

**Richmond VisitAbility Task Force  
12 - 2 p.m., May 22 Meeting  
Executive Airport Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre**

**MEETING NOTES**

1. Recap on phase 1 project deliverables
  - Research Asset Mapping
  - Stakeholder identification and initiative involvement
  - Community plan

**ACTION: A Phase I Action Plan Progress Report has been done and attached.**

2. Action Items from last meeting May 22, 2014
  - Raise awareness about "VisitAbility"
  - Resources Sharing – HAFI
  - Influence on the new building trend

A web page for Richmond VisitAbility Task Force has been created, with a purpose to inform task force members of the project information, visitability resources and task force materials. This site is primarily designed to share resources among task force members, nonetheless it can also give info to people outside of the task force. Useful materials include meeting agenda and notes and reports, presentations and CCDS webinar info, as well as other useful resources such as HAFI (it is suggested to have a HAFI presentation by BC Housing in future)

<http://www.accessrichmond.ca/VisitAbilityWeb/index.asp>

**ACTION: Send this webpage info and link to UDI to inform them of our works.**

3. Discussion of Tom Parker's presentation on "Flex Housing - Homes that Adapt to Life's Changes"

(Presentation slides are available on Richmond VisitAbility Task Force website.)

- ▶ There are various ways to provide possible incentive to promote accessible housing in BC. Tom said that in Yukon they reduce their mortgage as a way to promote and implement accessible house designs.
- ▶ It is commented that the visitability features mentioned in the presentation are within the accessibility guidelines in the zoning requirements. It seems that taking an influence at the zoning level will be more effective than at the building code which has different requirements for high-rise (BC Part 3) and private homes (BC Part 9). It will be hard to influence Part 9 because it is for private homes.
- ▶ Murray Siple, a film director who is a quadriplegic, built a high-end universal-designed home in North Vancouver, through the design of a local architect firm, Acton Ostry Architects Inc. (<http://www.dev.ihcdstore.org/?q=node/168>).

**ACTION: Post the Siple House link on Richmond VisitAbility web page.**

4. Presentation on “Water Entry Issues with Zero Grade Entrance in Richmond” by James Cooper, Building Plans Manager, City of Richmond

Elevated sidewalks and front doors are common in Richmond, but may have evolved from cultural preference that high land symbolizes higher rank or status, rather than because of building requirement to have the main floor above sea level. In fact, “with careful design, both realm of your home and accessibility” can be achieved. There are different ways to do that including design of drops, trench drain, ramp, etc. which are mostly affordable.

Accessibility and universal design go hand in hand, and cultural diversity might be accommodated by creative thinking. So promoting universal design will help the notion of visitability.

Question: Are there any special requirements in Richmond that mitigates or complicates accessibility with housing?

There are Bylaws with Building Regulations, Zoning and Development as well as Flood Plain Designation and Protection, that may impact building elevations. Different areas of the city are affected differently, and there are a number of general exemptions to the Bylaws. Meanwhile City staff is allowed sufficient flexibility to consider different options in building elevation as needed.

Question: For one lot splits into two single family lots, is there a way to leverage the zoning application to include visitability features?

It is possible, that is a matter of trying to influence the zoning requirements vs. the building code.

5. Presentation on “Findings from City’s Affordable Housing Strategy Accessibility Engagement Process”

The dialogue focused on what everyday life experiences and social outcomes, in addition to physical environment of people with disabilities. All the findings would be useful for the space design within a multi-family building model.

6. Discussion on possible “Provincial Uniform Building Code” and how the Richmond VisitAbility Task Force may influence this proposed initiative

The meeting was overrun thus it was decided to defer this discussion to next meeting. Nonetheless, there were talking points related to this topic throughout the meeting, and the notes are collectively recorded here:

- ◆ Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) is consulted by the BC Government to establish a uniform Building Code province-wide. It is suggested to give a presentation to the City of Richmond Council regarding “VisitAbility” concept and how to incorporate that into the building code; or a 1-page position or discussion paper. Some think visual materials should be included as well.
- ◆ It has been suggested to take the opportunity of the upcoming civic election in November, and use the All Candidates Meetings to ask questions, increase public awareness and influence politicians.

- ♦ In viewing of the promotional items from CDDS, it was suggested that we can distribute similar promotion items at community events such as fairs, exhibitions, info expo, open house and block party.

## 7. Planning for Phase II (September 2014 to September 2015)

It is agreed that for next phase, the Richmond VisitAbility Task Force will embark more on promoting "VisitAbility" and our action plan should reflect increased promotional efforts, outcomes and deliverable. Perhaps each membership group (consumers, policy makers and housing professionals) will have individualized action plan. This will be discussed more in detail in next meeting.

### **ACTION: Discuss Phase II Action Plan in September meeting.**

## 8. Next Task Force Meeting

September meeting will be held on **Wednesday, September 24, 2014, from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m.** at the Executive Board Room of the Executive Airport Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre. CDDS Project Team from Winnipeg will join us, with an intent to learn about our Phase II action plan.

### In Attendance:

Aileen McCormack	Richmond Senior Advisory Committee
Alan Hill	City of Richmond, Diversity Services
De Whalen	Richmond Poverty Response Committee
Dena Kae Beno	Affordable Housing Coordinator, City of Richmond
Ella Huang	Richmond VisitAbility Task Force Coordinator
Frances Clark	Board Secretary, Richmond Centre for Disability
George Pope	Community Living BC, Richmond Council
Jamee Justason	Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver
James Cooper	Building Plans Manager, City of Richmond
John Hopkins	City of Richmond, Planning & Development
Joyce Rautenberg	Affordable Housing Planner, City of Richmond
Perry Hoogveld	Realtor, Re/Max
Sarah Ho	Community Living BC, Richmond Council
Sunil Mathure	Richmond Homelessness Coalition / Richmond VCH Family Committee on Mental Health Issues
Tom Parker	Accessibility Specialist, Richmond Centre for Disability
Viet Vu	IT Support, Richmond Centre for Disability
Edmark Lim	Note taker
Ashley Penheiro	Assistant to France Clark