

Richmond VisitAbility Task Force Meeting

Tuesday, March 24, 2015, 12 to 2:30 p.m.
Executive Airport Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre, Room Tivoli II
(7311 Westminster Highway, Richmond, BC)

Meeting Notes

12:30 p.m. Recording Started

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

Sub-Topic: Viewing of Townhome

Speaker: Perry Hoogveld

About the Rancher Townhome

- Unit 22 - 5111 Maple Road, Richmond
- Situated in a 33 unit townhome complex
- 1300 sq. ft., with 2 parking spaces
- Built in 1987

Some features of the VISIBLE House

- Bathroom has a zero grade level entry

We are visiting the VISIBLE House

- Date: April 2nd for viewing before it hits the market
- Time: 11:00 am

Perry's request

- If we could identify what Visitability features that house has so that we could use the right terminology/wordings with its listing.
- If we could also identify what modification does the house still needs to have.

Sub-topic: Survey to Renovators

Speaker: Ella Huang

Current Status

The message was sent to 90 members throughout Metro Vancouver. The target audience of the survey is renovators. We got 9 responses as at March 24, 2015.

Suggestion

- To bring the survey to the small builders group as well

Action to Follow

- Ella to forward survey email to Dena Kae Beno & John Hopkins; deadline extended to April 30, 2015

Discussion about use of survey outcomes

- It is suggested that the task force could connect builders and renovators with knowledge of visitable and/or accessible features to people who need their services.
- A resource list may be developed for this purpose – it is shared with the group that CCDS VisitAbility Project website will be posting provincial visitAble housing resources.

Discussion about specialization of builders

- Based on experience, Mark finds that builders tend to specialize in a certain trade like building green houses for the environment or others. If accessibility could become a niche market, then we could create a demand for it as most builders size up the demand before specializing in a particular trade such as green building or accessible housing.

Ideas about how to promote visitable housing to builders

- Emphasize on market demand – such as aging population
- Effective communication – current and future needs and uses
- Public education

Sub-Topic: Enhanced Builder Licensing Requirement

Early March 2015, an enhanced licensing system for residential builders in BC has been announced. Under the Homeowner Protection Act regulations, the BC government is establishing new qualifications and continuing education requirements for home builders constructing single-family homes and small residential buildings. It will be phased in over the next 16 months to give the industry time to prepare for the new requirements.

See more at:

http://www.bchousing.org/Media/NR/2015/03/04/5590_1503040850-652#sthash.YbPcxmfY.dpuf

Discussion

- Richmond Visitability Task Force would have the opportunity to network with relevant stakeholders to provide inputs to the continuing education courses. Perhaps, a course about Visitable Housing would be included somewhere in the course content.

Action to Follow

- Ella to follow up with Homeowner Protection Office (HPO) Research Dept. to seek channels for input and possible role of Richmond Visitability Task Force
- Joyce has provided a list of contact at HPO to liaise

Sub-Topic: Presentation Arrangement to Richmond Small Homebuilders

Presentation Team: Tom, George, De, Ella

Current Status

- Small Home Builders Association members do not meet regularly, but Dena and Mark can assist to invite them.
- Usually, lunch time works best for them; usually around 15-17 members will show up for a particular meeting.
- We can invite them to a lunch meeting, to present about the Richmond VisitAbility Task Force and perhaps ask for assistance to engage their industry for the survey.
- Dena to connect Ella with an official contact person.

Availability of the Presentation Team

- George preferred Tuesday but has a bit of leeway.
- Tom will be away for one week in April.
- Weekday is better for all the presentation team members.

Sub-Topic: Richmond Age-Friendly Assessment and Action Plan and Affordable Housing Resource Guide

- The Richmond Age-Friendly Assessment and Action Plan has been approved by Richmond City Council, attachment enclosed.
- Dena is in preparation of an Affordable Housing Resource Guide; in which Chapter 4 is on housing design and basic universal design is included.

Topic II: Events Planning

Sub-topic: Doors Open Richmond at RCD (June 6 and 7)

The Doors Open Richmond is an annual event hosted through the City of Richmond. The RCD has applied and is selected to be one of the destinations. It is proposed that the main focus will be to educate the public and showcase visitability features at this highly publicized event. Currently the RCD has planned for display of gadgets that would make daily living activities more manageable for people with different challenges, and it would be a good fit to showcase "VisitAbility" as well. There are many accessible features inside the RCD building, we may plan to have a scavenger hunt for visitors to identify what is and what is not accessible inside the building, then afterward, we will do a presentation for the public on VisitAble Housing.

Response: The Visitability Task Force sees that the idea was very good.

Suggestions: Perhaps the OT Association can be invited to be part of the Open Doors event.

Sub-topic: Access Awareness Forum (June 12)

Sub-committee Team: Tom, Dena, Mark, Ella

The purpose of the team is to set a theme for the forum, plan programs, and make referrals for engaging the right stakeholders for forum. They will have a small group meeting to discuss for the proceedings.

Agenda

- De will be the MC, it is planned to have two MCs
- It will be co-hosted by the Richmond VisitAbility Task Force, the Richmond Centre for Disability and the Richmond Poverty Response Committee
- Keynote speakers and/or panelists
- Some informal networking opportunities

Discussion on Forum Theme

- To heighten the awareness of the general public on VisitAbility
- To build a case for showing a market demand to the builders and developers

Target Audience

- Policy maker, developers and builders
- Broad spectrum of people, UDI, homebuilders
- Market demographic analysts – highlighting future market trends and potential demand for accessible housing
- Advocacy group and people with disabilities so that it would be realistic for policy makers
- Engage the players (planners, policy makers, architects, professional providing future market trends of demographic, advocacy group, and people with disabilities) and raise awareness towards the end goal
- Someone from BCIT

Other Things to Consider

- Ask City of Richmond Mayor to proclaim June as the Access Awareness Month for 2015
- Draft a news release about the access awareness month so that the news release would be timely for the forum

Topic III: Presentation

Some facts about the short presentation from John Hopkins regarding “Re-zoning Process and Related Bylaws”

- In 2007, the City of Richmond adopted basic universal housing features in its Zoning Bylaw
- The requirements for accessible housing features is an optional incentive rather than a policy

- Outcomes – more than 10% of new apartment units are fully accessible; nearly every new townhouse project has provided at least one convertible unit
- In the 2012 the Official Community Plan was adopted, policies encourages adaptable housing features in apartments, convertible housing features in townhouse and aging in place for all
- Provide incentives for all forms of accessible housing
- Development Permit Guidelines for Multi-family is to ensure the development design to have full and unrestricted access; including site design, building design and site accessibility
- Zoning Bylaw – a dwelling unit that incorporates all of the basic universal housing features is considered an amenity, thus is exempted from the maximum floor area ratio calculation – density bonus.
- The bylaws also include guidelines that are consistent with the Province's Adaptable Housing standards.