



CITY OF
ST. CATHARINES

Minutes

Meeting: Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility
Location: Committee Room #1
Date: Wednesday, September 24, 2014
Time: 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Meeting Attendees:

Invited Name

| | |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Present | Shelley Stewart, Co-chairperson Diane Foster, Co-chairperson Bob Asham Ian Crawford Steve Kurtic-Lentinello Julie Morris Linda Marie O'Hagan David Reed Mary Jane Waszynski |
| Regrets | Councillor Harris Steve Byers Chantal Barrette |
| Staff | Diana Lecinski, Accessibility Coordinator, CSS Christine Adams, Manager of Engineering & Construction, TES Samantha Downing, Design & Construction Engineer, TES |
| Guests | Rick Gabel, Associated Engineering Rick Hein, Associated Engineering Lindsay Mooradian, Associated Engineering |

Agenda Items and Deliverables

1. Welcome from the Chair: **Shelley Stewart at 1:35 p.m.**

2. Roundtable introductions were made.

3. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting:

Wednesday, June 25, 2014

Moved by: Bob Asham

Seconded by: Diane Foster

That the Minutes of the June 25, 2014 be approved.

CARRIED

4. Discussion:
Downtown Streetscape Project

- Rick Hein reviewed the elements of the Downtown Streetscape Project and discussed each demonstration board to provide MACOA with a comprehensive overview of the scope of this project
- MACOA made the following points;
- That the streetscaping needs to be consistent throughout the downtown core. This includes;
 - Pedestrian width to be consistent
 - Final streetscape plan should clearly note width and application details
 - Pedestrian path of travel to be straight (not zig-zag around various items, such a street furniture on one-side, refuse containers, street lighting and trees on another side, yet all within the pedestrian path of travel)
 - Pedestrian path of travel surface to be as smooth and consistent as possible for people who use mobility device (avoid bump, bump, bump)
 - Expansion joints in concrete are necessary but care should be given to making them as seamless as possible.
 - Patterned concrete or interlocking block should never be used as it is noisy, jarring and leaves a legacy of heaved and uneven blocks (example; current downtown)

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- Curb ramps at intersections should not be steep (e.g. low road, high sidewalk = grade differential cannot be made within those few inches of ramping, but the sidewalk should be gradually lowered before it meets the curb ramp (please refer to City specs 110-1243, 110-1244, 110-1244A and FADS 4.1.10)
- Curb ramps should be tactile (e.g. City specs on cast iron plates)
- Ideally intersections should incorporate Urban Braille (example, City of Hamilton and Port Colborne photo submitted by J. Morris, MACOA)
- Sidewalk cafes or patios should not impinge on a straight, wide, consistent and accessible path of travel
- Major consideration should be given to opportunities and solutions to create accessible entrances into businesses that currently have a step but are part of the downtown streetscape scope
 - Steps into business should be alleviated at all opportunities (e.g. 1, 20, 30 St. Paul St.)
 - Recessed entrances should become barrier-free at all opportunities (where private property is involved the business/owner should receive recognition (TBA MACOA) for their support in becoming barrier-free (e.g. 36, 55, 81, 84, 101, 261 St. Paul)
 - Patio-type entrances should be renovated for an accessible connection between the sidewalk and the entrance (e.g. 241 St. Paul, 11 Geneva @ St. Paul)
- MACOA's notes will be forwarded to Samantha Downing to ensure that Associated Engineering includes all perspectives and advice offered by MACOA
- Associated Engineering notes included;

The MACOA voiced the following concerns regarding the Downtown St. Catharines Streetscaping Guidelines:

 - MACOA would like the streetscaping to be consistent throughout the downtown core.
 - MACOA flagged that accessibility is often problematic during winter storms and this should be considered as part winter maintenance plans.
 - MACOA expressed concerns over motorists parking in cycling lanes.
 - MACOA expressed concerns over the saw-cut sidewalk as they provide a bumpy and uncomfortable ride for those using wheelchairs.
 - MACOA stated that the colored sidewalk on Welland Avenue is less bumpy for pedestrians using wheelchairs and should be considered throughout the downtown core.
 - MACOA stated that wider sidewalks allow for better accessibility.

Agenda Items and Deliverables

- MACOA stated that sandwich boards create obstructions on sidewalks and should be discouraged
- MACOA stated that sidewalk cafes without gates are more accessible.
- MACOA stated that if the sidewalk café is fenced, then the gate needs to open in towards the café to prevent path obstruction.
- The new raised parking on Queen Street in Niagara Falls makes street parking more accessible to those in wheelchairs moving from the passenger seat to the wheelchair. These should be considered for downtown St. Catharines.
- Many people have difficulties getting up the steps leading to many of the shops in the downtown core.
- City of Hamilton has installed Braille markings at each of the intersections showing the street names and has inlaid brail in the concrete of main buildings throughout their downtown core.
- Those with vision impairments have difficulty finding doors to main buildings.
- Having Urban Braille throughout the downtown core would make it more accessible to those with vision impairments.
- MACOA stated the two compromises they would like to see are: (1) consistency, and (2) wider sidewalks.
- Shelley Stewart thanked TES staff and Associated Engineering for their presentation and encouraged all MACOA members to promote the upcoming October 7th Public Information Centre with their friends and colleagues, as an accessible downtown is an important part of “community”. MACOA looks forward to participating in the next steps.

5. Business Arising from Minutes:

a. Accessibility Plan

Accessible parking under the Integrated Accessibility Std., Design of Public Spaces has A & B type accessible parking. TES and PDS staff are undertaking to update documents (e.g. Zoning By-law) to reflect these updated requirements.

Transportation staff continue to endeavor to repaint City lots using the current updated criteria for accessible parking sizes and ratios.

On-street accessible parking locations should continue to be discussed.

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Construction / Renovation have been excellent at meeting FADS and creating an accessible environment usable by all patrons. Projects include; Meridian Centre, washrooms at Pearson Park and Happy Rolph's, Kiwanis Locke Rooms acoustic reno, West Park washroom soon, Performing Arts Centre signage. Kudos to staff for bring these designs at various stages to MACOA, and kudos to MACOA for their advice and expertise on these projects.

List of facility attributes, deferred.

b. **Municipal Elections**

The schedule of advanced polls and election day locations were provided as part of the agenda material. There are 8 advanced poll dates, each providing a choice of 2 locations, 1 of which will host the accessible audio voting tabulator. The Ubi Duo will also be available for 2-way communication with people who have a hearing or communication disability at the same accessible advance voting location. That accessible voting tabulator will also be available for voters at City Hall on election day.

Thank you to MACOA members who volunteered to assist with the accessible election worker training piece over 14 various dates and times arranged by the City Clerk.

6. Updates:

- a. **Site Plan** – Ian Crawford and David Reed both noted disappointment with the lack of underground accessible parking and steps vs. ramps at the 6-10 Dalhousie site. Staff will ask PDS about this site.
- b. **DDRC** – The same downtown streetscape presentation will be coming to the next DDRC meeting.

Bob Asham noted that Rick Hansen was the recent key-note speaker at the opening of the Niagara Wine Festival, luncheon. This is being replayed on the community channel and MACOA is encouraged to tune in for this motivational presentation to many key figures and stakeholders in Niagara.

- c. **Niagara AAC**- No report
- d. **Other** – Staff recently emailed a link the City's Recreation Master Plan Survey to MACOA for their response. This item is scheduled for MACOA's November agenda.

Agenda Items and Deliverables

7. Information Items

- a. **CELA memo**; kudos to the St. Catharines Library who recently joined the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) to provide patrons with more alternative format materials. Hand-outs were circulated with the agenda and at the meeting.
- b. **MACOA term of appointment** is until January 14, 2015. All MACOA members are encouraged to re-apply. This will be discussed at the November meeting.

POSTPONED. The City Clerk is hosting a Public Open House on all Associations, Boards and Committees on ~~November 25 from 12-8 at Lock 3 Museum~~ for interested residents to become more familiar with the City's various committees.

8. Next Meeting

12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 26, 2014 in Committee Room #1
Chair: Diane Foster.

This will be MACOA's holiday luncheon and the last meeting of this term of appointment for MACOA members. Please RSVP.

REMINDER: MACOA's October 22nd meeting has been cancelled due to an advance election poll on that date.

9. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

Moved by: Bob Asham
Seconded by: Julie Morris

That this meeting do now adjourn.

CARRIED