
ATTENDING

- Vice Chair Meghan Swanburg
- Birgit Elssner
- Alex Leblanc
- Elizabeth Ann Mills

ALSO ATTENDING:

- Kelton Thomason, Director Parks & Recreation
- Barb Shaw, Communications & Special Projects Specialist
- Laura Morrison, Recording Secretary

REGRETS:

- Mayor Wendy Donovan
- Councillor Jennifer Ingham
- Emily Duffett

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair, Meghan Swanburg called the meeting to order at 4:36pm.

- 1. Approval of Agenda** **MOTION: IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED.**
CARRIED

- 2. Approval of the Minutes** **MOTION: IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE APRIL 17, 2023, ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE BE DEFERED TO THE NEXT MEETING.**
CARRIED

- 3. Public Input** • No public input

4. Introduction of Parks Master Planning Process & introduction of Fathom

- Barb Shaw introduced Rob LeBlanc of Fathom Studios who is working with the Town on the Parks and Open Space Master Plan.
- The role of this committee is to help inform Rob and his team ways to make the parks and open spaces more inclusive from an accessibility point of view. This commitment was made by the committee and is reflected in the first version of the Access by Design Plan.
- Rob provided some information on his background as a Landscape Architect and Planner and some of the past projects he has worked on including the Argyle St redevelopment – which turned a traditional section of street into shared street following a typology from the Netherlands and other projects.

5. Facilitated Discussion (Opportunities to make Wolfville Parks & Open Spaces more accessible)

- Barb asked the committee to share their thoughts on the homework they had been given to think about opportunities to share with Rob to help make our parks/open spaces more accessible. Suggestions made include:
 - Accessible signage and pictorials for the visually impaired and those who cannot read written language.
 - Accessible parking spots.
 - Adult sized equipment such as swings which are stronger and larger built to hold adults. Similar to current swing equipment at Willow Park but with a higher frame, sturdier chains and larger in size.
 - Accessible adult swing equipment where access would not be across gravel or grass but accessed by a smooth pathway and where

approach and utilize from a wheelchair is possible.

- More public green space in the southwest section of Wolfville. Green space there is privately owned and not very accessible.
- Would like to see shade.
- Shade at Reservoir Park could be a mix of natural and built. There is some natural shade on the beach but not accessible for mobility aid users. A mix of natural and built shade should be included. Solar cells could be implemented on top of built shade and used as a power source for lighting washrooms as well as charging stations for emergency cell phone charging. Ensure the design doesn't allow wasps in.
- Capitalize on grant programs.
- Quality control around the contractors carrying out the work to ensure safety for the end users. Contractors to be held accountable if work not carried out to spec.
- Quiet Park could be multi-generational, used by children's centre and nursing home – could be good location for roll-on wheelchair accessible swing.
- Better signage required, should be tactile and high contrast for people with visual impairments. Pathways should be firm and stable not loose gravel and wide enough.
- Accessible activities: bocce ball have a ramp available.
- Accessible mats to access the beach.
- Accessible seats.

- Consider whole journey approach, how do you get there, what amenities are there to do once there, what's safe and fun.
- Seasonal maintenance
- Concerns raised about paving in Gaspereau, heavy trucks used in construction will destroy the sidewalks.
- Discussion around accessibility assessment done with all the parks. Certain parks and spaces easier than others to make accessible.
- In the past a review of some of the parks was carried out and there was work and feedback done.

Action Item: Director Thomason will locate and share that feedback with Fathom to help inform current process.

6. Facilitated Discussion (opportunity to increase feelings of inclusion in Wolfville Park & Open Spaces)

- Walk the sites on a guided tour for those who are going to be using it, include them in process and create excitement. Show them what is being put in and ask for their input. Open to all as much as possible with safety provisions being made.
- Town of Berwick has a good example of signage showing history of town and signs on historic buildings. They are properly colour contrasted and incorporate aboriginal signage. Work with First Nations peoples and include the Mi'kmaq language on signs. Acadia has started this with some of their amenities including phonetics showing correct pronunciation.
- Consider abilities of people, age groups and time of the year they might visit each park.
- Include some creative space.

- Should be destination spots where different groups meet and do lots of different activities.
- Embrace nature.
- Sensory garden with raised beds, smells, tactile plants. Would be good near the library, secure space with benches.
- Forest Bathing.
- More park benches, not just in parks but everywhere especially at bus stops – currently nothing along Pleasant/Skyway corridor or Gaspereau. Everywhere there is high traffic, encourage people to get out and sit and look around.
- Consider accessible benches with a space next to bench for a wheelchair or dog can be. Benches should be with and without arms. Arms on one side, mix what side the arm is on. Helpful to those with no upper body strength. Would like to see 39 inches provided beside the bench. Consider challenges with weather to ensure the bench remains level.
- Space for passing lanes.
- Appreciate Reservoir Park with off leash dog park, well used and have met people from all over the world.
- Willow Park – change of slope is a concern.
- Request Town staff not cut grass before the mud slide for Canada Day celebrations.
- Centreville Park has a great example of an accessible swing. Easy to get to and use and has perfect parking. Suggestion it be looked at.
- Discussion around whether focus should be on one or two top quality accessible parks/spaces or whether it should be spread around to make as many parks/spaces as accessible as possible, understanding budgetary constraints but that this is an ongoing process.

MOTION: IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL THAT THE INVESTMENT IN ACCESSIBILITY BE SPREAD OUT TO MORE PARKS AND OPEN SPACES IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF TOWN AND NOT ON ANY ONE PARTICULAR PARK.

CARRIED.

**7. Accessibility Event
– Wolfville Farmers
Market – Saturday
June 3**

- Access by Design Volume 2 is available in print and digitally. It will be available at the Wolfville Farmers market Accessibility event on Saturday June 3, from 8:30am to 1:30pm. Members of committee are welcome and encouraged to attend and join Councillor Ingham and Barb Shaw.

8. Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 5:33pm.

**Approved at the October 16, 2023 Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting.
As recorded by Laura Morrison, Executive Assistant & Town Clerk, Office of the
CAO.**