

**Seniors Advisory Committee**  
**April 16, 2010**  
**MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Seniors Advisory Committee was held on Friday, April 16, 2010 at 9:30 AM in Committee room # 2 at City Hall.

The notes were taken by Milinda Schulz, Observer

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chris Morrissey – Chair, Thomas Brunker, Alice Choi, Dellie Lidyard, Eva Wadolna, Virginia McDade, Sylvia Gurstein, Henry Lee, Al Blakey, Neal Carley, Loretta Woodcock

Others attending:

Milinda Schulz – observer

John Nosotti – observer

Jill Weiss – Liaison – Persons with Disabilities Advisory

Tosia Alexis PWDAC Liaison

Absent: Grace Balbutin,

Approved LOA: Patrick Simpson, Dena Dawson, Colleen McGuinness

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The Minutes of March 5, 2010 meeting were approved.

Moved by Tom Brunker, seconded by Virginia McDade – carried

CORRESPONDENCE FOLDER – There were no items to discuss in the Correspondence Folder.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**1. HOUSING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Jill and Dellie are working on gathering research data and information to support implementing **adaptability guidelines into City Building bylaws**. Dellie is working on obtaining relevant research articles and Jill is summarizing and analyzing.

Difficulties include:

- a. This is a time consuming project partly because SAFER has not provided full documentation, and the global research on Ageing in Place and homes for life is substantial.
- b. Published research for global adaptive housing standards is extensive, and there are several housing models, which include basic accessibility and adaptability for everyone's needs. These include "Lifetime Homes" (UK) and "Flex Housing" (Canada, CMHC).
- c. SAFER standards have no requirement for a bathroom on the main floor of a multi-level unit -- this must be included and is part of what the Chief Building Officer has recommended.

The project is huge, and Jill and Dellie can't say for sure when it will be complete. They estimate possibly the end of May or June for completion of this research.

Eva reported on her meeting with the **West End Seniors Advocacy group**, a follow up to a letter from Gail Hammer to the SAC. There are a few issues affecting the housing situation of seniors living in rental accommodation in the West End, the most important being a general shortage of affordable housing.

Another issue is related to "**renovictions**" (**eviction for the purpose of renovations**) imposed on tenants' the problem of finding temporary accommodation and upon return to their "home" after the renovation, facing substantial rent increases. This is causing many seniors to not report any deficiencies in maintenance of the buildings and on occasion living in squalid conditions out of fear of triggering "renoviction" that could lead to homelessness.

The group had asked Eva to pursue with SAC a recommendation to the City Council that the provincial SAFER (Shelter Aid for Elderly Residents) rules are amended as follow:

- a. To remove the condition that tenants must reapply every year for that subsidy, as it is too onerous a requirement for people coping with aging and illnesses. As well this causes additional administrative cost to the program.

- b. Increase maximum rent limit subsidy from the current in Metro Vancouver Regional District from \$700 for singles, \$750 for couples and \$950 for “shared” households. The cost of most rental units in Lower Mainland is much higher. That limit should be tied to the average rent reported annual by CMHC data for different locations and types of accommodation.

It was also recommended that a housing advocacy position be established at City Hall, which would include liaising with federal and provincial governments.

## 2. **Work Plans for the Housing Subcommittee:**

No 1 – Jill and Dellie’s task is to provide documentation for including accessibility guidelines in the building bylaws will proceed as outlined

No 2 – The committee would initiate the development of a definition of “seniors friendly housing projects” to be continued by the entire SAC

No 3 – Review of current housing projects impacting seniors in Vancouver

The two items previously considered: 1) emergency and evacuation plans for seniors and 2) Age Friendly City criteria development, will be transferred to the entire SAC for further action.

3. **Abbeyfield Housing** Eva reported on attending an Annual General Meeting of the **Abbeyfield Housing** Association in BC held in Vancouver on Saturday April 10.

Eva explained the concept behind Abbeyfield seniors housing (e.g. in Vancouver it provides “room and board” for a senior for a reasonable fee of \$1350/month). However, even at those rates Vancouver Abbeyfield has vacancies. The Abbeyfield Housing concept could be incorporated into the regulatory bases by the City and thus contribute to the diversity of independent seniors housing stock.

Eva will ask Judy Davies, former Board member of Abbeyfield, to come to speak to the SAC on June.

4. **NORC** Eva introduced the American concept of **NORC** or “**Naturally Occurring Retirement Community** “. It was suggested that the West End might be a good candidate for a pilot study in Vancouver.

A discussion followed about the number of issues the housing subcommittee is addressing. Chris recommended that the subcommittee choose 1 or 2 issues only to present to SAC. If other issues are discussed, they need not necessarily be reported upon but segued in priority.

## **2. TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Tom Bruncker reported that the committee did not have a meeting in April but a meeting was scheduled for May 4 10am to 11:30am in Meeting Rm 3. Agenda to include:

- a. Developing a work plan
- b. Brainstorming committee positions
- c. Brainstorming problems and concerns for seniors

## **3. VIRTUAL VILLAGE WORKING GROUP REPORT**

- a. Colleen was not in attendance and unable to report
- b. Chris stated that no organizational meeting had occurred but individual research had begun

## **4. PEDESTRIAN PROJECT UPDATE**

- a. Patrick was not in attendance to report

## **5. INTERIM CHAIR REPORT ON MEETING WITH COUNSELOR STEVENSON**

Chris reported that Counselor Stevenson had not attended SAC meetings but had called to tell her he could hear motions and issues from the Committee and he would bring them to Council.

Neal Carley said he would check who a contact in the City is regarding housing.

## 6. UBC LINE RAPID TRANSIT STUDY

Chris Robertson – City Rapid Transit Office  
Margaret Witkins – Translink Planning Office

Expansion of the Broadway Corridor transit is planned between Commercial Dr and UBC, Info is available on the City website [Vancouver.ca/ubcline](http://Vancouver.ca/ubcline) .

The study includes 3 phases:

- 1) Short listing preferred alternatives to meet future demand
- 2) Develop the benefits and impacts of the preferred alternatives and conclude what would be the optimal alternative
- 3) Design and implementation of the preferred alternative

Eva asked how seniors would learn of the study and its phases. Chris mentioned that seniors' voices are not always heard and they may not go to the internet for information. Seniors need to be identified as important sources of input, especially about accessibility and safety concerns. Chris asked that major concerns for older adults be discerned and reported to SAC.

7. **SFU “AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY” DVD** viewing by SAC members would be arranged by Chris and suggested dates in May send to all.
8. **JANE HYMAN AND TONY DUMOULIN** are confirmed as speakers for next meeting.
9. A discussion of **COMMUNITY GARDENS** occurred. Jill commented that Kerry Jang was interested in that committee. What is needed are accessible pathways throughout the gardens and the surface cost is an issue. Jill will send joint guidelines to Loretta and Neal. Tom and Jill will ask to meet with the parks Board re this. Tom asked Jill for an inspection of the gardens and site visits.

Send other business and agenda items for the next meeting to Chris M.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 am.