

City of St. Catharines

Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (MACOA) MINUTES, Wednesday, June 26, 2013

A meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility was held on
Wednesday, June 26, 2013 in Committee Room #1
at City Hall at 1:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Brian McMullan
Councillor Matthew Harris (via conference call until 2 p.m.)
Shelley Stewart, Co-chairperson
Diane Foster, Co-chairperson
Bob Asham
Julie Morris
David Reed
Linda Marie O'Hagan
Mary Jane Waszynski

Regrets: Chantal Barrette
Ian Crawford
Steve Kurtic-Lentinello

Staff: Diana Lecinski, Accessibility Coordinator, CSS

Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS):

The FADS guideline was approved by the Region of Niagara in September 2005 and adopted by the City of St. Catharines Council on April 24, 2006 for use in municipal facilities.

1. Call to order:

Diane Foster, co-chairperson called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

2. Introductions:

Everyone was welcomed and round table introductions were made.

Diane Foster informed members that regretfully Tony DiPaola resigned from MACOA due to scheduling difficulties for attending meetings. She thanked Tony DiPaola on behalf of MACOA for his valued membership, noting that parents of children with a disability provide valuable advice on this perspective of accessibility. Membership attendance and input is important as MACOA seeks to improve access and prevent barriers for people with various disabilities.

Members were reminded of MACOA's terms of reference that outline attendance under B.6;

A committee member shall make every effort to attend all meetings. The appointment of a citizen member to a committee shall be rescinded should the member be absent from three consecutive meetings or absent from over 50% of the meetings in one year, unless excused by the Committee due to extenuating circumstances;

Staff will seek input from the City Clerk to fill this vacancy.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes:

The minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for May 22, 2013 were approved.

That the minutes of May 22, 2013 be approved.

Motion by: Bob Asham

Seconded by: Mary Jane Waszynski

CARRIED

4. Presentations/Discussions:

a. Adaptive Rowing; postponed.

5. New Business:

- a. Sidewalks on Vansickle, June 24 Council meeting;
Councillor Harris joined the meeting via conference call and provided an overview of the Vansickle report to Council regarding connective sidewalks. He thanked MACOA reps Diane Foster and Julie Morris for speaking to the value and need for connective and accessible sidewalks throughout the City and also to Steve K-Lentinello who was in attendance to support. Diane Foster and Julie Morris shared their comments to Council with the committee and noted that MACOA's 2010 Sidewalk Action Statement, also endorsed by Council, continues to advocate for the prevention of sidewalk deletion.

6. Business Arising from Minutes:

- a. **Review of presentations/discussions from last meeting;**

Draft Zoning By-law;

Further to the PDS presentation at the last meeting, members were asked to review the draft document in context with the presented information in preparation for this meeting. The areas that most specifically affect access relates to accessible parking. There was some concern about the changes to ratios and percentages from the existing requirements.

Moved by: Bob Asham

Seconded by: Shelley Stewart

That the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (MACOA) acknowledges that the Niagara area has one of oldest populations in Canada which therefore benefits from increased accessible parking opportunities that includes fully accessible, safe and connective routes between parking areas and the building; and

That the accessible parking ratio chart contained in Section 3.7 of the proposed Zoning By-law be amended back to its original requirement for a minimum of 2% of accessible parking spaces in parking lots between 501-1000 spaces instead of 10 accessible parking spaces; and

That while concerned about the change from 2 to 5 parking spaces as the minimum requirement for 1 accessible parking space it is recognized that greater concern is in large developments with numerous parking spaces and busy vehicle traffic.

CARRIED

Community Improvement Plan (CIP);

Further to last month's CIP presentation/discussion followed by quite a specific discussion and motion, Diane Foster asked members if there was any further comment or concern as time may not have allowed for everyone's input. Shelley Stewart had therefore asked that this item be brought forward to this meeting. The overall consensus remained adamant that CIP needs to include accessibility as a needed and beneficial component of the CIP program. It was also suggested that Councillor Harris help promote MACOA's position and motion when it comes before Council. Staff will forward these follow up comments and the May 22nd minutes and motion to Erin O'Hoski, a staff lead on the CIP process review.

Park access audit and maintenance;

Further to last month's park access audit and maintenance suggestions, MACOA supported the approach that Kristen Sullivan has developed for addressing accessibility themes, not just in the audited parks, but in applying the themes to all parks and trails as renovations move forward. Members acknowledged that budget development may benefit from a specific accessibility component to ensure that the benefit to users takes an inclusive and community-based approach. Additionally MACOA supported Mauro Becchetti's recognition of parks and trail maintenance taking a greater focus on accessibility elements. Members thanked RCS staff for being receptive to the park access audit findings and also thanked the MACOA reps who did the audits last summer.

b. Accessibility Plan / AODA

Diana Lecinski noted that comprehensive accessibility training under the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) for all staff and volunteers is being developed and will take place in the Fall.

c. New Hospital Tour (discussed after the Vansickle sidewalk, Item 5.a.)

Councillor Harris provided an update on the new hospital and the associated facility access and parking issues. Delivery of MACOA's letter regarding accessibility at this new site after their March 18th tour has been awaiting an opportunity to be presented directly to administration staff. Councillor Harris and Diana Lecinski met with Brady Wood, Chief Communications Officer with NHS. It was an excellent opportunity to

discuss accessibility suggestions contained in the letter as well as develop some preliminary solutions. Brady Wood reviewed the letter and assured that he would provide the letter to the Board and review each point in order to increase accessibility. He acknowledged that this identifies an opportunity for greater communication between stakeholders and the NHS. They are already working on a re-design of the parking as issues have been identified regarding inadequate accessible parking layout.

d. Provincial Access Forum, Burlington, May 9th

St. Catharines and MACOA was well represented by Shelley Stewart, Diane Foster, Julie Morris, Ian Crawford and Diana Lecinski. Reps felt that it was rather repetitive from the previous forum however there were opportunities to meet other AAC members and to listen to their experiences / opinions. There was new input from the Province on the latest access legislation, engaging AAC's in the promotion of the AODA and finding new methods to promote accessibility within one's own municipality.

Mayor McMullan noted that, as a member of LUMCO (Large Urban Mayor's Caucus of Ontario), accessibility is also promoted by the Province. It was suggested that St. Catharines also continue to put itself forward as an engaged community, accessibility leader and is opened to hosting future Provincial access initiatives. Diana Lecinski noted that a Provincial visit focusing on accessibility was scheduled for last June (2012) however the Accessibility Directorate's Office cancelled it and despite re-invitation has been unable to reschedule. Staff, along with MACOA, will continue to promote St. Catharines' accessibility with the Province.

7. Updates:

- a. Site Plan; no further updates on the Performing Arts Centre or a more final design for the Spectator Facility.

David Reed noted a concern for sidewalk curbs being too steep at the reconstructed intersection of Welland and Ontario Streets. Particularly at the S/E and N/W corners. Staff noted that this was likely part of a Regional contract, but that Christine Adams of TES would be advised of this concern.

- b. DDRC; Bob Asham noted that he was only provided 48 hours notice of an upcoming meeting and was unable to change his schedule in order to attend. He spoke with DDRC staff rep regarding more advanced notification and the next meeting date.
- c. Niagara AAC; Linda Marie O'Hagan reviewed several issues that Niagara's AAC is focusing on, including new NRP facilities and renovations, NRP's new website, Regional council chamber renovation designs including accessibility, etc.

MACOA invited Niagara facility staff to make arrangements to visit City Hall's Council Chambers to view the independently adjustable podium.

- d. Other;
March of Dimes, Breaking the Barriers Awards Event – MACOA hosted an information and display table at this event. Diane Foster nominated the new pedestrian walkway at Fairview Mall from Geneva to the Mall entrances. The design was based on the input provided by MACOA. Fairview Mall (First Capital Realty) received an award and had several representatives in attendance to receive the award.

Shelley Stewart and Julie Morris were interested in the demonstration provided at the Sign Aids display. They manufacture signs that contain an icon/chip that will read aloud the content on the sign via a smart phone or tablet. Both recommended that the City look into this product. Staff noted that since that event in May, Sign Aids did come to City Hall to demonstrate their product for approximately 20 staff and several reps from other Niagara municipalities and Brock University who were also interested in the information.

Shelley Stewart suggested that MACOA members continue to think about next year's nominations as they visit places over the next year that are becoming more accessible.

8. Next Meeting:

After canvassing MACOA to ensure quorum for July, it was determined that quorum would not be met. MACOA had previously determined that it would continue with its tradition of not meeting in August for similar reasons.

Moved by: Linda Marie O'Hagan

Seconded by: Julie Morris

That MACOA cancel its July 24th meeting.

CARRIED

Therefore Diane Foster confirmed that MACOA would not meet again until September unless there was an unforeseen need. Staff will advise if such a situation arises.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, September 25, 2013 at 1:30 p.m. in Committee Room #1.

9. Adjournment:

The meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility adjourned.

Moved by: Julie Morris

Seconded by: Bob Asham

That this meeting do now adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

CARRIED