



## **Inclusion Advisory Committee Minutes**

**March 23, 2021**  
**9:30 a.m.**  
**Virtual**

**Present:**

Dr. Sulaimon Giwa, Co-Chair - Anti-racism  
Joby Fleming, Co-Chair - Empower NL  
Councillor Deanne Stapleton, Council Representative  
Debbie Ryan, CNIB  
Donna Power, Metrobus/GoBus, Accessible Transit  
Kim Pratt Baker, Canadian Hard of Hearing Association  
Megan McGie, NL Association for the Deaf  
Ashley Gosse, Autism Society  
Grant Genova, NL Association of Architects, Universal Design  
Hope Colbourne, NL Association for Community Living  
Renata Lang, Association for New Canadians  
Heidi Edgar, Mental Health  
Jane Simmons, Physical and Neurological Disabilities  
Alyse Stuart, Women's Issues  
Nancy Reid, Coalition of Persons with Disabilities  
Brittany Hiscock, CHHA NL  
Natalie Godden, Manager of Family & Leisure Services  
Sherry Mercer, Inclusion Coordinator  
Trisha Rose, Fieldworker III, Inclusion Services  
Karen Chafe, Supervisor, Legislative Services

**Regrets:**

Trevor Freeborn, Coalition of Persons with Disabilities  
TJ Jones, 2SLGBTQ+  
Shanna Fitzgerald, Legislative Assistant  
Maureen Harvey, Legislative Assistant

**Others:**

Councillor Ian Froude  
Garrett Donaher, Transportation Engineer  
Anna Snook, Transportation Systems Engineer  
Sarah White, Autism Society of NL

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

2.1 **Agenda for March 23, 2021**

**Moved By** Heidi Edgar

**Seconded By** Debbie Ryan

That the agenda be approved as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

3. **ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

3.1 **Adoption of Minutes - February 9, 2021**

**Moved By** Debbie Ryan

**Seconded By** Jane Simmons

That the minutes be approved as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

4. **DELEGATION**

5. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

5.1 **Kelly's Brook Shared Use Path Engagement**

Mr. Garrett Donaher, Manager of Transportation was present to discuss the above cited matter and advised that it will be brought forward to Council for a decision at the March 24th Committee of the Whole meeting. Specifically, Council needs to decide on the material to be used for the Kelly's Brook shared use pathway and as such, the opinions of this Committee are being sought.

The feedback heard so far during the public engagement process brought forth the importance of accessibility as well as maintenance considerations, i.e. water flow/runoff near the trail, costs associated with the trail, etc. Upon investigation, costs over a 20 year life cycle are in the range of \$1 million. The option for asphalt is about 10% over and above that amount.

Co-Chairperson Joby Fleming referenced the discussions held in the Universal Design Working Group wherein it was determined that asphalt and concrete were the most preferred materials in terms of accessibility. Members of the Committee expressed overall support for the recommendation to use asphalt material. The following points were outlined also:

- Concerns expressed about the maintenance of the trails to offset safety hazards such as surface deterioration, pavement cracks, potholes, ruts, etc. Staff elaborated on the base pavement structure of a pathway, the components of which allow water to disperse through layers of gravel which offsets contraction and expansion due to freezing and thawing. The engagement page contains extensive information on the geotechnical report and construction scale for the pathways which outlines in detail various options and specifications.
- Shedding of water off the trail was also referenced and it was suggested that should any weak areas be identified; they should be fortified where necessary. Staff assured that such areas will be identified through the geotechnical report and addressed accordingly. The Committee and Working Group will continue to be consulted as the project unfolds.
- The quality of asphalt was questioned and whether there are specifications in place to ensure strength, durability, etc. Staff advised that the standard used around the City will apply, noting that options are limited.
- Should any damage to the pathway occur such as cracks, etc., will these be rectified in a more timely fashion than is currently the case for city streets? Staff advised that a maintenance protocol must be budgeted to rectify such issues.
- Reference was made to the use of alternate materials to asphalt such as recycled plastic that may have more durability. Staff advised that research was conducted on different materials newer to the market

which were found to be effective as outlined in the background materials; however, costs were prohibitive.

Councillor Froude who was present during this discussion thanked members for their feedback and advised he would relay the Committee's recommendation to Council.

**Moved By** Debbie Ryan

**Seconded By** Heidi Edgar

That asphalt material be used on the trail path on the basis that it is the most accessible option. The Committee and the Universal Design Working Group will continue to be consulted on the detailed design to ensure safety and quality of installation.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **6. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **6.1 Re-Imagine Churchill Square – Concept Plan**

Transportation System Engineer Anna Snook was present to discuss the above noted. She updated the Committee on the visioning/concept plan exercise conducted. Some of the main needs outlined were: wider sidewalks, enhanced lighting, conveniently placed bus stops, to be more pedestrian oriented, more appealing landscaping, and more outdoor amenities. The proposal presented today is an attempt to incorporate these needs in the context of challenges with existing infrastructure and grading. A concept plan is not a detailed design but rather a much higher-level look at a space thus, the process is still at the preliminary stage. As such, specific amenities/objects/structures are not illustrated in great depth on the plan as it is more of a blocking exercise to ascertain what could fit where, all of which will require Council's approval prior to going through a detailed design phase. In terms of feedback from the IAC, staff requested direction on the layout of accessible spaces for parking, noting that the Province's Service NL will have final authorization in this regard. Anna advised that feedback is required in time for her report to Council next week.

Other noteworthy points raised:

- transit stops require more strategic placement and frequency to ensure accessibility is accommodated.

- No objections were outlined in relation to the proposed layby area for public transit, as it was noted that it is always a safety challenge in busy areas to let people on and off GoBus/Metrobus.
- Assurance that sidewalks are kept clear to accommodate public transit passengers. Staff advised that maintenance considerations must be incorporated within the plan. At present, Churchill Square is snow cleared by a private contractor. The businesses in the area have been consulted on the approximate cost to accommodate maintenance within the proposed plan.
- Reference was made to the prevalence of parking spaces in Churchill Square and how these may coexist with pedestrian use/access, i.e., community assembly, passive recreational opportunities, places for people to sit and meet, access to Wi-Fi. Staff advised that a total of 26 fewer parking spaces is proposed in the design. Though it is not obvious in the plan, the idea is to provide lots of space for people to gather in front of businesses, and sidewalk areas will be wider than the norm.
- Reference was made to the practical use by pedestrians given the challenges with weather during certain times of the year and what consideration has been given to shelter. Any space that is created should be usable space and not simply for the creation of space. Staff was asked to address the pedestrian aspect more positively and with more geometry. Staff advised that amenities such as wind screening would happen at the detailed design stage. With regard to pedestrian movements, the provision of connections is important.
- There is a requirement that 6% of the total number of parking spaces must be accessible. The plan currently shows 23 accessible spaces which is just over that requirement. The placement of accessible spaces is important to consider in line with those areas requiring ramped access to business. Terrace on the Square is a challenge in this regard as its entryway is high above ground. Reference was made to a space near Alpine Country Lodge which would provide a convenient connection to the ramp by CIBC.
- Reference was made to examples in the City of seamless procession into buildings, i.e., Walmart and Starbucks where no ramps exist or are required. Concern was expressed about the area becoming a series of ramps and the revamping of the total site may be an opportunity to address the elevation and movement of pedestrians. It was suggested

that there are good examples in Europe of modernized older buildings that have no curbs and use new technologies and designs for accessibility. Staff advised that they have looked at preliminary grading; however, it becomes cost prohibitive to regrade an entire site. To do so will functionally stall the project. There are also implications in relation to impacts on the underground infrastructure should regrading take place.

- It was suggested that one or two additional accessible spaces on Rowan Street near Pinebud Avenue may be beneficial to reduce distance from the nearest curb cut to the businesses along this area. Staff advised this may be a challenge due to stairs in the area, but staff will take it into consideration. It was noted that accessible parking spaces benefit a variety of users who may be able to navigate some stairs such as: canes users, walker users, those with endurance difficulties and not only those who use wheelchairs.
- Is the sidewalk outside the public area adequately wide enough? Staff advised it is 2 meters which is about half a meter larger than typical sidewalks. There is also another 2 meters for pedestrians on the other side as well.
- Reference was made to the demographic of seniors in the area who will appreciate the enhanced space, adding to their quality of life.

## **6.2 Update: Paratransit**

Donna Power, Para-Transit Coordinator updated the Committee on the above noted matter. A synopsis is included in the agenda for the Committee's reference. In terms of the RFP, the deadline is now April 5 instead of March 26th. She will keep the Committee updated as this unfolds.

## **6.3 Ramps Up Working Group**

The Committee considered the Ramps Up letter to David Brockerville, Director of Engineering & Inspection Services with the Province of NL seeking support for this program. The Manager of Family & Leisure Services advised the Committee that this item is for information purposes at this time and staff will follow up accordingly. Joby Fleming signed on behalf of the co-chairs of this Committee requesting the assignment of a member from Service NL to the working group.

## **6.4 Terms of Reference**

The Manager of Family and Leisure Services referenced the extent of items contained within the Committee's agendas, noting that there is merit for more frequent meetings. As such, she suggested that the terms of reference should be changed to reflect a maximum of nine meetings per year instead of the current six. The Committee agreed.

**Moved By** Megan McGie

**Seconded By** Jane Simmons

That the Terms of Reference be amended to a maximum of nine meetings per year instead of the current six.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6.5 Member Updates**

Megan McGie suggested that there is a need for more presentations by the organizational representatives, similar to what occurred earlier in the Committee's term. This provides each organization with the opportunity to raise issues that may not otherwise be raised within the agenda and to share information among groups. Such presentations or updates do not need to be lengthy but rather a short update on general matters. The Committee agreed to give this further consideration.

**6.6 Virtual Meetings held via Zoom instead of MS Teams**

Megan McGie expressed a preference for the use of Zoom as a virtual meeting platform instead of MS Teams, noting that she felt it was more user friendly and accessible. Other members agreed. Staff advised they would consult with IT about this possibility and keep the Committee apprised.

**7. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held at the call of the Co-Chairs.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

CO-CHAIRS, JOBY FLEMING AND DR. SULAIMON GIWA