

**ADA ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES
April 11, 2012
Meeting Room A, Main Library
2:30 P.M.**

Disclaimer: The ADA Accessibility Review Board is a citizen board volunteering their time to give necessary feedback on projects of the City which may have an impact on Title II of The American's with Disabilities Act. The intent of the review is not to evaluate complete compliance with an accessibility standard, but to ensure overall programmatic accessibility. The Board is not presented all the information and is not given sufficient time for a thorough review. The Board's review is merely cursory and should only be considered a recommendation of the Board. The Board recommendation should not be considered a certification that the project meets ADA standards. The Board only reviews the project based on The American's with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines and other U.S. Access Board guidance and does not address any local codes, such as any building codes or fire and safety codes. Any conflicts in local codes should be addressed by the appropriate parties.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Hoy called the meeting to order at 2:40 p.m.

Board members present: Sarah Aldinger, Roseann Burkett, Helen Hartmann, Doug Hoy, and Eric Kritzmire (2:42p.m.)

Board member(s) absent: Matt Cain and Page Hudson

Staff present: Colleen Moran, City ADA Coordinator and Carol Garry, Human Relations Assistant

Guests present: Don Dethlefs, Sink, Combs, Dethlefs; Shannon VerHey, City Engineering; Peter Blanch and Jim Felakos, Transition Plan Consultants; Ken Laughlin, North Central Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America; Robert Bohm, DakotAbilities; Denny Theel, Steve Adkins, Brett Glirbas.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Burkett moved to approve the minutes from the March 27, 2012, meeting
Hartmann seconded. Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Joel Niemeyer memorial – After the March 27th meeting, Kritzmire thought the fishing area at the diversion channel would be a perfect memorial to honor Joel – name the park after him. Staff is checking with Parks & Rec to see what steps need to be taken. The Board thought this was a good idea.

NEW BUSINESS

Event Center– Don Dethlefs and Shannon VerHey

Don Dethlefs reviewed the current plans for the event center with the Board. The team is completing the design element phase - next phase is preparing the construction documents.

Parking

Dethlefs explained the parking layout and where the accessible spaces are located. Parking will be reconfigured because the new construction will be in the existing parking area. Adjacent to the building are the VIP parking and the drop off lane that will be used by paratransit vehicles. Each of the parking lots will have at least the required number of spaces. They are keeping them proportional to each lot instead of putting them all close to the building. This is because the parking lots serve other venues and will also need accessible parking nearer those venues.

The road along the building will have ramped pedestrian crosswalks – ‘speed humps’.

Questions/concerns from the Board regarding parking –

Hoy asked for clarification on the ‘speed humps’. These are wider than ‘speed bumps’ with ramped sides.

Hartmann asked about the parking at McCart Fields – how far away is it? It is about two blocks.

Hoy asked if temporary accessible parking can be added in case an event would draw more attendees that need that kind of parking. Yes, if needed additional accessible parking can be added on a temporary basis by blocking out some spaces to be used as access aisles and the accessible spaces can be temporarily signed as such.

Entrance

The event center entry is the same level as the center main floor. Ticket counters (with accessible counters) are located here as are locker rooms, men’s and women’s restrooms, family restrooms, event center offices and the facilities (HVAC). A corridor runs from the northwest side (Howard Wood) to connect to the existing convention center. Stairs, escalators, and elevators take attendees up to the other concourses.

Concourse

The main concourse is eighteen feet up from the floor level. The concourses are along the outside wall and the services are on the inside. Each level has accessible restrooms and family restrooms, accessible drinking fountains, concessions with thirty-four inch high counters (includes movable food and beverage carts). Accessible seating is spaced throughout the seating areas and the club suites have accessible seating areas, too. The accessible seating in the suite areas is achieved by removing chairs.

Dethlefs ran through each use of the venue and the ADA seating for each configuration exceeds what is required.

Each accessible seating area will have electrical power available so those in wheelchairs will be able to charge their battery if needed.

Other

Any of the stages will be accessible by ramp.

Kritzmire asked about railings. The railings in front of the seating area are two feet, four inches high. It is a common rail with a diagonal bar. At the aisle area, they’ll use a clear frameless glass to bring the height up to the required forty two inches.

One percent of the seats near the aisles have lift-able arms. These seats can be used by those who can transfer from mobility devices to seats.

Assistive listening devices - an FM loop will be installed and the listening devices can be checked out at the ticket counters. Video end boards are currently in the budget with plans for a center hung scoreboard - it will depend on the budget. Reader information will be posted on these boards.

Aldinger asked if the companion seating is fixed or removable. Removable is more flexible – allows more than one companion or several wheelchairs side by side.

Hoy asked about people in wheelchairs being bumped by the crowd behind them. There is plenty of room separating the two rows.

Moran asked what considerations were made for people with vision impairments. There will be large print, high contrast signage, Braille signage, ushers, high resolution video boards, and anything that would protrude past four inches (water fountains, ATMs, etc.) will have a detectable base or be recessed.

Hoy asked about contrast in flooring surfaces like for the accessible route. Hartmann said that at the Arena now there is yellow 'tipping' on the edge of each step on the stairway so people with limited vision can distinguish between the steps.

Moran asked if the open areas of the concourse, where the view is out over the 'bowl', will people in wheelchairs also be able to have the same view. The view would be blocked if people are standing, but otherwise the area is accessible. These areas will have a two foot four inch rail or no rail because there will be seating right up to that edge.

Hartmann asked if there is space to fold up and store a walker. There are some locations that have more leg room (1inch more). They can use the accessible seating areas and there would be room there to store their mobility aid.

Kritzmire thought older people who can't or is difficult for them to use the stairs should be able to sit in the accessible seating area.

Hoy didn't think it was appropriate to make any recommendations on the project at this time. He thought another public meeting would be a good idea. VerHey suggested it be an open house style not a presentation like today's, more like a meeting with general questions.

Kritzmire moved that the ADA Accessibility Review Board request the design team to have a meeting with the public specifically on ADA issues. Hartmann seconded. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Steve Adkins asked about the drop off zone not having any cover to protect against inclement weather. This has been discussed by the design team; this would be an additional cost.

Ken Laughlin, NC PVA – asked about the accessible parking – how many van accessible spaces and are the spaces 96” x 96” or will the universal spaces be used? Jon Brown with Stockwell is working on the parking plan. Dethlefs will check this with

him. Use of the universal space accommodates both vans and cars and uses less signage.

Brett Glirbas asked if there is a ramp for the ADA seating to see over the dasher boards. Yes, it is elevated about fourteen inches. This is removable when not used for hockey games.

Glirbas also wanted to know if the family restrooms are only on the main level. No, there are some on each level evenly spaced around the concourse.

He also had a concern about the route behind the accessible seating; often people get bumped and can disrupt a person's enjoyment of the event. This should not be a problem with this design.

Hartmann asked if people in wheelchairs will be able to see the outdoors through the windows on the outside of the concourse. Yes, though they will be at different heights. The windows are to bring in light and also allow people outside know there's something going on in the building.

Glirbas asked if there is an ADA regulation that prevents accessible seating being located where players can fall into the accessible seats. None are known. The venue operator may make that determination base on safety reasons.

Robert Bohm with DakotAbilities asked that a canopy for the drop area be seriously considered. The drop off area is away from the building and is at least 50 yards from the entrance. Paratransit riders could be waiting for a while out in the elements.

Staff asked if there will be another opportunity for the Board to look at more of the details like restroom fixtures, RF loop, etc. Yes, when the construction documents are created.

VerHey wanted it to be clear that the budget for the project is \$115 million. Some things that don't make it into this budget may be added in the future – 5 – 10 years from now.

Hartmann asked about the budget for parking. Parking is all included in the budget. Upgrades to Russell Avenue are a separate project/budget.

Adkins asked where they're at with the naming rights. They hope to have something by the July/August groundbreaking.

ADJOURNMENT

Burkett moved to adjourn, Kritzmire seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Garry