

City of St. Catharines

Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (MACOA) MINUTES, Wednesday, September 28, 2011

A meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility was held on Wednesday, September 28, 2011 at St. Catharines City Hall in Committee Room #1 at 1:00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Matthew Harris
Shelley Stewart, Co-chairperson
Diane Foster, Co-chairperson
Bob Asham
Ian Crawford
Tony DiPaola
Julie Morris
Jennifer Noble
David Reed
Mary Jane Waszynski

Regrets: Kevin Vallier
Andy Waldron

Staff: Diana Lecinski, Accessibility Coordinator, CAO's Office
Britney Williamson, Planning Services

Guests: Salima Rawji, Smart Centres
Adam Samuel, Smart Centres

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 1:00 p.m.

2) Introductions:

Everyone was welcomed and round table introductions were made.

3) Approval of Previous Minutes:

The minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for June 22, 2011 and July 27, 2011 were reviewed and approved.

Moved by: Bob Asham
Seconded by: Shelley Stewart

CARRIED

4) Presentations / Discussions:

a) Performing Arts Centre (PAC) – update

Staff previewed the latest drawings of the PAC concepts introduced at the recent PAC open house on September 21st. Initially it was hoped that representatives for the PAC would attend, however they will be in contact with MACOA shortly to review comprehensive plans. Currently plans are still incorporating staff input and once completed the architects will meet with MACOA for their input on the designs. This will take place in early October and staff will notify MACOA. Bob Topping of Designable Environments and an author of FADS has been brought in by the architects to provide accessible design review as well.

b) Lincoln Mall, Salima Rawji of Smart Centres

Diane Foster welcomed Salima Rawji of Smart Centre. A site plan of the Lincoln Mall was shown along with a review of pedestrian access and flow. These plans incorporate MACOA's previous input (May 25, 2011). Future plans for infill store strips and site access from Bunting Road was reviewed and MACOA's input was sought prior to another site plan being submitted.

MACOA also noted concern about no pedestrian access to the Canadian Tire side of Lincoln Mall and it was clarified that this is not part of the site plan. Staff noted that this area is under a separate site plan and not part of the Smart Centres' property.

Additionally, MACOA members inquired about unresolved pedestrian and access issues at other Smart Centre sites. Specifically the development on Fourth at Martindale where a grade separation slope was installed where a pedestrian sidewalk access into the property was to be located and across Fourth Avenue where traffic islands throughout the Walmart development having steep and cross-sloped ramps. Salima Rawji was aware of these issues and is working to resolve them, in particular the sidewalk access into the Fourth/Martindale development. She will continue to work with City staff to resolve the existing deficiencies.

Diane Foster thanked Salima Rawji for her presentation and for her efforts to design safe and accessible access from the street into the stores at Lincoln Mall.

5) Business Arising from Minutes:

a) Steps Out project:

Further to the previous meeting, staff reviewed the concepts and goals of this project for members who did not attend the previous meeting. Staff also noted that a letter of support from MACOA would be helpful when this project moves into more finalized stages. Members agreed that this innovative approach would benefit from as much support as possible and asked staff to draft a letter on its behalf.

Moved by: Bob Asham
Seconded by: Tony DiPaolo

That a letter of support from MACOA be provided to support the Steps Out project.

CARRIED

b) Accessibility Plan / AODA:

i. Integrated Accessibility Standard (IAS);

Staff reviewed several related requirements under the IAS

- Transit met related compliance requirements for all items before the deadline of July 1, 2011

- The next annual Accessibility Plan will create the basis for future longer-term plans. Departmental staff reps will be asked as part of the 2012 to develop long-term goals to be reflected in the next Accessibility Plan as a basis for a more specific framework and goals by the following year. At that time the next Accessibility Plan would ideally be a 3 year plan.

- Staff reviewed an exciting Accessible Information and Communication training partnership with Brock University. The City has developed an Accessible Communications Guide (reviewed and endorsed by MACOA June 22, 2011) along with a hands-on computer training module for its staff. Brock will provide the venue in exchange for participation by several of their key staff. City staff are providing a detailed training overview to all City managers and canvassing them to ensure that all their appropriate staff attend this training. Training is tentatively scheduled for December 2011.

c) Updates:

i. Site Plan Review;

Fairview Mall was receptive to MACOA's request and plan to provide accessible pedestrian access from Geneva Street into the Mall itself. A management representative from Fairview Mall noted that more final plans and construction arrangements still needed to take place and they plan to build this access in the Fall or if weather does not allow concrete work then spring 2012. MACOA and staff were pleased with the Fairview Mall management's efforts to improve access and discussed plans for a more formal event of recognition once the construction is completed.

Outstanding from the previous meeting are requests for an update on the Pen Centre renovations and a status update on implementing accessible on-street parking spaces. TES staff will update MACOA on these issues at the October meeting.

ii. DDRC; it was noted that DDRC membership is being updated and that Julie Morris is still MACOA's rep to the DDRC. Julie Morris noted that meetings are forthcoming and she will provide updates after all meetings.

iii. Niagara Inter-Municipal Specialized Transit advisory committee; Diane Foster noted that this committee has met its mandate and was

disbanded by the Regional Clerk. No further reports.

6) Information Items:

- a) Information items were circulated with the agenda package.
- b) Enabling Accessibility Fund (EAF) application was submitted on behalf of Lock 3 Museum. As with the EAF at City Hall the accessibility renovations planned provided improved access for various disabilities. The Lock 3 Museum EAF application included; elevator enunciators, contrasting stair nosing, visual fire alarms, 3 doors to be widened with auto-door openers installed along with 2 more auto-door openers on existing doors, and an audio tour guide system.

7) Next Meeting:

Wednesday, October 26, 2011 in Committee Room #1 at 1:30 p.m.

Members agreed that November's meeting would start at 12:30 with a holiday luncheon.

Members also asked that all staff reps be invited to attend November's meeting in preparation for the 2012 Accessibility Plan. The 2012 plan will be the last annual plan and departments should be assessing future accessibility undertakings in the context of a 3 year plan.

8) Adjournment:

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

Moved by: Julie Morris

Seconded by: Mary Jane Waszynski

That this meeting adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

CARRIED