



## **Accessibility Advisory Committee Information Session Minutes**

**Wednesday, January 8, 2025, 1:08 p.m.**

**Thunder Bay 55 Plus Centre**

**700 River Street**

### **1. Accessibility Advisory Committee Information Session 01-2025**

Chair: Samantha Zrobin

### **2. Members**

Ken Bjorn, Visually Impaired or Blind Representative

John Gobeil, Developmental Disability Representative

Councillor Brian Hamilton, Council Representative

Tara Lennox, Learning Disability Representative

George Saarinen, Hard of Hearing/Late Deafened Representative

Samantha Zrobin, Brain Injury Representative

### **3. Officials**

Krista Power, Director of Legislation & City Clerk

Flo-Ann Track, Council & Committee Clerk

### **4. Guests**

Jessy Bogacki, Program Supervisor - Adult Fitness, Wellness & Inclusion Services

Danielle Thom, Climate Action Specialist

### **5. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Samantha Zrobin welcomed those in attendance and advised, that due to lack of quorum, the meeting would proceed as an information session.

### **6. Communication Process**

Council & Committee Clerk Flo-Ann Track provided an overview of the Committee's communication process.

John Gobeil agreed to manage the speaker's list.

**7. Disclosures**

None.

**8. Boulevard Garden & Maintenance By-law**

Purpose: For Discussion

At the September 23, 2024 Committee of the Whole meeting Report 349-2024 (City Manager's Office - Strategic Initiatives & Engagement) Boulevard Garden & Maintenance By-law was presented as a first report.

At the November 13, 2024 AAC Meeting, Municipal Accessibility Specialist Scott Garner advised that Members of the Built Environment Working Group met at Hogarth Riverview Manor to review photo examples of boulevard gardens and determine potential barriers.

At the November 13, 2024 Meeting of the AAC resident Kyla Moore provided a deputation to the AAC relative to the Report, and members of the AAC and the Built Environment Working Group provided some feedback on potential barriers to Administration.

At the December 16, 2024 Committee of the Whole meeting Report 349-2024 (City Manager's Office - Strategic Initiatives & Engagement) was re-presented along with a Memorandum from Climate Action Specialist Danielle Thom outlining the changes that had been made to the By-law after further consultation had occurred and providing a recommendation that the updated Boulevard Garden & Maintenance By-law as appended to the memorandum be approved, attached for information. Council referred it back to Administration to consider the following:

1. Allowance of shrubs;
2. Exclude planter boxes from height restrictions.
3. Restrict all pesticides, herbicides, and rodenticides; and
4. Allowance of temporary plant support structures within height restrictions.

Climate Action Specialist Danielle Thom appeared before the Committee, provided an overview relative to Report 349-2024 (City Manager's Office - Strategic Initiatives & Engagement) Referral Motion and responded to questions.

Discussion was held relative to the above noted. Some of the items discussed as follows:

- Concerns shared by the Members of the AAC and the Built Environment Working Group at the November 13, 2024 AAC meeting were considered.
- Boulevard gardens must comply with the By-law and be kept in good repair and safety.
  - homeowner is required to sign an acknowledgement and waiver to assume all responsibility for injury.
- Shrubs:
  - height limit.
  - spacing.
  - maintenance.
  - planted outside of planter box.
- Planter boxes:
  - homeowners must register to identify the location of a boulevard garden.
    - some locations are not suitable due to existing infrastructure.
  - high-vis markers to indicate location of planter boxes must be in place for winter snow removal service.
- Synthetic pesticides, herbicides, and rodenticides:
  - only natural products will be permitted.
- Temporary plant supports may be used:
  - Specific types are allowed, must be safe, and removed annually by November 15.
- Vandalism:
  - Enforceable through the Nuisance By-law.
  - Contact the Licencing & Enforcement Department to report, or by calling Central Dispatch after regular business hours.

## 9. Terms of Reference

Purpose: For Discussion

Under Section 3.17, Procedural By-law 51/2021, A By-law to govern the proceedings of Council and its Committees - Purpose and Responsibilities, requires an annual review of the Terms of Reference.

Document entitled "Accessibility Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference - Ratified July 15, 2024", for information.

Council & Committee Clerk Flo-Ann Track advised that the annual review of the AAC's Terms of Reference will be scheduled at the February 12, 2025 meeting.

## **10. Disability Awareness Language**

Purpose: For Discussion

Program Supervisor - Adult Fitness, Wellness & Inclusion Services Jessy Bogacki provided information relating to the City of Thunder Bay's Corporate Orientation Video for Accessibility Training, and the Disability Awareness Language used by narrator Scott Garner, Municipal Accessibility Specialist.

Discussion was held relative to the above noted. Some items discussed as follows:

- it is mandatory that all employees and volunteers take Accessibility Training.
- Person first language.
- Identity first language.
- the term "handicap" should be replaced with "accessible", for instance: accessible parking space.

It was the consensus that person first language is preferred.

## **11. Roundtable of Accessibility Issues**

Purpose: Members to report on accessibility issues encountered in the community.

### **11.1 Lift +**

A Member advised that it is still taking up to 45 minutes to book a ride with Lift +.

### **11.2 Accessible Seating at Fort William Gardens**

A Member advised that when ordering tickets for the upcoming Scottie's Tournament they were unable to book an accessible seat. They were

advised there are only fourteen accessible seats available at Fort William Gardens for individuals utilizing mobility devices, and that they would have to go on the waiting list for one of those spots.

### **11.3 Parkade Floor Drains**

A Members advised that they had recently tripped in a drain that was not covered by a grate as they exited their vehicles passenger side door.

The member provided the following details:

- Victoriaville Parkade, main level, first interior row, second handicap spot from the end near to the building
- The drainage ditch is between the two rows of cars and is about a 4 - 6-inch drop.

Administration provided the following information after the meeting:

- The trenches run along the support column rows in between the parking lanes where vehicles park head-to-head, where people typically have no need to be walking.
- Yellow hazard paint will be re-applied around the drainage trenches as soon as the weather allows.

## **12. 2025 Meeting Schedule**

Meetings of the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be scheduled from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Thunder Bay 55 + Centre, 700 River St. on the following dates:

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

Wednesday, May 14, 2025

Wednesday, June 11, 2025

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Wednesday, October 8, 2025

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

## **13. Adjournment**

The Information Session adjourned at 2:10 p.m.