

City of St. Catharines

Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (MACOA) MINUTES, Wednesday, September 25, 2013

A meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility was held on
Wednesday, September 25, 2013 in Committee Room #1
at City Hall at 1:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Brian McMullan
Diane Foster, Co-chairperson
Chantal Barrette
Steve Byers
Ian Crawford
Bob Asham
Julie Morris
David Reed
Linda Marie O'Hagan
Mary Jane Waszynski

Regrets: Councillor Matthew Harris
Shelley Stewart, Co-chairperson
Steve Kurtic-Lentinello

Staff: Diana Lecinski, Accessibility Coordinator, CSS
Vince Covatta, Project Supervisor, TES

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 1:35 p.m.

2. Introductions:

Everyone was welcomed and round table introductions were made. Diane Foster welcomed new MACOA member Steve Byers.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes:

The minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for June 26, 2013 were approved.

That the minutes of June 26, 2013 be approved.

Motion by: Julie Morris
Seconded by: David Reed

CARRIED

4. Presentations/Discussions:

- a. Design review for Happy Rolph's and Pearson Park washrooms.
Vince Covatta provided an overview of the plans, noting that they are same except for an additional maintenance area on the Pearson design. This design will be used as the template for future park washroom renovations.

Several comments were made by MACOA members that included:

- Ensure on-grade entrances both into the washroom and from a pedestrian path to a concrete 'porch' area
- Verify that grades shown don't create a slope greater than FADS
- Prefer hard surface for pedestrian path (outside of the scope of the washroom design), but should be flagged to RCS reps for maintenance
- Ensure accessible pedestrian routes and way-finding from roadway, bus stop, parking, etc. into the park and to the washroom location
- Suggest that auto-flush mechanisms be selected that are not so sensitive to movement that they flush multiple times (also eco consideration)
- Finishing materials in the washroom need to create contrast without busy patterning (City Hall washrooms are a good example)
- Lighting to be adequate (FADS)
- Consider the benefit of having a single accessible unisex (family) washroom in future designs

- b. Staff explained that the Meridian Centre design team were meeting simultaneously to MACOA and could not be present at this meeting. It was noted that this project also requires a formal design audit against FADS for accessibility by an independent expert. The City has retained Bob Topping of DesignABLE Environments to provide this review of the designs. Staff noted that Bob Topping also provided the access audit of plans for the Performing Arts Centre. He is also the co-author of FADS with the City of London.

The 90% drawings were shared with MACOA well in advance of the meeting in order that they could review beforehand and be prepared to discuss or outline any areas of concern or clarification. Visual fire alarms were confirmed as part of the design. Thank you to Ian Crawford who prepared specific points to review and encouraged others for further comments. The comments from this meeting were provided to key City staff and Anthony Boland of CBRE and attached here as an appendix (1).

Moved by: Linda Marie O'Hagan
Seconded by: Bob Asham

That MACOA extends their thank you for the continuing opportunity to provide accessibility comments on the Meridian Centre designs, and

That the design team be provided with MACOA's specific comments on the 90% designs. (Summarized in Appendix 1) noting that MACOA's comments are not the formal access audit of designs to FADS as being undertaken by DesignABLE Environments.

CARRIED

5. Business Arising from Minutes:

- a. Draft Zoning By-law;
Accessibility staff noted that another public meeting was being held to promote revisions made since the initial public input opportunities. It was confirmed that MACOA's previous request to retain the FADS parking ratio at 2% when over 500 spaces has been edited back to 2%. No other concerns or comments were put forward. The public meeting will still be running after this meeting adjourns and any further individual input could be made then.

- b. Community Improvement Plan (CIP);
Accessibility staff noted that the CIP report went to Council on August 26, 2013. MACOA felt that it did not clearly define elements of accessibility however references were made. MACOA remains firmly committed to a CIP concept that actively includes accessibility. Members noted that businesses may prefer to spend all CIP funding on façade improvements without budgeting for elements such as more accessible entrances. This would be a predictable outcome without any specific mandate or framework that includes accessibility. If there is no mandate, a separate Accessibility CIP could be additional funding available in conjunction with façade applications. Several years ago PDS did submit a budget request for an Accessible CIP however it never received approval.

MACOA does recognize that not all façade improvement designs can include an accessible entrance without significant exterior or interior adjustments (e.g. some downtown retail entrances have 2 or more steps). Creating an accessible entrance does not activate additional Ontario Building Code access requirements, such as washroom updates, unless the business itself undergoes a change of use (e.g. retail store to a restaurant).

Moved by: Bob Asham
Seconded by: Linda Marie O'Hagan

That MACOA recognizes a community that includes an aging population, parents with strollers and people with a disability who all benefit from accessible entrances; and

That MACOA recognizes and supports downtown revitalization; and

That MACOA recognizes an age-friendly community as outlined in a report to Council on July 8, 2013; and

That MACOA recognizes that approximately 15.5% of the population has a disability along with the province's objective of an accessible Ontario by the year 2025; and

That MACOA continues to strongly advocate for accessibility as a needed and important component of City grants.

CARRIED

c. Accessibility Plan / AODA;

Accessibility staff reported that corporate-wide accessibility training will be launched in early October on the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR). Training will include Council, all full-time staff, all part-time staff, casual employees, students and volunteers.

Accessibility staff also reported that the lift at the Merritton Community Centre was recently reinstated. The City has ensured that the Lion's Club representatives have received recognized training on operating the lift for wheelchairs. The City provided 2 new courtesy wheelchairs along with appropriate use, training and signage.

6. Updates:

a. Site Plan;

The Meridian Centre designs were reviewed and discussed under Item 4.b.

Staff provided an update on the upcoming NHS accessible parking changes. Photos provided gave an indication of the misuse of the accessible parking spaces, although all vehicles displayed a valid APP. To address this on-going situation and to alleviate the growing pedestrian safety concerns in this area, NHS will relocate and add more accessible parking. One lot section area has been designated to focus on accessible parking and volunteer parking. The initial accessible parking area closer to the entrance will become 15-minute drop off parking that also includes accessible parking spaces. This will alleviate other vehicles in this area from parking and dropping-off in fire zones.

b. DDRC; Bob Asham noted that he will be attending a meeting next week and can provide an update at the October meeting.

c. Niagara AAC; Linda Marie O'Hagan. NRAAC will be meeting shortly and an update will be provided at the next meeting.

d. Other;

–MACOA vacancy has been filled by Council's appointment of Steve Byers. Welcome Steve.

- NCIL fundraiser; Diane Foster announced to the committee that she is undertaking a 50 kilometer bike ride to raise funds for NCIL. Her transition as an active cyclist to a wheelchair and back again will help raise awareness and funds for NCIL. Sponsors are welcome.
- Sidewalk patio update; staff updated that the Region is in the long process of notifying the property owner of this Port Dalhousie former pub regarding removal of the sidewalk patio. Julie Morris noted that it has been vacant for years, yet that patio railings are still intact and it continues to be a barrier to pedestrians along the sidewalk in that area.
- Agenda information items; FYI
 - ~ Provincial AODA 5 year review
 - ~ Age-Friendly report to Council

7. Next Meeting:

Wednesday, October 23, 2013 at 1:30 p.m. in Committee Room #1.

8. 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 3:25 p.m.

CARRIED

Firstly MACOA has asked that staff extend their thank you all for the continued opportunity to provide accessibility input and comments as the plans progress.

MACOA would like to clarify that these comments are separate from any findings of the formal accessibility audit of the plans that is being made by Designable Environments, Bob Topping.

Further to the comments outlined on plans and sent c/o Anthony Boland of CBRE, MACOA had a few suggestions/clarifications.

- A0-100 – sidewalk under ‘south bridge’ prefer ramp not steps. If not seen as a public sidewalk or pedestrian route, please ensure signage notification at the facility entrance/exit that clearly notes this is not a public or accessible pedestrian route.
 - Curb details not FADS, S/B 1.5 not 1.2
 - Accessible Sign by-law states “Ontario”, but please use signage consistent with City requirements (although may be one in the same)
- A1-100 – washrooms are within staff areas only, or public? Confirm if accessible and with PDO’s.
- A2-310 – ensure PDO’s for all washrooms that have doors, not zigzag entry
- A7-100 and 101 – PDO on washroom doors? Staff and public.
- A1-300; Suites doors, all doors to be wire prepped for future PDO
 - Suite doors to be free and easy swing, not with closers which are difficult to navigate when no PDO
- C3-100 – perhaps a more detailed view of this would make the pedestrian path of travel clearer.
- CB-111 – comments in context with L3 and previous email 1 of 2, A0-100
- L5 – dropped curb not shown on this plan, but shown on Site Plan
- L8 – Planter at curb s/b cane detectable
 - L9 – Bench design, needs arms, per FADS and very heartily supported by MACOA

Please provide feedback or confirmation on these points. MACOA members look forward to next steps with respect to input on finishing materials, adequate contrast of materials, and signage/way-finding.