

Snohomish County ADA Citizen Advisory Committee for Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: July 11, 2013

TIME: Commenced at 9:06 a.m. and adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

LOCATION: Main County Campus. Conference 4D00, 4th Floor West

ATTENDANCE: John Dineen, Corinna Fale, Oliver Sloboda, Brian Way, Harold Wirch, Jim Bloodgood, Ryan Peterson, Andy Lentz, Nadeem Mohammad, Doug McCormick, and Candice Soine.

Excused Absence: Mark Villwock.

AGENDA: The meeting was conducted following the agenda that was emailed to each committee member several days in advance of the meeting. The agenda items included:

- 1. Introductions** – committee members and County staff introduced themselves and indicated their interests and expertise.
- 2. Committee Purpose/Expectations** – The committee was reminded that their focus was to help the Snohomish County Public Works Department address equal access issues relating to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and that they were being asked to focus specifically on pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way. Concerns with ADA requirements or equal access issues relating to other County programs and services would be forwarded to the appropriate County official responsible for such matters but would not be a focus of the committee.

Committee members and County staff then discussed the general purposes of the committee as touched upon in Article II of the Draft ADA Citizen Advisory Committee By-Laws.

The expectations are that the committee will:

Advise – Jim Bloodgood in his role as the County Traffic Engineer and ADA Coordinator for Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way and the County staff who design, build, and maintain pedestrian facilities. Each committee member offers a unique perspective of the accessibility issues facing the disability community and can help fill in the gaps in the understanding of County staff.

Evaluate – County programs and services that provide pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way for compliance with laws mandating equal access for citizens with disabilities.

Provide Recommendations – for changes that can be made to the County's programs and services to better serve the needs of citizens with disabilities. The committee may also recommend accessibility projects that the County may want to consider adding to the six-year transportation improvement project list.

Plan – Transition plan – how the County is going to make all existing pedestrian facilities in the County ROW compliant with ADA standards to the maximum extent feasible. The committee will help rank & prioritize projects and provide input on a multi-year Transition Plan.

Assist with Outreach/Education – by providing the County with guidance and planning for upcoming public meetings and community surveys. Committee members are also encouraged to reach out to their communities and serve as voices for their neighbors, family members, friends, co-workers, and associates who are interested in accessibility issues.

- 3. Review and Adopt the Committee By-Laws** – the committee reviewed the draft By-Laws and recommended and voted on changes. The approved changes will be incorporated into the By-Laws and a copy emailed to each committee member and posted on the County's ADA website.

The committee voted to adopt the appellation/acronym ADAPROW as referenced in Article I of its By-Laws to distinguish its role as an advisory committee focused on ADA compliance issues in the public right-of-way (PROW).

- 4. Elect a Citizen Co-Chair** – The ADAPROW committee discussed whether it should wait until the next meeting to elect a citizen co-chair to allow the one member who was unable to attend the meeting the opportunity to nominate and vote for a candidate. The committee determined that there was a good probability that they would never have all members present and that with a quorum now present they should proceed to nominate and elect a Citizen Co-Chair.

John Dineen was anonymously nominated by four committee members to be the Citizen Co-Chair of the committee, accepted the nomination, and was unanimously elected by the quorum.

- 5. Overview of the County's ADA PROW Program** - Jim Bloodgood, Doug McCormick, and Ryan Peterson provided a brief overview of the County's ADA programs and services for facilities in the public right-of-way. A summary of the discussion is as follows:

Jim Bloodgood provided a brief history of the County's efforts to provide accessible pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way. It was noted that the County, at the very least, has been providing accessible pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way as far back as the 1970s in conjunction with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Jim pointed out that the along with every other public agency Snohomish County's understanding of accessibility requirements and the application of ADA standards has evolved over the years.

Jim Bloodgood explained that ADA compliance has always been a moving target as requirements have changed and guidance from federal and state agencies has changed. As an example, Jim

mentioned that in the past the County was building curb ramps based on standard plans provided by the Washington State Department of Transportation and blessed by the Federal Highway Administration that were not illustrating ADA compliant designs.

The County wants to be on the proactive in addressing accessibility issues and that is one reason why the ADAPROW committee was formed.

Doug McCormick shared insight into the County's budget for accessibility improvements. In order to proactively address accessibility compliance issues the County has a specific budget item in its six-year Transportation Improvement Project (TIP) list that enables it to respond to citizen requests for accessibility upgrades and fix facilities that may not be compliant with current accessibility standards.

The TIP also includes funding to upgrade curb ramps as part of the annual overlay/pavement rehabilitation program and as part of larger capital improvement or roadway projects.

Jim Bloodgood explained that pedestrian facilities constructed as part of new construction projects must fully meet ADA standards; although there are rare occasions when it is not possible.

Pedestrian facilities that are provided or altered as part of existing infrastructure cannot always be built to fully meet ADA standards due to existing limitations and constraints. When ADA standards cannot be fully met due to existing constraints the facilities must be built to comply to the maximum extent feasible.

Jim explained his role as the County Traffic Engineer and as the ADAPROW Coordinator for the Public Works department in which he reviews requests to build pedestrian facilities to comply with ADA standards to the maximum extent feasible when they cannot be built to fully comply due to existing constraints.

Ryan Peterson described the County's ongoing self-evaluation of the County's programs and services providing accessible pedestrian facilities. County staff have been inventorying curb ramps, sidewalk, traffic signals, and other pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way starting in the year 2011.

So far staff have identified over 6,000 curb ramps in the urban growth areas of unincorporated Snohomish County and identified over 1,000 more locations where curb ramps may be needed. The inventory of pedestrian traffic signal components is approximately 95 percent complete, and County staff recently started an inventory of over 480 miles of sidewalk.

There was further discussion of the curb ramp inventory, the types of ramps included in the inventory and the most comment elements that were out of compliance.

The inventory of non-compliant facilities will be the basis for a multi-year Transition Plan in which the County will bring the facilities into compliance with current ADA standards to the maximum extent feasible.

6. Transition Plan – Did not get to this topic.
7. Fall Public Meeting Schedule/Public Outreach – Did not get to this topic.

ACTION ITEMS:

The ADAPROW committee decided that they should meet again in August to continue the discussion and start charting a work plan. The date and time of the meeting has yet to be determined and scheduling will be facilitated by County staff.

Meeting Minutes taken by Candice Soine, Secretary

