



MINUTES OF THE FIRST BARRIER FREE SUB-COUNCIL MEETING OF 2024

DATE: January 30, 2024

TIME: 9:03 a.m. to 12:29 p.m.

LOCATION: Videoconference

PRESENT: *Sub-Council Members*
Karen Muir
Gunjan Dhawan
Cindy Gordon
Bev Knudtson
Robert Lipka
Donna Monkhouse
Georg Rath, Vice Chair
Deliany Sather
Chris Chamber
Nathaniel Wagenaar
Ron Wickman
Simon Wunderli, Chair

Safety Codes Council
Erik Salés, Jennifer Johnson

Alberta Municipal Affairs
Linnie Tse

REGRETS: Tanya Befus, Donna Monkhouse

GUESTS: Keith Jansen, BSC Liaison;

RECORDER: Jennifer Johnson

2023 MEETINGS: April 16, June 25

1. Meeting Opening

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. A round table introduction was held and videoconference functionality was reviewed, and members were reminded that their primary duty is to act in the interest of safety in the built environment for the benefit of all Albertans

1.1 Agenda Adoption

The following items were added to the agenda:

Item 4.5 - New Building Code – Increase in Turning Diameter

Karen/Bev Knudston moved that the agenda be adopted, as amended; CARRIED.

1.2 Adoption of the October 24, 2023 Minutes

Nathanial Wagenaar/Bev Knudston moved to adopt the minutes of the October 24 meeting, as circulated; CARRIED.

2. Matters for Decision

2.1. Closed Session

Karen Muir / Robert Lipka moved to enter into closed session; CARRIED Nathanial Wagenaar/Karen Muir moved to exit closed session; CARRIED

2.1.1. Nomination of Miguel Burgos to represent Non-Residential Building Management

Karen Muir/Georg Rath moved to recommend to the Board appointment of Miguel Burgos to the Barrier Free Sub-Council to represent Non-Residential Building Management for a term ending January 31, 2027, effective immediately; CARRIED.

3. Review Matters Arising/Action List

	Item	Action	Date Initiated	Responsible	Status/Update
1.	Link to the Ministry of Community and Social Services	As issues arise and expertise is required, a guest may be needed. Municipal Affairs will look into a connection at the Ministry of Community and Social Services. AMA was able to connect with the Disability Advisory and Engagement branch at the Ministry of Community and Social Services. They will provide qualitative and quantitative data on issues related to the built environment.	Nov 20/19	Tse	
2.	Training on the accessibility requirements in the upcoming NBC(AE)	It was asked whether there will be training on the accessibility requirements in the upcoming edition of the NBC(AE) and	Oct 13/21	Council Admin	

		whether that training would include rationale for the changes. Council staff will request an update from the Training department about what accessibility information will be in the Building SCO code update training.			
3.	Buyers cannot search for accessible homes on the MLS	Further discussions needed to figure out who would be responsible for developing this	Dec. 13/22	Sather	
4.	Consider creating a condensed version (checklist) of the BFDG for developers/builders to assist as they begin work on a new project	This will be a stand-alone document available on Council website.	Dec. 13/22		
5.	Lack of awareness of other disabilities not covered in the code, but are mentioned in the BFDG: Seniors, Hearing, Vision, Communication & Cognition, Bariatrics.	Consider whether upcoming new requirements in the 2020 NBC will be sufficient for those disabilities, or if more requirements should be in the code . Determine if more information should be added to the BFDG for Seniors, Hearing and Vision. More information on Communications & Cognition and Bariatrics was submitted in fall 2019	Dec. 13/22	Knudtson	
6.	Builders do not have access to a certification program that is widely accepted and adopted by industry. Until then there is no will to build accessible homes for the market.	Certification Programs like Rick Hansen foundation and Universal Access etc. do exist but until the government approves these how does a builder know which program to follow?	Dec. 13/22	Sather	

7.	Ambiguities that need clarification within the Code from Municipal Affairs		Dec. 13/22	Tse	
8.	Not all areas of a building accessible i.e. public courtyard in townhouse complex	Helen reviewed current code requirements and found that the code doesn't address this issue. Helen has posted a document on the portal.	Dec. 13/22	Wickman	
9.	Better Universal Toilet Room (more guidance for Designers)	Ron to review current Code requirements to see what is applicable to Universal Toilet Rooms	Dec. 13/22	Wickman	
10.	Parking Meters	Members to work on a best practices document that could be sent to advisory groups and included in the Barrier Free Design Guide	Mar 21/23	Lipka/Rath	
11.	Agility Disabilities Nominating Organization	Council staff will investigate other potential nominating organizations for the Agility Disabilities segment	Oct 24/23	Council Admin	

4. Matters for Discussion

4.1. Barrier Free Design Guide

- The Administrator has completed a draft version of the 2024 Barrier Free Design Guide and will share it in the member portal. The code is identified in blue text with interpretation and best practices are identified with black text.
- Members are asked to review the document and add their comments and any proposed edits by March 1st. [all]

4.2. Power Door Operators

The member representing mobility disabilities shared a document outlining challenges and proposed solutions for accessible operational door controls located at public entrances. There may be an opportunity to include this information in the Barrier-Free Design Guide. The member will review the document and add recommendations.

[Schamber]

4.3. Door Closers

- Door closers continue to pose issues for those without the strength to open them (e.g. the elderly), particularly those who reside in assisted living buildings.
- Members discussed if exemptions are possible but the Administrator explained that life-safety is the highest priority so data would be needed to show this is not impacted.
- It was suggested that members contact students to see if they would conduct a research project, the Administrator offered to work with members to provide contact information.
[Administrator/Rath/Knudston]
- Members discussed the possibility of a joint working group with Building and/or Fire sub-councils regarding the right to cooling and clean air. Council staff will raise the issue internally to determine next steps.

[Salés]

4.4. Parking Meters

There is a document in the member portal for members to review, please provide comments prior to the next BFSC meeting in April.

[All]

4.5. Implementation of New Building Code – Increase in Turning Diameter

It was noted that the 1500 mm turning radius only accommodates manual wheelchairs and some smaller motorized wheelchairs whereas 1700 mm will accommodate 90% of wheeled devices.

4.1. Updates on Focus Groups

4.1.1. Assisted Listening Devices

The member representing Hearing Disabilities will meet with the previous representative to learn more about this item.

4.1.2. Accessible Parking Stalls

Council staff will investigate the status and provide an update at the next meeting. It may be possible to remove this group from the agenda.

[Sales]

4.5.3. Door Closers & Accessible Housing Issues

Covered under item 4.3

4.5.4. Height of Operational Controls

No update.

4.5.5. Segregated Paths of Travel to Accessible Parking Stalls

This item may be complete, will share will members one final time to confirm and move forward.

5. Meeting Finalization

5.1. Round Table

- Members sought clarifications regarding the new code, particularly concerning its application to health care facilities during the transition period. [Knudtson]

5.2. Next Meeting

The next meeting was reconfirmed for April 16, 2024 via videoconference at 9:00 a.m.

5.3. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

– NEW ACTION ITEMS –

4.1. Barrier Free Design Guide

Members are asked to review the document and add their comments and any proposed edits by March 1st.

[All]

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– MOTIONS –

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