

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA  
ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

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Friday, February 21, 2014  
9:30 a.m.

David Gebhard Public Meeting Room  
630 Garden Street

1. **Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 9:33 a.m.

2. **Roll Call**

Committee Members Present: Robert Burnham – Chairperson; Brian Barnwell; Ken McLellan; Adelaida Ortega; Martha Degasis; Barbara Silver

Committee Members Absent: Karen Johnson

Staff Present: Brian D'Amour, Supervising Engineer; Sarita King, Administrative Specialist

Staff Presenting: George Estrella, Chief Building Official; Tony Ruggieri, City TV Production Supervisor

Guests: Pat Kelly, Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer; Bonnie Elliot; Roy Harthorne

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of November 21, 2013, were approved.

4. **Public Comment:**

a) Kathryn Dean: Has concerns about curb cuts in Upper Eastside, particularly to the Mission and the intersections of Padre/Anacapa, and Mission/Anacapa. Also noted that there are no accessible routes to the Santa Barbara Mission from the Braille Institute.

5. **Agenda Items**

a) **Acknowledgement and Appreciation of Service - The Access Advisory Committee acknowledgement and appreciation of Victor Suhr.** George Estrella provided the following speech regarding Victor's 25-plus years of service to the City.

*Victor Suhr has decided to take a break from his service on the Access Advisory Committee. While we hope that Victor will remain active in the City's access improvement efforts, and perhaps even return to the Committee at some point, we want to take a moment to honor him for over 25 years of service to the City and its citizens and visitors with disabilities.*

- *In the late 1980s, the City Council formed a temporary ad hoc committee called the Disability Advisory Committee on Access (or "DACA"), to advise the City in its efforts to meet the requirements of the new Americans with Disabilities Act. Victor actively partnered with the City as it evaluated its programs and facilities, and prioritized needed changes, through the development of its first Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan.*
- *In 2001, this ad hoc committee was replaced with the first standing committee, known as the Staff Advisory Access Committee (or "AACS"), focused on providing advice and assistance to Building and Safety Division pertaining to access for people with disabilities to City facilities and rights-of-way. Victor continued his service to the City as a member of this Committee.*
- *In 2006, the City undertook an extensive update to its Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan, and Victor played a key role in working with Gilda Puentes-Peters Architects, City staff, and the community at large in that effort.*
- *In 2008, the "AACS" committee was again enhanced to become the Access Advisory Committee (AAC), and its scope was broadened. The Committee continues to advise staff on City development projects and on prioritizing barrier removal in the City's rights-of-way, but also provides general guidance to the ADA Coordinator on a broad range of program access issues. Victor continued his service on that committee.*

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*Specific projects that Victor has advocated for successfully over the years include improving access to picnic tables at Oak Park; improving traffic safety near Shifco housing on the Mesa; installing ramps and sidewalks on State Street and throughout the City; improving access at places of public accommodation, including museums, theaters, and the train station; and improving physical and program access at City facilities, parks, and other structures, including the Santa Barbara Wharf. We wish Victor continued success in his other roles in the Community.*

Pat Kelly, Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer also noted that Victor provided input on various projects within the City, showing where accessibility needs were, and helped to note priority for various corridors requiring access.

- b) **Welcome New Member – Barbara Silver.** Barbara feels that the Access Advisory Committee was a natural fit for her. She is a retired UCSB librarian and a former Grand Jury member. She has a long history of personal and professional involvement promoting access and diversity in the community.
- c) **New Hearing Loop Systems at Council Chambers and Gebhard Room.** Tony Ruggieri, City TV Production Supervisor, introduced two representatives of Otojoy. Founder, Thomas Kaufman, and Community Relations Manager and Hearing Loop Advocate, Kase Martis, gave a presentation about hearing loop technology and its impact on individuals with hearing loss. Hearing loop technology has been installed at three City conference rooms: the David Gebhard Meeting Room, Council Chambers, and the conference room at the Santa Barbara Airport. The wireless technology works by switching on the T-Coil system in the user's hearing aid and delivers sound directly into the hearing aid without extra background noise or blurring. If the hearing aid does not have a T-Coil, the user may use a headset. Otojoy has installed hearing loop systems in Campbell Hall at UCSB, the Lobero Theatre, Carpinteria Library, and a number of other facilities locally and in California. Funds for installing hearing loops at these facilities were provided by the Let's Loop Santa Barbara Campaign, a grant-funded organization that works with the Independent Living Resource Center, the Hearing Loss Association of Santa Barbara, and Otojoy. The two representatives from Otojoy welcome suggestions for additional facilities that Access Advisory Committee members feel may benefit from the installation of hearing loop systems. Committee members suggested facilities include the Braille Institute County conference rooms, the MTD bus station, and also Council Chambers for the cities of Goleta and Carpinteria. One member of the public noted that a microphone should be provided to audiences.
- d) **Election of new Committee Chairman:**  
It was noted that the Committee should elect a new Chairperson. Brian Barnwell expressed an interest.

**MOTION** by Martha DeGasis to elect Brian Barnwell as 2014 and 2015 Chairman of the Access Advisory Committee was put before the committee.

Robert Burnham seconded.

Ayes=6

Noes=0

Abstain= 0

Absent=1

- e) **Missing Access Ramps:**

Brian D'Amour, Supervising Civil Engineer, provided an update on the City's Access Ramps.

Brian Barnwell brought photos at Mackenzie Park which were provided to him and noted that that the Committee had not discussed the issues regarding access ramps at the park in detail. The photos showed areas that lead to the children's area in the park. Also noted was the lack of sidewalk between State Street and Las Positas.

Roy Harthorn asked if a discussion regarding MacKenzie Park Access issues could be brought before the Committee at the next meeting with private parties, Parks and Recreation staff, and Public Works staff. Mr. Harthorn mentioned that the Men's Gardening Club would like to work with the City to create an accessible path from the upper park to the lower park. He noted there are challenges in a volunteer project, with technical requirements that need to be considered, which may require City staff resources.

