

DISABILITY REFERENCE GROUP

MINUTES

5.30 P.M. – Tuesday 8th September, 2009

Committee Room 2

Members Present

Sara Pivac Alexander (Co-Chair)
Rosie Macleod (Co-Chair)
Jules Taniwha
Thomas Bryan
James Tait
Sandie Waddell
Lisette Wesseling
Alan Royal
Philippa McDonald

Also Present

Jenny Rains (WCC)
Jula Goebel (WCC)
Councillor Iona Pannett

1. Welcome

The chair welcomed the group and thanked everyone for attending.

2. Apologies

All members were present for this meeting.

3. Simon Kennett – Greater Wellington: Walking & Cycling Planner Website

Simon Kennett presented to the group about the walking and cycling website that is to be made live shortly. This website came about because of the high cost and difficulty of updating data for the current walking and cycling maps. They are hoping to launch this website on 30 September in time for the World Car Free Day. He then went on to explain how the website will look and what data it contains. The website includes data and information from Google maps, Terralink, Greater Wellington, private data, and the Department of Conservation. The website will be able to provide information on the length of your trip and how long it will take you (this data can be manipulated for faster and slower pace journeys); it contains an altitude graph showing hills; you are able to change the direction of the route if you do not like the route provided; it provides a calorie counter; weather forecast, points of interest (these points of interest can also be zoomed in on) and you can also view your trip in different map form, ie, satellite and hybrid.

Questions & Comments:

Why develop another map as opposed to using Google maps that already exist? *Google maps are an international company, they have their own*

priorities when it comes to websites and they only want to deliver a service that can advertise to large numbers and have no interest in smaller groups like cyclists as they are a marginal mode of transport. We also wanted a website that could be updated quickly and had detailed information.

What experience did the design company have with regard to designing accessible websites? *Unfortunately I do not have this information.*

It was noted that when some members of the DRG tried to use the site they could not get the directions to work.

It was noted that if you are a tourist to Wellington and unfamiliar with the city it would be helpful to have side streets noted on the directions because street signs are not always visible.

It was noted that, from an accessibility point of view, members found this website disappointing due to the buttons not being labelled properly and there was no reference to accessibility on the site. The north/south button needs to be made clearer when used in conjunction with the map and there is a problem with the colour contrast. *With regard to the comment around direction this is a problem that we are still working on.*

Why was this website not integrated with the public transport journey planner? *The Metlink journey planner was built by an overseas web design company and there is a problem with keeping this site up-to-date. There is a link built into the directions and you will be flagged to use this if your journey is over half an hour and your addresses will be automatically transferred into this website. We did not want to duplicate the website and wanted to use a local web designer so that this website could be updated frequently. The Metlink website does not have sufficient data for walking.*

We will be making some further changes to the website including adding an icon for steps where you will be given a warning if your journey includes steps; a warning for roads without footpaths; it will show where there are mobility parks; and there will be better altitude data that will show steep streets. We are currently working through data anomalies and expect this will take till the end of the year. We will also need assistance from the public to make sure the points of interest are correct.

Have you considered adding accessible information like accessible ATM machines? *We can look into adding this information.* Do you also need to have the number of the building in the street or can you use the name of the building? *The address finder is a separate website and at the moment this website will not recognise building names. We hope to add this feature in the next six months.*

Can the site answer questions like where is the nearest bank? *This is probably not possible because of the huge layer of data that needs to be added. The website will include a list of other useful websites that can be used to obtain this type of information.*

Will the website be able to tell you if a building is accessible? *No it is not designed to provide this type of information.*

4. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a true and accurate record by Sandie Waddell and then by the whole group.

5. Report from the Chairs

The Co-chairs met with Jula and Sinead in preparation for upcoming meetings.

It was noted that a letter has been received by the DRG from Alison Riceberg regarding a complaint about the bus hub at Johnsonville on route 54. She noted that recent changes to this hub have now made this inaccessible. She has written to Steve Harte but he is away on annual leave at present but did note that the area is due for an upgrade. It was noted that this letter has been received by Garry Poole last month and it is a concern that there has still been no action taken.

Action: Jula will follow this up and report back to the DRG.

Rosie noted that she attended a presentation at Te Papa on working artists with mental difficulties that she found very interesting.

6. Council Officer's Report

Adelaide Road – there is no update at the moment but Council Officers would like to present to either the DRG or Subgroup.

Comments - It was noted that the designer of this project was supposed to send through more detailed information and plans to the subgroup but they still have not been received. There was also a concern that the plans could be passed without further consultation with the DRG. *It was noted that these plans have not been passed yet.*

Action: Jula to arrange a meeting between the subgroup and Urban Design.

Housing Subgroup – James will stay on this subgroup until a replacement can be found.

Airport Upgrade – there has been a request made to meet with either the full DRG or the transport subgroup on the next planning stage for the Airport.

Action: Jula to arrange a meeting with the transport subgroup.

2040 Workshop Consultation – It was agreed to meet for this consultation on Tuesday, 22 September from 5.30 to 6.30. Jula to confirm the venue with members.

8. Subgroup Reports

ICT Subgroup – this report has been sent out to members. It was noted that 12 recommendations were put forward to Council and it is disappointing to note that none of these have been acted upon. The issues that still need to be followed up on include: the web training document – the subgroup would like to see a copy of the web training document before it goes out for use. A document was also prepared about making presentations to the DRG and it is suggested that the Office of Disability Issues be referred to as they have a good section on making presentations. A request was made that the Council web alerts contain fuller statements so that you do not need to go into the main document to see what these refer to. Council have not taken up the NZ Disability Strategy and this needs to be followed up more strongly. There has also been little or no progress made on getting accessible documents on the Council website, ie, the LTCCP document was too big to download and the subgroup would like to see documents presented in the html format. The question needs to be asked why does the Council have a website if it is not accessible to large numbers of the community.

Action: Jula to follow up on this. Jula to also follow up on the progress for the Positively Wellington Tourism website upgrade and report back at the next meeting.

Housing Subgroup – this group met on 26 August with the Housing Action who were asked whether they would be using the architectural design competition design would be used. They said that the design would not be used because the buildings within the complex do not lend themselves to the design. There will be accessible housing provided in the Regent Park, Central Park, Newtown Park Flats and Marshall Court complexes though. They will send Jula copies of the design for the accessible housing for review by the Housing Subgroup.

Arts Subgroup – this report was sent to the group via email. They had a meeting on 14 August on the Arts Access Aotearoa draft publication to market the arts towards disability communities. The subgroup were impressed by the work on this publication so far. There were no questions raised about this report

Transport Subgroup – this report was sent to the group via email. Issues to note included the Adelaide Road bus stop (update required), the Johnsonville bus stop and the Basin Reserve flyover (there are a number of concerns about this upgrade and the subgroup would like to be briefed on developments by Council and GWRC). Topics to note for further discussion include Snapper Cards; public transport forum; websites and consistency around the access and mobility role on the Regional Transport Committees. There were no questions raised about this report.

8. Other Business

Members met with representatives from the Manukau City Council where they talked about their adoption of the Disability Strategy and how this works for

them. DRG should move forward on getting this strategy adopted by the Wellington City Council.

Action: Jula will follow up on this. Councillor Pannett will follow this up with Wendy Walker as well.

It was noted that there are a number of events coming up that could be of interest or have relevance to the DRG and it would be useful for a list of events to be sent to members.

International Day of Disabilities – it was agreed to look into doing something for this day next year.

Forward Programme – upcoming topics for DRG include: shared space concept, Council to debate this on 17 September – update from Council; Kilbirnie Town Plan; PPR; Te Rakahu Point; Manners Mall update.

Action: Jula to look into the time frames for these issues. DRG Co-chairs to set agenda for topics.

DRG Membership – a new Co-chair will need to be elected when new members have been appointed.

Action: Jula and Co-chairs will work on the timeline for the advertising, election and appointment process for new DRG members.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

Next meeting is scheduled for: Tuesday, October 13th, 2009 at 5:30 pm.