



## **Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, November 13, 2024, 1:01 p.m.**

**West Thunder Community Centre**

### **1. Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting 07-2024**

Chair: Samantha Zrobin

### **2. Members**

Ken Bjorn, Visually Impaired or Blind Representative  
Tom Brownlee, Caregiver to a Person with a Disability  
John Gobeil, Developmental Disability Representative  
Councillor Brian Hamilton, Council Representative  
Todd Kennedy, Service Agency Representative  
Tara Lennox, Learning Disability Representative  
Ulysses Patola, Citizen Representative  
George Saarinen, Hard of Hearing/Late Deafened Representative  
John (Rob) Wheeler, Mobility Disability Representative  
Samantha Zrobin, Brain Injury Representative

### **3. Officials**

Gordon Stover, Acting Deputy City Clerk  
Scott Garner, Municipal Accessibility Specialist  
Flo-Ann Track, Council & Committee Clerk

### **4. Guests**

Jessy Bogacki, Program Supervisor - Adult Fitness, Wellness & Inclusion Services  
Karen Kadolph, Special Events Developer - Recreation & Culture  
Kristen Pacheco, Assistant Coordinator - Festivals & Events  
Louisa Costanzo, Manager - Community Safety & Well-Being  
Danielle Thom, Climate Action Specialist - Growth  
Tessa Soderberg, Built Environment Working Group

Kyla Moore, Citizen  
Robert Tinsley, Citizen

**5. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Samantha Zrobin called the meeting to order and a roundtable of introductions followed.

**6. Communication Process**

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

Tara Lennox agreed to manage the speaker's list.

**7. Disclosures**

None.

**8. Agenda Approval**

MOVED BY: Ken Bjorn  
SECONDED BY: Tara Lennox

WITH RESPECT to the November 13, 2024 meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, we recommend that the Agenda as printed, including any additional information and new business be confirmed.

CARRIED

**9. Deputations**

**9.1 Draft Boulevard Garden Bylaw**

Purpose: Deputation

At the September 20, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting, a resolution was passed recommending that Administration review the enforcement of a boulevard garden and maintenance bylaw as outlined in Report 120/2021 (Development & Emergency Services/Licensing & Enforcement).

At the September 23, 2024 Committee of the Whole meeting Report 349-2024 - City Manager's Office - Strategic Initiatives & Engagement, presented as a First Report and recommended the draft Boulevard Garden and Maintenance By-law, as appended to the report be approved.

At the October 21, 2024 Committee of the Whole meeting a resolution was passed deferring the re-presentation of Report 349-2024 to the November 25, 2024 Committee of the Whole meeting.

Report 349-2024-City Manager's Office-Strategic Initiatives & Engagement, for information.

Correspondence dated October 23, 2024 from citizen Kyla Moore, was received via email, requesting an opportunity to provide a deputation to the Accessibility Advisory Committee re: Accessibility Concerns - Draft Boulevard Garden By-law.

Correspondence dated November 5, 2024 from Kyla Moore providing additional information related to the Draft Boulevard Garden By-law Deputation, for information.

Kyla Moore appeared before the Committee, provided a deputation relative to the Draft Boulevard Garden By-law and responded to questions.

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

- Draft By-law
  - Limits gardening activities.
    - By-laws require enforcement and regulation.
    - Maintenance standards to ensure sidewalks are clear and free of debris.
    - Permissible uses and plants and height restrictions.
    - Bushes and shrubs create sound barriers, people with visual impairments utilize traffic noise for navigation.
    - Should require an application to ensure the location is suitable and doesn't interfere with site specific conditions.
    - Should not displace recycling and garbage placement.
    - Gardens to be located immediately in front of applicant's property.
    - Neighbours should be provided an opportunity for consultation, same required for a Minor Variance Application.

- On-street accessible parking.
  - Gardens shouldn't be within a certain distance of accessible parking spaces (residential and commercial).
  - Gardens are potential barriers for people with disabilities accessing someone's home from on-street parking.
- Should not be allowed in areas where it would displace recycling and garbage placement.
- By-laws must comply with requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.
- Guidelines:
  - Saskatoon and Calgary provide a guideline not a by-law.
  - No Provincial accessibility legislation in Saskatchewan and Alberta.
  - Thunder Bay uses sidewalk ploughs; Property owners are responsible for sidewalk snow removal in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

The meeting recessed at 1:55 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 2:07 p.m.

## **10. Presentations**

### **10.1 City of Thunder Bay Events**

Purpose: Presentation

Special Events Developer Karen Kadolph to provide a presentation on making City of Thunder Bay Events more accessible.

Special Events Developer - Recreation & Culture Karen Kadolph and Assistant Coordinator - Festivals & Events Kristen Pacheco appeared before the AAC, provided a presentation of City of Thunder Bay Events and responded to questions.

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

- City of Thunder Bay Events.
  - What are we doing well:
    - Events are inclusive and free to attend.
    - The 2025 Season of Events is listed on the City of Thunder Bay's Events web page.
    - Accommodations are provided when available.
    - Most events are hosted at locations on transit routes.
    - Community Partnerships provide additional funding for events.
  - What do we need to work on:
    - Accessible customer service training - vendors and their employees should participate in mandatory training.
    - Snow removal in parking lots, sidewalks and washrooms require additional attention during events.
      - More frequent sanding during freezing rain events.
      - More frequent snow clearing during events.
      - Place displays and vendors closer to the path of travel.
      - Provide Mobi-mats.
      - Advertise the availability of beach wheelchair and other specialized equipment.
      - Include a QR Codes with the Teddy Bear Picnic map so people can scan and go to specific vendor or service provider.
    - Future plan for festival area at waterfront:
      - Electricity strategically placed so extension cords are not placed across sidewalks.
      - Grading to prevent water from pooling.
      - Accessible washrooms.
    - Accessible shuttle for the Kite Festival at Chippewa.

- Administration is working with Thunder Bay Transit.
- Advertising:
  - Print media is still necessary for the Senior market
    - Suggestion: Publish the 2025 Event Season Calendar in the Waste Collection Calendar.
- Survey results determined that parking and accessible washrooms are still a barrier at some events.
- Affordable Access Pilot for Recreation and Transit:
  - Information and applications can be found on the Lakehead Social Planning Council's web site; programs are limited and are provided on a first come basis.
- Volunteering:
  - Volunteers must complete the on-boarding process and meet the requirements for the specific volunteer role.
  - Information and applications can be found on the City's Volunteer web page.

#### **11. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of Meeting 06-2024 Accessibility Advisory Committee, held on October 9, 2024 to be confirmed.

MOVED BY: Tara Lennox  
SECONDED BY: Ulysses Patola

THAT the Minutes of Meeting 06-2024 Accessibility Advisory Committee, held on October 9, 2024 be confirmed.

CARRIED

#### **12. Invisible Disabilities Awareness Week 2024**

Purpose: Follow Up

At the September 11, 2024 meeting of the AAC, Members discussed opportunities to help raise awareness about invisible, hidden disabilities during Invisible Disabilities Awareness Week, recognized October 20 - 26, 2024.

At the October 9, 2024 meeting Municipal Accessibility Specialist Scott Garner confirmed a ceremonial puck drop at the October 25 Thunderwolves game to highlight Invisible Disabilities Awareness Week 2024.

Municipal Accessibility Specialist Scott Garner provided an overview of the Ceremonial Puck Drop, held at the October 25, 2024 Lakehead Thunderwolves game to raise awareness for Invisible Disabilities Awareness Week, recognized internationally October 20-26, 2024, and raising public awareness of the work of the Committee.

Member Tara Lennox dropped the ceremonial puck to start the game and Member Ken Bjorn shared copies of the Multi Year Accessibility Plan.

### **13. Roundtable of Accessibility Issues**

Members to report on accessibility issues encountered in the community.

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

- Transit is still a barrier
  - Difficult to book last minute trips with Lift +
  - No bus service on Christmas.
    - people rely on transit to go to work.
- Host "A day in my shoes" event.
  - Experience what it is like to live with a disability.
  - Potential Open House theme.

During the discussion of the above noted, quorum was lost. The meeting continued as an information session.

### **14. Working Group Updates**

Purpose: For Information

Municipal Accessibility Specialist Scott Garner to provide an update.

Municipal Accessibility Specialist Scott Garner advised that the Built Environment Working Group met at Hogarth Riverview Manor to review photo examples of boulevard gardens and discussed potential barriers, noted by BEWG Member

Tessa Soderberg during the Deputation - Boulevard Garden By-law held earlier in the meeting.

**15. 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, January 8, 2025

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

**16. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:04 p.m.