chair	Patrick Simpson
Jeffrey Christopher	Paul Tubbe, Chair
Susana Cogan	Leanne Wood

Council Liaison:	Councillor Heather Deal
Park Board Liaison:	Commissioner Heather Holden
Meeting Coordinator:	Tina Hildebrandt, City Clerks Office

2. Forum for Disability Issues

The Advisory Committee on Disability Issues provides a forum for the public, members of City staff and outside organizations and agencies to present information and enter into discussion issues relating to people with disabilities. The following individuals appeared before the Committee to speak on the listed subjects during 2006.

Guest Presenters/Subjects

Names of Presenters	Subject
Emese Szucs, SPARC BC	<i>Access Awareness Day, June 3, 2006</i>
Cynthia McEwan, Director, Accessible, Inclusive Cities Project	<i>Accessible, Inclusive Community Cities Project.</i> Vancouver's progress in the development of the Measuring Up Guide (formerly known as the "ratings instrument") was reviewed
Nick Istvanffy, SPARC BC Emese Szucs, SPARC BC	<i>BC Community Accessibility Network (BC CAN).</i> Information session with regard to SPARC BC's mandate, particularly with regard to BC CAN and the Community Accessibility Initiative Project (CACI).
Kathleen Shiels, Western Society for Children	<i>Children under the age of 19 with disabilities.</i> Report on steps taken to increase public knowledge and awareness of the fact that families with disabled children under the age of 19 suffer a heavy financial burden owing to a quirk of provincial legislation. Update on attempts to bring this situation to the attention of the Legislature for remedy.

Names of Presenters	Subject
Bob McDonald, Senior Parking Policy Engineer	<i>Parking.</i> City staff update to the Committee on the current state of Vancouver's on-street disability parking provisions with request for Committee input with regard to draft Council recommendations on proposed disability parking provisions
Jody Andrews, Project Manager, Southeast False Creek and Olympic Village	<i>Southeast False Creek Development.</i> Updated the Committee on the SEFC Development and requested input on matters of concern to people with disabilities.
Roger Bayley, Merrick Architects Karis Hebert, SEFC Planner, Central Area Kyra Lubell, Planning Assistant, Central Area Stu Lyon, GBL Architect Group Grant Miller, SEFC Planner, Rezoning Michael Naylor, SEFC Planner, Central Area	<i>Southeast False Creek Development and Universal Design.</i> An information session in which the Committee was informed about the application of Universal Design principles throughout the SEFC Development. The Committee reminded participants that the SAFERhomes Program does not cover all aspects of Universal Design.
Paul Teichroeb, Chief License Inspector	<i>Taxicabs.</i> Overview on the Vancouver Taxi Roundtable, established to look at issues related to perceived inadequacies in taxi service levels. Issues of driver training were also discussed, as well as the proper ratio of accessible taxis in Vancouver's fleet. Description was offered of a prototype accessible vehicle that will become available in 2007.
May Brown, Chair, Triple-R Review Committee	<i>Triple-R Review.</i> A general discussion of the functions and operations, as well as the problems it encounters.
John Harris, AudioVision Joel Ornoy, VoicePrint Canada	<i>Vision- and Print-restricted persons.</i> Overview of services provided by the two named organizations in providing access to a broad range of print media and televised programming, including candidate profiles and voting locations for the most recent City and provincial elections.
Joe Krapiec, Marpole Curling Club Vince Miele, Marpole Curling Club Derryl Neighbor, Marpole Curling Club Carol Sogawa, District Recreation Coordinator, Park Board	<i>Wheelchair Curling Facility.</i> The Marpole Curling Club sought the Committee's support for their proposal to upgrade their facility for the use of wheelchair curlers.

3. Sub-committees

The Advisory Committee on Disability Issues has established sub-committees in which membership has not been restricted to Committee members. In some cases, sub-committees have been joint ventures with the Advisory Committee on Seniors Issues.

Demographics

- The Sub-Committee reviews published demographic material from government and academic sources on an on-going basis with regard to the present prevalence of disabilities and expected trends over the next few decades.

Housing

- The Sub-Committee, working with members of the Advisory Committee on Seniors Issues, has advocated that the City explore ways of providing appropriate incentives and support to encourage developers, builders and consumers to implement the SAFERhomes Standards and Certification Program on all new residential building projects.
- The Sub-Committee was assigned the task of following up on the advocated application of Universal Design principles by the Park Board and the Board's adoption of the "TrailsExplorer" program which rates trails and provides information on which trails to make accessible.
- Working jointly with the Advisory Committee on Seniors Issues, the Sub-Committee has provided City staff with input and critiques of proposed developments in Vancouver.

Employment

- The Sub-Committee maintains an on-going review of problems and issues for people with disabilities related to obtaining and maintaining employment.

Media

- The Sub-Committee deals with the media on matters of concern to people with disabilities, as well as issues and innovations relating to access to media by people with disabilities.

Outreach

- The Sub-Committee continues its long-term program of reaching out to inform City staff and the general public on issues relating to people with disabilities and advising on ways to ameliorate difficulties.
- The Sub-Committee, jointly with the Advisory Committee on Seniors Issues, met with the Bicycle Advisory Committee to determine areas of common interest and to establish areas of common interest and joint activities.

Transportation

- The Sub-Committee maintains an on-going review of transportation matters of interest and consequence to people with disabilities, as well as on matters of common interest with the population of seniors in the City.

2010 Vision for British Columbians

- The Sub-Committee takes an on-going interest in this 2003 Council initiative and has provided a member of the guiding team.

4. Other Activities

- *Accessibility to Council Sessions.* The Committee took note that barriers continue to exist that make it difficult for people with disabilities to appear before the Vancouver City Council such as, for example, the difficulty people with hearing disabilities experience in attempting to follow deliberations of Council members. The Committee reviews problem areas and offers suggestions on practical improvements.
- *Child Issues.* The Committee continued its attempts to increase public knowledge and awareness that families with disabled children under the age of 19 suffer a heavy financial burden owing to a quirk of Provincial legislation.
- *Homeless Action Plan.* The Committee established a sub-committee to monitor the progress of Vancouver's Homeless Action Plan Report and its consequences.
- *Parking Passes.* The Committee took note that parking passes distributed by SPARC BC and other agencies do not include people with non-ambulatory disabilities. A Committee member was directed to research the matter of making such passes available to non-ambulatory individuals. After meeting with City staff and SPARC, the member reported back that special meters would be required, incurring substantial cost. Further consideration of the matter was deferred to such time as financial and technical solutions become available.
- *Southeast False Creek.* The Committee maintained an on-going watch on decisions relating to the development of Southeast False Creek, particularly in regard to design factors relating to people with disabilities and the housing component.

5. Future Directions

Council has established a new Accessibility Advisory Committee to commence in 2007. The new Committee is intended to be an amalgamation of the Advisory Committee on Disability Issues and the Advisory Committee on Seniors Issues. Members of the existing Advisory Committees have met with individual Councillors and appeared before a Standing Committee of Council regarding the establishment and form of the new Committee. At the date of the writing of this report, a joint-sub-committee composed of members of the current Seniors and Disability Issues Committees was meeting with City staff to create a draft mandate, terms of reference and organizational form for the new Committee for report back to Council.

6. Thanks of the Committee

The Advisory Committee on Disability Issues offers its thanks to individuals who have been of particular aid and service in its final year.

- Desiree Baron, Outreach, Vancouver Public Library
- Diane Clairmont, City Clerk's Office
- Bruce Gilmour, former Committee member
- Tina Hildebrandt, City Clerk's Office
- Monica Kay, Equal Employment Opportunity Program
- Laura Kazakoff, City Clerk's Office
- Emese Szucs, SPARC BC

CONCLUSION

The foregoing information is presented to Vancouver City Council for information.

* * * * *