

City of St. Catharines

Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (MACOA)

- MINUTES -

Wednesday, June 23, 2010

A meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility was held on Wednesday, June 23, 2010 at St. Catharines City Hall in Committee Room #1 at 1:30 p.m.

Present: Sheryl Stewart, Co-chairperson
Shelley Stewart, Co-chairperson
Ian Crawford
Diane Foster
Julie Morris
Jennifer Noble
David Reed
Frances Tanner
Andy Waldron
Mary Jane Waszynski

Regrets: Mary McKay

Staff/Guests: Diana Lecinski, Accessibility Coordinator
Colin Briggs, CAO
Joanne Tessier, Financial Management Services
Amanda Knutson, Planning Services
Ian Redmond, guest citizen

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:

Sheryl Stewart, co-chairperson called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

2) Introductions:

Members were welcomed and round table introductions were made. Sheryl Stewart introduced Jennifer Noble as MACOA's newest member. City of St. Catharines CAO, Colin Briggs was introduced. He noted that there are many new members of MACOA and he'd like to attend September's meeting for a short round-table type of discussion. It was suggested that members take this opportunity to bring messages regarding accessibility to this meeting.

3) Approval of Previous Minutes:

The minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for April 28, 2010 were approved.

Note: Members hosted a MACOA information table at the March of Dimes event, Breaking the Barriers Awards on June 2, 2010 in lieu of the May 26th meeting. This event marks National Access Awareness Week within Niagara Region. Thank you to all the members who attended. Congratulations to MACOA members Andy Waldron and Frances Tanner as Breaking the Barriers Award recipients. An excellent and detailed article from the St. Catharines Standard of this event was circulated under Information Items to the Committee.

Moved by: Diane Foster
Seconded by: David Reed

That the minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for April 28, 2010 be approved.

CARRIED

4) Business Arising from Minutes:

a) Accessibility Plan:

- i. AODA review by Charles Beer - Charting a Path Forward
This pdf report was circulated with the agenda package, along with html link to the Province's website for the document. Overall the consensus was it was a comprehensive and detailed document that clearly outlined the many critiques of the AODA, the associated Standards, as well as clearly outlining methods to achieve the recommendations.

Frances Tanner noted talking with Charles Beers on several occasions regarding concerns on integrating 3 of the pending Standards (Information & Communication, Transportation and Employment). There was agreement that these seem to be 3 very different issues. The report itself recognized much feedback regarding the need to harmonize the Standards however some members noted a concern on how this might be achieved. Frances Tanner noted several meetings and was asked to forward her information to staff to circulate to all MACOA members. Frances Tanner also noted that a good resource of advocacy by people with a disability in Ontario is the AODA Alliance. MACOA requested that staff record the website within the minutes.
<http://www.aodaalliance.org/>.

Ian Crawford noted some concern on implementation of the recommendations as well as changing the next review from 3 years to 4 years. Members noted that change needs to proactively take place and have some concern about the timeframe of implementation of the Charting a Path Forward recommendations.

ii. Sidewalk Action Statement:

The Sidewalk Action Statement has been included in recent reports to Council (June 7 for Martindale Road, June 21 for Avery Cres.). Diane Foster was among several who addressed Council in favour of the staff recommendation to deny the request to remove sidewalks from this development. Mary Jane Waszynski thanked Diane Foster for attending and addressing Council as an area resident, an active pedestrian and a member of MACOA.

A minor earthquake was experienced. The dialogue resumed. Colin Briggs returned after a brief exit to note that no damage was reported, however the co-chairperson is advised to adjourn the meeting as a precaution.

Sheryl Stewart received a few quick comments and adjourned the meeting.

Quick comments:

- Frances Tanner is interested in MACOA members participating on a float in the Grape & Wine Festival parade. Several members noted a concern about this being an appropriate event, safety and dignity. Given the deadline, planning, interest, details etc. it was suggested that this would not be achievable before September's event.
- This and other opportunities for MACOA to promote accessibility should be discussed at a future meeting.
- There should be a July meeting and that all items from this agenda that were not discussed should be brought forward.
- Staff noted that any transportation issues due to the early adjournment can be arranged from outside with staff's cell phone.

5) Next Meeting:

Wednesday, July 28 at 1:30 in Committee Room #1