

City of St. Catharines

Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (MACOA) MINUTES, Wednesday, February 23, 2011

A meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility was held on Wednesday, February 23, 2011 at St. Catharines City Hall in the Ante Room at 1:30 p.m.

Present: Councillor Matthew Harris
Sheryl Stewart, Co-chairperson
Shelley Stewart, Co-chairperson
Bob Asham
Ian Crawford
Tony DiPaola
Diane Foster
Julie Morris
David Reed
Kevin Vallier
Andy Waldron
Mary Jane Waszynski

Regrets: Jennifer Noble

Staff: Diana Lecinski, Accessibility Coordinator, CAO's Office
Steve Bittner, Transportation & Environmental Services
Britney Williamson, Planning Services

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:

Shelley Stewart, co-chairperson called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

2) Introductions:

Members and staff were welcomed and round table introductions were made.

3) Approval of Previous Minutes:

The minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for January 26, 2011 were reviewed and approved.

Moved by: Andy Waldron

Seconded by: Sheryl Stewart

That the minutes of January 26, 2011 be approved.

CARRIED

4) Business Arising from Minutes:

a) Accessibility Plan / AODA

- i. 2011 Accessibility Plan; was distributed to MACOA members and departmental staff reps with the agenda package in order that all had an opportunity to review the annual Accessibility Plan in detail beforehand. Comments and suggestions included a number of practical and service related questions. Some related to Transit and staff suggested that Transit staff be invited to an upcoming meeting. Members also asked that library staff become more participatory in the development of accessibility planning. Overall the members were very positive about the City's accessibility planning and noted that it has become more proactive with each successive year. Building relationships between the Plan and the Provincial AODA legislation provided a clearer path for accessibility planning as it continues to move forward. Further to last month's meeting Shelley Stewart, co-chairperson, took the opportunity to thank all the departmental staff reps as their liaison roles have been an extremely helpful conduit of information and has created improved action and understanding throughout the City.

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MACOA also decided to continue its practice of making a formal presentation of the annual Accessibility Plan to Council. MACOA members Diane Foster, Sheryl Stewart and Bob Asham were confirmed as the presenters. Staff will notify the City Clerk and provide a PowerPoint backgrounder for this presentation.

Following the discussions MACOA endorsed the 2011 Accessibility Plan and requested that it be forwarded to Council. Once approved by Council notification should be sent to the Ministry of Community and Social Services with a copy of the 2011 Accessibility Plan.

Moved by: Julie Morris
Seconded by: Diane Foster

That the 2011 Accessibility Plan be endorsed and forwarded to Council and further that the Ministry of Community and Social Services be notified.

CARRIED

- ii. AODA - Final Proposed Integrated Accessibility Regulation (IAR); Staff noted that MACOA had provided a response on the initial proposed IAR last Fall. Members were provided with the links and the IAR documents shortly after the latest release on February 1st and determined not to provide any further feedback. The changes since the initial proposed IAR provide more detail and clearer objectives. Diana Lecinski will meet with all key staff to ensure that departments are building the necessary preparations into their planning and budgets.

b) Updates:

- i. Site Plan Review; ongoing. Staff noted a recent opportunity to open discussion with Fairview Mall management regarding the creation of a pedestrian access from Geneva Street to the Mall entrance. MACOA's previously submitted site plan drawing will be used. Key TES and Planning staff, along with the accessibility coordinator will bring this forward to the Mall owners and management. MACOA supported this and reiterated how important a safe pedestrian access is for all shoppers including shoppers who use mobility devices. Also refer to Information Items 6d).

Staff also noted that Linda Crabtree, former MACOA member and community accessibility activist, will be attending an upcoming MACOA meeting to talk about AccessibleNiagara.com and about creating a more accessible tourism and downtown area.

- ii. DDRC; no report.
MACOA thanked Julie Morris for becoming the DDRC rep. A meeting is expected to be scheduled shortly. Planning Services organizes the DDRC meetings.
- iii. Niagara Inter-Municipal Specialized Transit advisory committee;
Diane Foster was recently appointed to this Regional Committee and was elected as chairperson. Congratulations Diane. MACOA looks forward to updates at future meetings.

5) MACOA Elections:

Shelley Stewart received a motion from Diane Foster and seconded by Mary Jane Waszynski to turn the chair over to staff in order to hold MACOA's elections. Carried. The meeting was turned over to Diana Lecinski.

Staff noted that annual elections generally take place at the January meeting however Council's advisory committee appointments were not confirmed in time. Therefore the MACOA elections were postponed until this meeting. Staff thanked the committee for its ongoing support and commitment to the City's accessibility planning. 2010 co-chairpersons Shelley Stewart and Sheryl Stewart were thanked by staff and the by members as well. Staff also reviewed the responsibilities of chairpersons and members, in particular noting the importance of attendance at meetings and notice of regrets requirements. As in the past MACOA members preferred the shared role of co-chairpersons instead of chair and vice-chair.

Diana Lecinski called for nominations for co-chairperson:

Moved by Shelley Stewart that Diane Foster be nominated for co-chairperson, seconded by Ian Crawford. Diane Foster accepted the nomination.

Moved by Sheryl Stewart that Andy Waldron be nominated for co-chairperson, seconded by Mary Jane Waszynski. Andy Waldron accepted the nomination.

Moved by Julie Morris that Shelley Stewart be nominated for co-chairperson, seconded by Diane Foster. Shelley Stewart accepted the nomination.

Moved by Andy Waldron that Sheryl Stewart be nominated for co-chairperson, seconded by Shelley Stewart. Sheryl Stewart accepted the nomination.

No other nominations were received. Staff reviewed the nominations received for co-chairpersons as being; Shelley Stewart, Sheryl Stewart, Diane Foster and Andy Waldron. Staff handed out ballots and adjourned the meeting for 10 minutes to tabulate the ballots. Upon recalling the meeting to order it was announced that Shelley Stewart and Diane Foster were elected by MACOA as co-chairpersons. Carried. Staff turned the chair back to Shelley Stewart.

6) Information Items:

- a) Information items were circulated with the agenda package.
- b) The Rick Hansen 25th Anniversary Relay will take place in 2011 and is tentatively scheduled to arrive in St. Catharines on November 13. The City has been asked to arrange a “lead participant” for the end of day ceremony. Bob Asham agreed to be the lead participant and has worked with the Rick Hansen Foundation on several occasions in the past. Staff will draft a memo to the Mayor’s office on behalf of MACOA in this regard.
- c) March of Dimes – Living with a Disability Conference. This is scheduled for the same date as MACOA’s next meeting. MACOA members were interested in attending this in lieu of the next meeting as it is being held on the same date. The consensus was that MACOA’s March 23 meeting be cancelled and that all interested members respond to staff for registration for this Conference. Staff also noted to be contacted if any concern regarding transportation.

- d) Additionally the following items were reviewed
- Sidewalk snow shoveling reminder PSA on the City's website and the City's 'snow line' phone number is 905-935-3813
 - St. Catharines Standard article on Fairview Mall pedestrian concerns
 - Council orientation sessions have been taking place since the New Year and the accessibility presentation is scheduled for February 28th. Thank you to Shelley Stewart and Diane Foster who will participate in this training; similar to their previous and comprehensive roles in the corporate staff training sessions from the Accessible Customer Service.
 - The newspaper stands along the wall of the Government of Canada building across the parking lot from City Hall have been removed as several complaints have been received regarding impassable sidewalks in that area.

7) Next Meeting:

Wednesday, March 23, 2011 MEETING CANCELLED and the next MACOA meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 27 at 1:30 p.m. in the Ante Room. Interested MACOA members who RSVP to staff will be registered to attend the March 23rd of Dimes Conference per item 6c).

Moved by: Andy Waldron
Seconded by: Julie Morris

That MACOA's meeting of March 23 be cancelled. That interested MACOA members RSVP to staff to be registered to attend the March 23rd March of Dimes Conference and that the next MACOA meeting will take place on April 27th.

CARRIED

8) Adjournment:

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

Moved by: Diane Foster
Seconded by: Mary Jane Waszynski

That this meeting adjourn.
The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

CARRIED