

Richmond VisitAbility Task Force Meeting

Friday, Jun 26, 2015, 2 to 4 p.m.
Richmond City Hall, Room 2.004
(6911 No. 3 Road, Richmond, BC)

Meeting Notes

Topic I: Updates of Richmond VisitAbility Task Force Phase II Action Plan

Sub-Topic: Viewing of Townhome

Some members of the VisitAbility Task Force have visited a townhouse on Maple Rd, Richmond. Here are some of their comments regarding accessible features of the property.

- There is no accessible entrance at the front door or the car porch
- The bathroom had a wheelchair accessible shower
- Doorway to one of bedrooms is too narrow

We discussed whether there is a field for realtors to list accessibility information on MLS® Listings. Currently there is a rating for walkability; perhaps a rating for accessibility is feasible. We have concluded that there is no public demand of accessibility information yet, but we could create demand through public education.

Sub-topic: City of Richmond's Affordable Housing Resource Guide

Housing affordability – Some pointed out that the city should be leading with the affordability of housing market in Richmond. There has been a discussion about the city bylaw that 5% of new units built has to be affordable. There has been discussion to build on what the city has started regarding the affordable 5% of the units that are accessible and make that 10% to be affordable and make 5% of the new units VisitAble.

A draft of the Affordable Housing Resource Guide has been circulated, there is an entire chapter dedicated to accessibility. It is expected that City Council will accept the guide.

Sub-topic: CCDS Award of VisitAble Houses

CCDS announced the winners, but none from BC. There is an award for a housing project of Habitat for Humanity and it was suggested that we probably could make the connection to them.

Sub-topic: Renovators' Survey Report

Some discussions –

- We could identify from the survey the company that is constructing/renovating VisitAble houses and perhaps encourage them to become champions/leader in VisitAble housing in BC
- Perhaps, the survey could be more reader friendly by having a summary/conclusion to appeal to a wider audience
- It appeared that most renovators are working on wall ovens or bathroom, perhaps due to interior design influence.
- It was also inferred that most of people are renovating because of government grants. The market for VisitAble housing is hidden as most consumers do not have the money to renovate their homes. The needs are present, but the resources are not
- We could also promote these companies to the general audience, perhaps, those needing the services to connect the services with the demand
- Based on the survey of 10 renovators who responded out of the 90, 90% said they are interested in learning more about VisitAble housing. This could mean that these companies may be in favour of receiving some training. Perhaps, there is possibility in designing a course, program, or, perhaps, certification for small business builders and renovators
- We may send an invitation to the builder who have done the most accessible features to come to our VisitAble Task Force meeting so that we could learn more from them regarding best practices, the VisitAble Housing market, and to understand more about demand and supply

Sub-topic: Media Package

The intention of the media package is to arouse in media for some public education as well as consumer awareness of visitAble housing designs. There has been some discussion about approaching the local papers and all the regional media. Perhaps, we can do a press release. It has also been suggested to distribute the media package widely to the community and to create significant web presence.

Next Step - The Second phase of the project will end by September. Request has been made to CCDS to extend to end of 2015 to complete all the Action Plan tasks.

Next Meeting – **Tuesday, September 29, 2015, 2 to 4 p.m. Richmond City Hall M2004**