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Town of Aurora
Memorandum
Corporate Services

Re: Accessibility Advisory Committee Input and Comments for Site Plan Application SP(EX)-2020-28, 77 Wellington Street East

To: Accessibility Advisory Committee

From: Mateusz Zawada, Accessibility Advisor

Date: December 9, 2020

Recommendation

1. That the memorandum regarding Accessibility Advisory Committee Input and Comments for Site Plan Application SP(EX)-2020-28, 77 Wellington Street East be received; and
2. That the Accessibility Advisory Committee comments regarding Accessibility Advisory Committee Input and Comments for Site Plan Application SP(EX)-2020-28, 77 Wellington Street East be received and referred to staff for consideration and further action as appropriate.

Background

The Accessibility Advisor has made comments on behalf of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

The comments are as follows:

- The developer to incorporate accessibility features, such as sensory and active play components, for children and caregivers with various disabilities into the design of outdoor play spaces; and
- Ensure that outdoor play spaces have a ground surface that is firm, stable and has impact attenuating properties for injury prevention and sufficient clearance to provide children and caregivers with various disabilities the ability to move through, in and around the outdoor play space.

The developer has responded to the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

The comments are as follows:

There are key elements to choosing adapted and stimulating toys for children with disabilities that we plan on considering:

- Choosing toys that children can manipulate without help from third parties to reinforce their autonomy
- That buttons are accessible, identifiable, and easy to operate
- The size of toys
- That table-top toys have anti-slip surfaces on the bottom
- Using toys with different visual designs (colour, shape, size, etc)
- Choosing activities that are adaptable for children with disabilities
- Promoting exploration and participation
- Messy play (using sand, water, finger paints, play dough, kneading, wax, plasticine, etc.) favors sensory and motor development for children with disabilities.

For children with disabilities, there are certain activities that work particularly well to keep them engaged, focused and actively learning. Outdoor play is stimulating for children of all abilities, specifically those who need a little extra help developing gross motor skills. Here are some suggestions:

- Sensory tables offer a wealth of benefits for children with disabilities. Engaging in sensory experiences like running fingers through dried rice or pouring water can distract and calm a child who is feeling over-stimulated or anxious. It promotes self-discovery and encourages a child to explore new textures which in turn supports social and emotional development. Offering textures like dried beans, sand or cotton balls promotes hand-eye coordination and gives the opportunity for a child to pinch, grasp and enhance fine motor skills. As children discover new textures and objects, they tend to have a verbal response. Engaging them in a sensory table is a great way to work on language.
- Yoga is a practice that balances the mind and body. Though yoga is generally thought to be a practice for adults, children can benefit significantly from it as well. With practice, children who have a hard time sitting still can learn to self-regulate and self-soothe using movement and breathing techniques.
- Music activates every subsystem in the brain, including areas that regulate emotion and motivation. Setting aside specific time to sit together and make

music allows children to bond with each other and gives them a sense of belonging to a group. Music time can be especially beneficial to children who are non-verbal. For them, music can be a way of expressing themselves and interacting with their peers.

Attachments

None.