

City of St. Catharines

Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (MACOA)

- MINUTES -

Wednesday, November 24, 2010

A meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility was held on Wednesday, November 24, 2010 at St. Catharines City Hall in the Ante Room at 1:30 p.m.

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

Regrets: Mary McKay
Frances Tanner

Staff: Diana Lecinski, Accessibility Coordinator
Sam Carrera, Transportation & Environmental Services

<p>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.</p>
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1) Call to order:

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

MACOA convened at 12:30 p.m. for their annual holiday luncheon, followed by their regularly scheduled meeting.

2) Introductions:

Members and staff were welcomed and round table introductions were made. Staff noted that Frances Tanner sent a thank you to MACOA for their thoughtful card and regrets that due to health reasons she needs to step back from MACOA for the time being.

3) Approval of Previous Minutes:

The minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for September 22, 2010 were approved.

Moved by: Andy Waldron

Seconded by: Diane Foster

That the minutes of September 22, 2010 be approved.

CARRIED

The non-quorum minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for October 27, 2010 were approved.

Moved by: Andy Waldron

Seconded by: Diane Foster

That the non-quorum minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for October 27, 2010 be approved.

CARRIED

4) Business Arising from Minutes:

a) Accessibility Plan / AODA:

i. MACOA recruitment and 2011 meeting schedule

Staff noted that the City Clerk is advertising for citizen applications to all associations, boards and committees. The ads will be featured in the newspaper, along with the City's website for further details and application forms. All staff reps to the various committees will be holding separate public orientation sessions for interested members of the public. MACOA's will be held on Tuesday, December 14th from 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. at City Hall in Committee Room #1. The co-chairpersons have been invited to participate in the orientation process. All MACOA members are encouraged to participate as well. Diana Lecinski noted that a MACOA sub-committee had developed an orientation manual in 2006 and it is updated annually to provide interested members of the public with a solid background on MACOA.

All members are encouraged to re-apply (staff handed out application forms as well as noting the website having a fillable application form) and additionally to promote MACOA to their colleagues to help ensure that good candidates are available and kept on file should any future vacancies occur. Council will be making association, board and committee appointments in late January 2011. Elections for chairpersons will be held after Council has confirmed appointments. Staff also noted that the Region of Niagara's AAC is renewing its membership and representation from St. Catharines is important.

MACOA reviewed and approved their 2011 meeting schedule and staff will post MACOA's schedule on the City's website calendar.

Moved by: Diane Foster
Seconded by: David Reed

CARRIED

ii. 2011 Accessibility Plan preparation

MACOA discussed maintaining the same approach in moving forward with another annual accessibility plan. Staff noted that until the ODA is repealed (as recommended within the Charles Beer report title "Charting a Path Forward) that all broader public sector entities will be

required to continue with these annual plans. It is expected that 2011 and 2012 plans will be required.

MACOA invites all departmental staff reps to the January 26, 2011 meeting to update on the status of the 2010 undertakings and plans for 2011 relating to the Accessibility Plan. Based on those discussions and pending AODA Standards the Accessibility Coordinator will draft a 2011 Accessibility Plan to table at MACOA's February meeting. If approved MACOA will make appointment and present the plan to Council in March.

Mary Jane Waszynski asked that the Library become more engaged in the annual accessibility plan, similar to the participation of Transit. It was noted that Transit submits their approved accessibility plan and that their detailed plan is provided as an appendix within the City's Annual Accessibility Plan. MACOA asked that a representative of the Library be invited to their January meeting and/or submit their input on their 2010 undertakings along with accessibility related plans for 2011. Staff noted that Jack Foster and Anna Chiota of the St. Catharines Public Library attended MACOA's July 2009 meeting to share ideas relating to accessibility at the new library / aquatics facility being constructed in Lester B. Pearson Park.

b) Updates:

i. Site Plan Review; ongoing.

Staff noted that another request to delete sidewalks has been made to Council. The staff report from Planning Services recommends denial and has attached MACOA's full Sidewalk Action Statement with the report. The item was deferred from the November 22 Council meeting and several MACOA reps asked to attend and speak to this item at the December 13 Council meeting. It continues to be the consensus of MACOA that these requests should be consistently denied by Council as otherwise lack of sidewalks leave a legacy of inaccessible pedestrian connections.

Further to the last meeting regarding CIP discussion, staff noted that a meeting has taken place with longtime accessibility advocate Linda Crabtree regarding accessibility to downtown businesses becoming a

complimenting component to CIP. The Mayor, Linda Crabtree along with several key staff discussed ideas and options. Diana Lecinski will invite Linda Crabtree to an upcoming meeting to discuss her ideas and how a project might gain support and momentum.

MACOA was concerned about the continued inaction by the developer to address accessibility concerns and barriers that have been outlined since last summer (July 2009 minutes) and more formally addressed within a letter dated August 17, 2009 from Planning Services. There is still no pedestrian sidewalk access into the retail property between the Wendy's and Shoppers Drug Mart located at Fourth Avenue and Martindale Road. Additionally the dangerous curb ramps or lack thereof within the Walmart parking lot renovation have not been addressed. Planning Services in late 2009 and subsequently TES's Building section in spring of 2010 have required that both of these issues be addressed immediately by the Smart Centres, however no action has taken place to date. MACOA requested that immediate actions be taken to address this ongoing access barrier and that these Minutes be forwarded to the appropriate staff in Planning and TES.

ii. DDRC; no report.

Staff noted, as with all associations, boards and committees, that the DDRC is also undergoing renewed citizen appointments. MACOA can assume the same 'accessibility advisory role' related strictly to accessibility perspectives within the DDRC mandate and not with the DDRC process itself. This proactive approach will help keep an inclusive and barrier-free community at the forefront of the DDRC's initiatives.

5) Information Items:

- a) Information items were circulated with the agenda package. Also noted;
 - evacuation chairs have been ordered for Garden City Arena and staff have been trained.
 - the new sidewalk areas at entrances to City Hall are completed with new park benches also providing space for mobility devices to park beside the bench. MACOA reviewed the plans in the spring and provided suggestions that were integrated into the design.
 - MS Trivia Night is January 15, 2011; details will be circulated to MACOA to promote with their colleagues. Staff will post this on the community calendar section of the website.

6) Next Meeting:

Wednesday, January 26, 2011 at 12:30 in the Ante Room.

7) Adjournment:

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

Moved by: Diane Foster

Seconded by: Ian Crawford

That this meeting adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

CARRIED