

# **City of St. Catharines**

## **Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (MACOA) MINUTES, Wednesday, January 25, 2012**

**A meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility was held on Wednesday, January 25, 2012 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  
Ian Crawford  
Tony DiPaola  
David Reed  
Kevin Vallier  
Mary Jane Waszynski

Regrets: Bob Asham  
Julie Morris  
Andy Waldron

Staff: Diana Lecinski, Accessibility Coordinator, CAO's Office  
Kris Jacobson, Transportation & Environmental Services  
Steve Bittner, Transportation & Environmental Services  
Britney Williamson, Planning Services  
Sue Dods, Corporate Support Services, Clerk's  
Joanne Tessier, Financial Management Services  
Marco Marino, Economic Development & Tourism Services  
Jack Foster, St. Catharines Library Commission

Staff Regrets: Jennifer McQuillan, Recreation & Community Services  
Chris Leonard, Fire & Emergency Management Services  
Sam Carrera, Transportation & Environmental Services

Guests: Margaret Sanderson, Brock University  
Leslie Spencer, CNIB  
Cindy Upshall, Corporate Communications Officer, CAO's Office  
Helen Perron, Corporate Support Services, Information Systems

## **1. Call to order:**

Shelley Stewart, co-chairperson called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. It was regrettably noted that Jennifer Noble resigned from MACOA. The City Clerk is currently advertising to fill this vacancy.

## **2. Introductions:**

Everyone was welcomed and round table introductions were made.

Shelley Stewart provided a backgrounder to MACOA on the City's Accessible Information and Communication staff training that was done in partnership with Brock University in December at Brock's computer labs. A thank you presentation was made to the training team who are listed as guests on the minutes.

## **3. Approval of Previous Minutes:**

Diane Foster noted that she had no changes to these Minutes, however would like to provide further input under Business Arising from Minutes pertaining to the CIP and Downtown Urban Design Guidelines listed as 4c and 4d on today's agenda.

The minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for November 25, 2011 were approved.

Moved by:	Councillor Harris
Seconded by:	Mary Jane Waszynski

That the minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for November 25, 2011 be approved.

CARRIED

## **4. Business Arising from Minutes:**

### **a. Accessible Parking:**

#### **i. On-street parking locations/designs;**

Further to MAOCA's November discussion Kris Jacobson provided a detailed presentation on 6 different locations and designs for accessible on-street parking. Locations identified are in the area of 53 Church St., 75 King St., 80 King St., 1St. Paul, 98 St. Paul and 144 St. Paul. After discussion of design and placement it was apparent that several locations would benefit with an on-grade exit from the passenger side of the vehicle, in addition to curb-ramps for disembarking from side-exit or rear-exit vehicles. This is an additional

design request and staff were amenable to providing functional and safe designs. Sidewalk width was thought to be sufficient at the locations for Church St., King St. and 98 St. Paul. Upon further discussion the location near 1 St. Paul was requested to be 2 (or more) accessible parking spaces within the adjacent City parking lot at the corner of St. Paul and Westchester Sts. Staff noted that the downtown association has input on changes to parking and it will be informed. Staff also noted that future construction is possible along St. Paul and staff will check to ensure that any newly installed parking will not be removed as part of any upcoming construction. It was also suggested that the remaining location at 144 St. Paul be moved forward to mid-block and be placed closer to 156 St. Paul where an existing loading zone is designated.

David Reed asked that 1 accessible on-street space be constructed, reviewed (by staff and MACOA reps) and approved before any others are built. Staff agreed and also noted that Montebello Park poses no problem either and accessible on-street parking will be done there as well. Staff felt that this project would be addressed in 2012.

MACOA requested that a motion be passed to support TES transportation staff in completing this work in 2012.

Moved by: Mary Jane Waszynski  
Seconded by: Diane Foster

That accessible on-street parking spaces be installed in 2012; downtown (approximately 6 spaces) and at least 2 more at Montebello Park.

CARRIED

- ii. Curb ramp design and status update; Kris Jacobson advised MACOA that this is a comprehensive undertaking to ensure clear and specific designs for curb ramps. Further, it has to be a component of all future contracts, RFP's and Regional contracts. TES engineering staff are discussing this with a stakeholder group of Niagara municipalities and will ask that the City's more accessible design be adopted by all, regardless however, the City will require supplementary special provisions for this design for all contracts. An important component of this new criteria will include functional sidewalk closure and safe alternative pedestrian routes. TES engineering will also ensure that in-house curb ramp work will be made to these specifications once

finalized. MACOA thanked Kris Jacobson and asked that the designs be provided to them prior to being finalized.

b. Accessibility Plan / AODA

- i. 2012 Accessibility Plan - Departmental staff rep updates;  
Shelley Stewart thanked all departmental staff reps for their ongoing and supportive roles in creating accessibility throughout the City's facilities and services. Appreciation was also extended to the St. Catharines Transit and Library Commissions. The following representatives provided updates.

Jack Foster, Library:

- The Library Board approved their accessible customer service policy in November 2011.
- Library staff participated in the City's Accessible Customer Service training in 2009. Training continues in-house since that time.
- Key staff participated in the City's Accessible Information and Communication training at Brock University in December 2011
- A 5 year facility improvement plan was developed for 2012-2016
- Implementation and 2012 budget for \$46,000 for improvements granted Council's approval; \$18,000 for purchase of new technology for special needs equipment is identified in the near future.
- Elevator size is functional yet slightly less than FADS criteria, therefore it was advised that this should be reviewed when the entire elevator system is replaced, not as a primary deficiency
- Facility exterior deficiencies are being addressed by the City's facility management team

Joanne Tessier, FMS:

- Key FMS staff attended the City's Accessible Information and Communication training at Brock University in December 2011
- Staff ensure that finance documents posted on the website will be in an accessible format – new formats are being migrated at present.
- An accessibility clause is contained in procurement documents / contracts and is in the new Procurement Policy going to Council soon
- New RFP closing in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2012 for credit card processing will include wireless debit machines or connections long enough to accommodate usage for customers using the accessible finance counter or the cashier counter.
- Finance forms will continue to be updated and made more accessible as the City moves forward with an IT solution for forms.

Marco Marino, EDTS:

- Majority of EDTS staff attended the City's Accessible Information and Communication training at Brock University in December 2011
- Review and upgrade of Adobe software is being undertaken
- Marketing materials aren't readily available from graphic designers/printers in various formats, however the corporation and third parties all have responsibilities for this upon request. Departments will resource accessibility staff as needed.
- Staff are auditing documents and materials for accessibility on their website
- Tourism has a new website. Staff and web providers have been informed of applicable requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Regulation (IAR).

Sue Dods, CSS:

- Updates on behalf of CSS, Clerks and Information Systems (IS)
- Key CSS staff attended the City's Accessible Information and Communication training at Brock University in December 2011
- Renovations are forthcoming to Council Chambers this summer
  - Chambers will be shut down during renovations and accessible, alternative locations for council meetings will be sought for this period.
  - Renovations include a new audio system that is integrated with the existing listening assistive devices, projector with a clearer, larger image, a document camera (new technology similar to traditional overhead projector), new conferencing system, accessible podium; new carpeting with contrasting stair rise and nosing;
- Clerk's reception area scheduled for installation of accessible counter shortly
- Undertaking a review of corporate forms, consolidating similar forms into overall corporate solution, computers are upgraded to Microsoft 2010

Brittany Williamson, PDS:

- Key PDS staff attended the City's Accessible Information and Communication training at Brock University in December 2011
- MACOA continues as a commenting agent to site plan applications
- Downtown urban design guide comments submitted by MACOA
- CIP comments submitted by MACOA

- Zoning by-law is being updated, however existing content is being converted to accessible format.
- New software upgrade requested for digital imaging such as pdf format (site plans). Currently scanned site plans are not submitted or available in-house, however this is a future objective

Steve Bittner, TES Transportation:

- Key TES staff attended the City's Accessible Information and Communication training at Brock University in December 2011
- Project; accessible on-street parking in 2012 (Item 4ai)
- Curb ramp design, transportation will participate with engineering and other Niagara municipalities in developing and adoption of an accessible curb ramp design standard (Item 4a ii)
- Full review of City parking lots for accessible parking space size and ratios in facility lots (incl. recreation centres, arenas) and metered lots

Diana Lecinski, CAO:

- Noted further to the Library report, the undertaking of numerous supportive accessibility technology is being sought by the library
- Noted Transit's accessibility plan was recently approved by their Board. It has been received for inclusion in February's draft Plan to MACOA
- Organized staff training for the City's Accessible Information and Communication training at Brock University in December 2011 as part of the compliance under the AODA's Integrated Accessibility Regulation (IAR, O. Reg.191/11).
  - Over 100 City staff were identified as primary creators/users of documents (Word, pdf's, website) and attended this hands-on computer training along with more than 30 Brock University staff.
  - Approximately 200 more office staff will participate in a similar training module in Spring of 2012.
  - Remaining staff will receive awareness training.
- Participated in Provincial forums, webcasts, etc relating to the AODA
- Continues to support staff accessible customer service training for groups; seasonal students, crossing-guards etc.
- Continues to be an active and supportive member of the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP)
- Ensured MACOA's review of plans for various City facility construction or renovations. Over the past year this has included; the Performing Arts Centre, Kiwanis Aquatics and Library facility, Fire Hall #4, Montebello pathways, Happy Rolph's petting farm and washrooms
- Updated and renewed promotion of FADS (was 2001, updated to 2007)

- Applied for a grant under the Enabling Accessibility Fund (EAF) from the federal government for multiple access upgrades to the Lock 3 Museum. Notification of award decisions has not yet been announced.
- Future endeavors include; staged compliance with the IAR, organize 2012 park and trail audit, site plan comments via Amanda software, creation of a 3-5 long-term accessibility plan

Victoria Woolridge, CSS, HR:

- HR has a lead role relating to employee safety evacuation planning within the IAR
- HR is finalizing a statement confirming their ongoing commitment to being an equal opportunity employer, including for people with a disability
- Attended various forums and workshops regarding the AODA; ADO's forum in Burlington in early 2011, HR professional assoc. workshops dedicated to accessible employment best practices under the IAR
- HR has always provided employee accommodation and accessible support or formats as requested, however continues formalize these undertakings for clearer compliance with AODA legislation
- HR has an auto-open door and accessible customer service counter

Sam Carrera, TES building:

- Due to unexpected regrets for this meeting, staff submitted an overview of its undertakings which included; continue to review of all plans for OBC compliance under barrier-free part 3.8, continue to build awareness of FADS as a preferred access guideline, investigate opportunities relating to OBC elements that are applicable to the 2011 "steps-out" barrier audit of St. Paul Street, TES facilities continues to allocate budgets of approximately \$250,000 to annual accessible facility renovations as prioritized by MACOA and/or consolidate into other identified facility renovations.
- Staff flagged the Kiwanis artificial turf field beside the Seymour Hannah Sports and Entertainment Centre as access was an overall focus in the parking, drop-off area, pedestrian routes, change-rooms, washrooms and the spectator stands.

Jennifer McQuillan, RCS:

- Staff attended November's meeting and provided some input at that time, including RCS support for an access audit of parks and trails.
- Regrets, will confirm further RCS undertakings for the next meeting.

Chris Leonard, Fire:

- Chris attended November's meeting and provided some input at that time.
- Regrets, will confirm further Fire input for the next meeting.

ii. 2012 Accessibility Plan – next steps;

- Based on the input received and accumulated over the past year accessibility staff will draft a 2012 Plan prior to MACOA's February meeting for the review and endorsement of the committee
- A presentation of the endorsed Plan to Council by MACOA reps will be scheduled for March

- c. Community Improvement Plan (CIP), accessibility input in Nov. 2011; As noted under agenda item 3 (approval of previous minutes), Diane Foster felt that MACOA should be more explicit and formalized in ensuring that Council is aware of its position relating to the CIP. Further to MACOA's November 25, 2011 Minutes, Diane Foster asked MACOA to support a motion and the membership agreed. MACOA feels strongly that a focus on accessibility, specific to the CIP, must be included, wherever possible, in either existing funding or as additional but specific CIP focused on Access. The need for other accessibility funding assistance is redundant. Making improvements to beautify the downtown core, without making it accessible where ever possible limits growth as an inclusive community.

Moved by: Diane Foster

Seconded by: Kevin Vallier

That MACOA asks Council to read and review their general minutes from January 9, 2012, specifically Item #15(5) on page 23 regarding the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and MACOA's minutes dated November 25, 2011, also circulated to Council in their package of January 9, 2012. The minutes are MACOA's general response to this report.

CARRIED



- d. Draft Urban Design Guidelines, accessibility input in Nov. 2011;  
As noted under agenda item 3 (approval of previous minutes), Diane Foster wanted to thank Planning Services staff for including a majority of the suggestions made by MACOA at November's meeting with respect to the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines. Staff noted that Council approved the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines at their meeting of January 23, 2012. MACOA requests that Council require similar consideration be given to an accessibility within the CIP by ensuring an accessibility component.

## **5. Updates:**

- a. Site Plan Review:

- i. Performing Arts Centre

MACOA reps noted that the site plan for the PAC was received however it was vague and without dimensions so more specific plans were requested. Planning staff noted that this was the general consensus of all who reviewed this site plan.

Additionally it was clarified that the upper property where the PAC will be located is City and the lower property of the future Marilyn I. Walker, school of fine performing arts, will be reviewed by Brock University. The new Carlisle Street Parking Garage is now open so additional accessible parking is now available adjacent to the future PAC facility.

## **6. New Business:**

- a. MACOA elections:

Shelley Stewart passed the chair to Diana Lecinski in order to conduct MACOA's annual election of chairpersons.

Accessibility staff reviewed the role of members and of the chairs. MACOA continues to prefer having 2 co-chairpersons instead of a chair and vice-chair.

It was restated that the role of MACOA in the community are as ambassadors, and members are encouraged to distribute FADS or suggest that businesses visit City Hall or other facilities that demonstrate good examples of access. MACOA was reminded that despite a building being inaccessible it is almost assured that it is building code compliant. Accessibility staff often sends out copies of FADS and/or information on the AODA to assist community businesses or stakeholders recognizes the requirements and benefits of becoming accessible.

Diana Lecinski outlined the nomination process. Staff then called for a nomination for the co-chairperson.

Councillor Harris nominated Shelley Stewart and Diane Foster. Staff asked each nominee if they accept the nomination. Both accepted the nomination. No other nominations were received.

Moved by: Councillor Harris  
Seconded by: David Reed

That Shelley Stewart and Diane Foster be elected as MACOA's co-chairpersons for a term of one year.

CARRIED

## **7. Information Items**

a. Rick Hansen Foundation, Global Accessibility Map;  
Deferred to next meeting for Bob Asham to speak to item.

b. Town of Fort Erie;

As requested by Fort Erie's AAC MACOA reviewed their minutes and motion with respect to a proposed ODSP initiative "Triple D – Disabled Discount Day". A preference for person first verbiage was suggested. MACOA noted that action on this item would take place at the Provincial level. MACOA understands the marginalized consumer opportunities for persons on the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and therefore supports Fort Erie's AAC as it promotes this type of consumer discount for people with a disability.

Moved by: Diane Foster  
Seconded by: Ian Crawford

That MACOA supports the concepts of a discount to people with disability who are on ODSP and commends Adam McLeod's initiative for creating and promoting the ideal of a "Triple D – Disabled Discount Day".

CARRIED

**8. Next Meeting:**

- a. Wednesday, February 22, 2012 at 1:30 p.m. in Committee Room #1

**9. Adjournment:**

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

Moved by: Kevin Vallier  
Seconded by: Tony DiPaola

That this meeting do now adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.  
CARRIED

**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.