

WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Te Kaunihera ō Poneke

MINUTES

DISABILITY REFERENCE GROUP

*COMMITTEE ROOM 2
101 WAKEFIELD STREET*

Tuesday 28 August 2007

5.30 PM – 7.30 PM

Members

Thomas Bryan (Co-Chair)
Kendall Akhurst (Co-Chair)
Ollie Goulden
Ross Livingstone
Jules Taniwha
Rosie Macleod
Nick Luger
Fabian Todd
Lissete Wesseling
Kaeti Rigarlsford

Guests

Garth Stewart (NZ BUS)
Mark Farrar and Bessie Fepulea'i (WCC)

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the group.

2. Apologies

Sandie Waddell

3. Garth Stewart

“NZ BUS (GO WELLINGTON)”

‘GO Wellington’

- Customer service training.
- Staff Survey - 85% of Staff replied to the survey.
- Staff Feedback included:
 - Not enough training
 - “Tools don’t allow Staff to do Job”
- In-depth training for New staff / Old staff to be retrained.
- Management focus on customer service.
- New identity for Stagecoach Wellington ‘Yellow’ Buses.
- Renewed focus on customer service.
- Culture change.
- Vision – to be the best bus service in the world in a city of Wellington’s size and form.

'Wellington bus service statistics'

- Used by 57% of residents.
- 15 million passenger trips pa/55,000 per weekday.
- 1750 bus trips per weekday.
- 214 buses.
- 300 staff.
- 45% of Buses have wheelchair access.

'Wellington in an International context'

- Compared to peer group of 16 cities in New Zealand, Australia, Canada and USA, GO Wellington's services have:
 - Highest bus trips per capita (101 trips pa).
 - Lowest subsidy per passenger (\$0.64).
 - Highest fare box recovery (67%).
 - Highest journey to work mode share (Australasian comparison only).

'What's important to bus travelers?'

- Reliable service
- Frequent service
- Quick journey time
- Comfortable trip
- Easy to use
- Well presented fleet

'GO Wellington's commitment'

- GO Wellington will invest \$40m over the next 2.5 years to ensure that their vision is realized.
- 90 new buses (60 trolleys, 30 diesels) to update existing fleet and provide for growth.
- 95% fleet wheel chair accessible by end of 2009.
- New customer service training.
- New management focus and systems – need to include a clean and tidy bus fleet.
- New smartcard ticketing system – integration.
- New trolley buses (First one Due Next Month in Wellington).
- Battery controlled switch for drivers to move buses if they loose contact with the lines.
- New diesel buses:
 - 30 new Diesel Buses to Wellington.
 - First 10 in December 2007.
- All new buses in Wellington to have widened rear doors.
- 760mm Front Door Wheelchair Entry.
- Disability Training.
 - Vision Impaired A.B.C – Steven Bennett.
 - Hearing impaired – Darrin Alexandra.

- Walking impaired – Kendall Akhurst.
- Wellington Drivers to do survey
- Bus service will then be known as “Go Wellington”

4. Mark Farrar and Bessie Fepulea’i

“WELLINGTON YOUTH COUNCIL”

- 33,000 Young People in the age group of 12 – 24 years old.
- Youth Disability not as obvious as in other countries such as Britain.
- Positivism towards young focus on what’s ‘good’ not ‘bad’.
- Four Areas of Focus are:
 - Council Internal / External.
 - Events.
 - Youth Involvement.
 - The Sector.
- ‘Want’ to include focus towards youth with disability.
- Youth to be involved in organizing events.
- Sound Vans to promote “Youth Council” Pamphlets and Food.
- Polynesian Festival (Oct 5th Opera House).
- ‘Culture Jams’ (In Community). Youth to be part of conceptualizing (Investment / Involvement).
- Youth involvement in the Arts.
- Youth involvement in ‘All Groups’.
- Open to Anyone (Young People).
- Youth Sector – Regular meetings / Training.
- Funding in Youth Centers.
- Housing (Working in Partnership).
- Anti-Graffiti (Flying Squad) ‘Roading and Traffic’. Removal of Graffiti within 24hrs, active involvement to replace high graffiti effected areas with positive messages in murals by Youth. If the murals get tagged Youth Groups will go back to the location and fix it, to show ‘Taggers’ that it’s their wall.

5. Confirmation of Minutes

- Action ‘Check box’ noted by members

6. Report Back from D.A

Ross Livingstone

Waterfront LTD Submission:

- Sandy presented Tuesday Night, Thomas / Ross / Kendall presented last week as ‘Chairs’ of the DRG.

- New Parks etc have to be Universally Accessible.
- Economic Benefit for Tourists.

Kumutoto Open Space Project:

- Concerns regarding Ramp Access / Tactiles / Handrails.
- Karen Wallace from W.C.C to oversee these issues.
- T.A.G (Technical Advisory Group) should incorporate Universal Access into all Designs.

Wellington Railway Station:

- Ross met with 'On Track', owners of Wellington Railway station, Ruth Dyson Minister of Disabilities, opposition Minister Paul Hutchinson (National MP) Labour Central MP Charles Chauvel and 'On Track' Executive Neil Davies, the DRG report is attached.
- Ross met with Heritage Unit in WCC as follow up.

7. Report Back from Members

Lisette Wesseling

- Karo Drive.
- Steps on Victoria / Cuba Streets have been painted in High Contrast.
- Traffic Island will not be raised, Tactile Pavers to be installed instead.
- Buttons on poles to be raised for cyclists.
- Cycle lane / Walking Path to be changed (This will not happen). Suggestion to have single tactile studs installed to differentiate walking and cycling lanes.

8. Other Business

- D.R.G to have a representation from Youth sector.
- Employment opportunities for disabled youth (Help from D.R.G).

The next meeting will be Tuesday, 11 September at 5:15pm, Committee Room 2.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

ITEM	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBLE	DUE	COMPLETED
Warehouse Parking	Need to go and check site	Fabian Todd	28/08/07	28/08/07
	Meeting with John Howarth	Ross / Fabian	11/09/07	
C.C.D.H.B Representation	Contact Margo Meins	Jules Taniwha	28/08/07	28/08/07
	Forwarded on To Maurice Priestly	Jules Taniwha	11/09/07	28/08/07
Go Wellington Bus service	Approach Engineers regarding 'Belts' being to low for wheelchair users to access. Wheelchair positions and Colour contrast issues. Ross to follow up in two weeks time.	Garth Stewart/ Ross		

ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT REPORT

FACILITY: Railway Station

ADDRESS: Between Stout, Bunny & Molesworth Street, Wellington

CONTACT PERSON: Ross Livingstone - Community Advisor-Disability

DATE OF VISIT: 7 February 2007

DATE OF REPORT: 14 February 2007

The Railway Station

The Railway Station is currently undergoing structural alterations and in the process the matter of access at the front entrance is an issue yet to be resolved.

The Wellington City Council Disability Reference Group (DRG) met with Neil Davies, Commercial Property Manager for Ontrack on Wednesday 7 February 07 to discuss the provision of access to the front entrance which enables the Station to be accessible and inclusive.

It was noted that not even handrails are in place to assist individuals with restricted mobility. While viewing the steps, a parent/guardian was noted pushing a pram, used the steps for egress from the building. First time users, including tourists to the building coming in from the North would travel to the front entrance with the expectation that it would be accessible. There is absolutely no directional signage to alternative exits.

A similar situation exists when individuals with restricted mobility approach the entrance from the city end. It was demonstrated that a ramp exists to the left of the building. There is absolutely no directional signage to indicate this. Members were taken on this journey in order to view the interior of the building. This secondary means of access is not considered an acceptable solution for this building.

Historic Buildings

The fact that this building has historical significance should not affect accessibility. There are some excellent examples throughout New Zealand where access has been successfully incorporated into historic buildings. Two such examples are the AMP building in Wellington and the original Post Office in Hamilton which is now an Art Centre called ArtsPost.

There are also examples where alterations to historic building have had alterations to them. The Wellington City to Sea Museum near Queens Wharf is an example where obviously there was no attempt to design the new structure to blend in with the existing structure.

Furthermore the bus shelters on either side of the Railway Station principal entrance have a modern design that in no way reflects the traditional design of the building they front. The structure is round and is comprised of glass, steel and concrete. It has a very dangerous projection attached to the supporting poles. The purpose of the projection is not known.

It is also interesting to note that looking at the entire complex that even though these building are all connected, the various designs are quite different without taking into account the historic significance of the Railway Station. The result doesn't enhance the aesthetics of the area.

The internal features

Again it was evident that alterations to date have not taken into consideration the overall design of this historic building. Modern glass sliding doors sat beside original wooden doors and original windows. The design throughout is not consistent. Therefore it is hard to see the logic behind accepting that the main entrance not be made accessible.

Surfaces

It was noted that there are no tactile indicators on the edge of the platform. There are very clear instructions on where and how these should be positioned in RTS 14.

Ticket Sales

The ticket counters have been modified to provide a lower shelf for users with disabilities who may have to write a cheque etc and for those who use it to place a handbag or satchel while making a transaction at the window.

But the reach remains difficult for most wheelchair users and people of short stature. Height of counter 1070mm. Height of ledge 780mm.

Doors

The doors separating the concourse and the domed area are the original doors. These are mostly left in an open position. Currently they are barely wide enough especially when the handle projection of 60mm and the floor bolt projection of 50mm are taken into the equation.

It was agreed that a simple solution would be to re-hang the doors so that when in an open position the opening would be double and therefore better for everyone. This solution could also be applied to the main entrance doors.

Toilets

Firstly the signage indicating Parent Room/Baby Change Facilities is incorrect. It leads to no where.

The location is actually the same as the Male and Female toilets. The accessible toilets are referred to as “Paraplegic Toilets”.

Secondly the main doors into both toilets have very heavy doors with a ramp immediately inside leading to the toilet cubicles. They were most difficult to operate and manoeuvre into.

Women’s. An existing toilet cubicle has been modified to comply with access. All features are accessible and usable.

Mens. Same.

It was agreed that while the Women’s cubicle was accessible the entrance to and from did not comply and needed changing. This applied also to the Men’s entrance.

The signage indicating location of toilets should include the ISA. This will save travellers with disabilities desperately trying to locate an accessible toilet in another location.

Ramps

There are several ramps throughout the entire complex. Some meet the minimum requirements of the Building Code but the most important one doesn’t. This leads to and from Terminal 2. It was not tested with the correct measuring tool but the test for the wheelies was that it is most difficult to traverse and was impossible for one member of the group. Therefore the gradient must be revisited to determine compliance but the most important requirement is usability.

It was agreed that the gradient of the ramp should be investigated.

It was also agreed that a clever architect would be able to design a ramp at the main entrance that wouldn’t detract from the historic appearance of the building. This has been successfully achieved in other parts of New Zealand so why not Wellington.

Signage

The signage throughout is not consistent. The concourse and platform area have large blue signs on a pale blue background which are very good but other notices and signs throughout the complex are white on a grey background.

It was also noted that in two situations the ISA is posted on two sliding doors that lead only to steps. The location is the first entrance in the Terminal 2 building and the first entrance of Terminal 1 building directly opposite the café.

CONCLUSION

Before any building consent is issued due cognisance must be taken of the following requirements of the Building Act and relevant Compliance Documents.

Alteration to existing buildings. Under section 112 a Building Consent Authority (BCA) cannot grant a building consent for alterations to an existing building, or part of an existing building, unless it is satisfied that, after the alteration, the building complies with the provisions of the building code for access and facilities for people with disabilities **"as nearly as is reasonably practicable with the provisions of the building code that relate to access and facilities for persons with disabilities"**, This means that even when a building consent is required for refit or alterations to only part of a building, it is the *entire* building that must comply as nearly as is reasonably practicable with the access requirements.

Waivers. A Building Consent Authority has no power (section 67) to grant a waiver or modification of access provisions because under section 69, only the Chief Executive can grant these by way of a Determination. This applies to alterations only. Determinations by the previous Building Industry Authority, now the Department of Building and Housing, established the principle that disadvantages to the building owner of providing access and facilities do not outweigh disadvantages to people with disabilities if access facilities are not provided.

Change of use. Under section 115 **a change of use occurred when the New World Supermarket applied to operate from within the Station proper. The two entrances to the supermarket are level with automatic doors and these open from the concourse and from the main domed entrance. Apparently the matter of access to the supermarket from the front of the station was considered but not pursued because there is an accessible journey via alternative routes for parents with prams and those with restricted mobility. The fact is that, these routes are longer and take some time to find and, in the view of the DRG disadvantages people with disabilities, seniors and other people with restricted mobility.**

The Accessible Journey. In order to comply with access requirements a building must have an "Accessible Route". Defined in NZS 4121 as:

"This is defined as a continuous route that can be negotiated unaided by a wheelchair user, walking device or a person with a guide dog. The route shall extend from street boundary and car parking area to those spaces within the building required to be accessible to enable people with disabilities to carry out normal activities and processes within the building"

Therefore, it is very clear that the access route must begin at the street boundary as there is no parking area adjacent to the Railway Station. So serious consideration must be given to providing access at the main entrance to the Railway Station.

Other features that require attention are

- gradient of main ramp connecting to Terminals 1 and 2
- provision of appropriately designed handrails affixed to the poles by the steps at the main entrance

- provision of clear colour contrasted signage throughout the buildings
- including the ISA symbol on the sign identifying the M and F toilets
- removal of ISA from sliding glass doors that lead only to stairs
- consultation with the blind community to ensure tactile indicators are provided appropriately on platforms and wherever else they may be needed
- adjustment to the door closer to the entrances at M and F toilets
- re-hang central doors between the concourse and domed area in order to provide a better opening width for all users.

Ross Livingstone
Community Advisor-Disability

Thomas Bryan
Co-Chair Disability Reference Group