

**ADA ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES
March 26, 2013
Commission Room, City Hall
10:15 A.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 10:22 a.m.

Board members present: Roseann Burkett, Helen Hartmann, Doug Hoy, Sarah Aldinger, and Eric Kritzmire.

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

Staff present: Colleen Moran, City ADA Coordinator (11-11:30) and Carol Garry, Human Relations Assistant

Guests present: Bob Smith, Orientation and Mobility Specialist, SD Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired; Wes Phillips and Dena Knutson, City Engineering; Thad Roberts, Sayre & Associates; and Mitch Mergen, Stockwell Engineers.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Aldinger moved to approve the minutes from the February 26, 2013, meeting; Kritzmire seconded. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

ADA Sidewalk Ramps Improvement Project – Wes Phillips, Thad Roberts

This project is in the design phase. Engineering is requesting \$375,000 additional funding from the City Council to upgrade ramps in various areas of town. The areas where ramps are needed are mostly in the core area.

As a part of the City's transition plan update, Phillips looked at all of the areas that still needed ramps and divided them into two categories. One category included areas where future street work will be needed and the other one included areas where the

streets were okay, but ramps were needed. Today's project review is the ramp only category. This project has been further broken down into two phases: red quadrants (48) and blue quadrants (40)

Any intersections that fall within other street projects in need of ramps or ramp improvements will be upgraded as part of those street projects – approximately 100. There are approximately 80 quadrants that will still need ramps – roughly 10%.

Aldinger asked what type of ramp they propose to use for this project. Phillips explained it depends on how much space and right-of-way at the intersection. They prefer to use the perpendicular approach that directs travel directly across the intersection. There are a lot of places, especially where the streets are narrow, that the corner ramp is the only option.

Garry asked if consideration is given to what is across the street. If there is no access across the street would they use a single ramp directing travel where there is access. Phillips stated that the consultant reviewed the project areas specifically looking at T-intersections.

Hoy asked if some ramps that need upgrading, direct travel across to where there is no access on the other side, would they be replaced with the corner ramp or would they be a perpendicular one directing travel directly across the intersection where there is access.

As the perpendicular placement is preferred that is the one used if space allows.

Phillips reported that the City Council has emphasized that this project is a priority for them and anticipate the funding to be approved so the project can move forward this summer.

Phillips explained that they review the existing ramps in the other street project areas to see if they need to be updated. If there is an existing ramp that is in good shape and works well (not too steep) they will leave it and invest the money to put in a ramp where one is needed. They upgrade ones in these other street projects that need it.

\$600,000 will be spent in upgrading ramps in the overlay projects this year.

Discussion of sidewalk/ramp barriers for people with vision impairments – Bob Smith

Beginning with the basics, individuals with vision impairment expect their path of travel to be straight. Problems arise when there is a gradual curve to an intersection, and not being in line with the sidewalk/access on the opposite side of the street.

Many of the updated ramps w/tactile warnings are not aligned where a person with vision impairment would encounter it when crossing the street. The point of the tactile warning is to indicate where the street is.

Other intersections have architectural (poles) barriers in the path of travel.

The issues with the curved tactile warning are: the alignment with the sidewalk; the alignment with the tactile warning with the sidewalk and encountering; and the

alignment of the tactile warning to use the panel as a cue how to line up to cross the street. If there is a separation of the tactile warnings, a person with vision impairment can find direction and cross the street.

The panel could be used to direct travel across the street that would align with the sidewalk across the street. Most panels are aligned with the curb cut, but would be better if they were aligned with the direction of travel.

Light poles as barriers were also discussed. Recent city projects try to remove those barriers – fire hydrants as well. Traffic signals are kept as close to the intersection as possible to keep the footing and pole size down. Traffic signal poles are a challenge.

Smith also brought up the issue of the location of crosswalk buttons. They should be in a standardized location. He mentioned a city that has signal buttons that buzz as you get near to it so you can find it. Sioux Falls once had audible signals at three intersections. Smith feels they failed because they didn't train the visually impaired on how to use them to cross the street. Their previous training taught them to rely on the traffic sounds and the audible signals interfered with the traffic sounds and caused confusion to those who were supposed to benefit from them. Smith would like to see some kind of system used in Sioux Falls, especially at dangerous intersections. Dangerous intersections for the visually impaired have left –hand- turn signals and allow right turn on red. These are very difficult for visually impaired to cross at and would require that they wait at the intersection to figure out the traffic pattern and hope that once they start to cross, the vehicle traffic is following the rules. He suggested researching to see what kinds of systems are available and providing sufficient information/training to those who would use the system.

Smith stated that he feels the City of Sioux Falls does their best to help people with disabilities. He would like to see the tactile warnings not only used to indicate where the street is but also help determine the direction.

Hoy asked Smith for feedback on curved detectable warning panel proposed for the 6th Street reconstruction project. These were being considered at intersections where there is not enough room to install two perpendicular warning panels. The issue would be finding the sidewalk on the other side of the intersection. Different textures in the crosswalk are very helpful for the visually impaired to use to guide them across the street.

Kritzmire would like to recommend that an effort be made to line up the warning panels to guide individuals directly across the street. Smith agreed that it would be great if they would consider this option in future projects. Smith is willing to attend future board meetings if needed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Hartmann moved to adjourn and Burkett seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 11:53 am

Respectfully submitted by Carol Garry