

# **City of St. Catharines**

## **Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (MACOA) MINUTES, Wednesday, May 23, 2012**

**A meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility was held on Wednesday, May 23, 2012 at St. Catharines City Hall in Committee Room #1 at 1:30 p.m.**

Present: Diane Foster, Co-chairperson  
Bob Asham  
Chantal Barrette  
Ian Crawford  
Tony DiPaola  
Linda Marie O'Hagan  
David Reed  
Mary Jane Waszynski

Regrets: Councillor Matthew Harris  
Shelley Stewart, Co-chairperson  
Julie Morris  
Kevin Vallier

Staff: Diana Lecinski, Accessibility Coordinator, CAO's Office  
Jennifer Douglas, Recreation Supervisor Special Needs/Older Adults, Recreation & Community Services Department

Guests: Virginia Stewart, Community Coordinator, Region of Niagara  
Members of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Older Adults;  
Fred Stevens, Bonnier Purser, Marilyn Misener, Barbara Legg,  
John Strik and Virginia Stewart

### **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 1:35 p.m.

**2. Introductions:**

Everyone was welcomed and round table introductions were made including the members of the Mayor's Advisory Committee for Older Adults. It was noted that the presenter is also a member of the Older Adults Committee.

Diane Foster congratulated Bob Asham on being awarded the Joe Dineley Commemorative Award at the upcoming March of Dimes Breaking-the-Barriers Event on May 30<sup>th</sup>.

**3. Approval of Previous Minutes:**

The minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for April 25, 2012 were approved.

**Moved by:** Linda Marie O'Hagan  
**Seconded by:** Mary Jane Waszynski

That the minutes of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility for April 25, 2012 be approved.

CARRIED

**4. Presentation:**

Virginia Stewart, Community Coordinator for Niagara's Age-Friendly Community, Region of Niagara made a detailed presentation on the benefits of an age-friendly community and distributed associated material. She highlighted that it is an initiative supported by the World Health Organization (WHO) and that similar presentations have been made to various Niagara Councils and Committees. For example Welland has placed park benches in more strategic positions based on limited distances that older adults may walk and street signs with small font were replaced with larger print.

Members of both advisory committees (accessibility and seniors) agreed that an age-friendly and accessible community opens doors for all residents and visitors. There was good discussion and clarification during and after the presentation.

Virginia Stewart will also be making her presentation to St. Catharines Council in mid-June. As outlined on the PowerPoint presented she will ask Council for a motion of support.

Shelley Stewart MACOA co-chairperson, asked that due to her regrets at this meeting that staff review her input as follows; that this concept is a very positive approach however some concern about the duplication of goals that are being addressed through the provincial accessibility legislation. The public sector in general is very proactive in engaging older adults and in providing recreational programs in addition to making its services and facilities more accessible for the community at large. Shelley Stewart noted that maintaining an older adult's personal safety, health and independence as they age is of primary concern. The Niagara Age-Friendly Community Initiative focuses on the following areas and the corresponding accessible legislation is in brackets;

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings (AODA, draft Accessible Built Environment Std.)
- Transportation (AODA, Integrated Accessibility Std., Transportation Section, O. Reg. 191/11)
- Housing (Region of Niagara)
- Social Participation (St. Catharines offers 4 Older Adult recreation facilities)
- Respect & Social Inclusion (These are the key fundamentals of the AODA, Bill 118)
- Civic Participation and Employment (AODA, Integrated Accessibility Std., Employment Section, O. Reg. 191/11)
- Communication and Information (AODA, Integrated Accessibility Std., Information and Communication Section, O. Reg. 191/11)
- Community Health and Support Services (Region of Niagara)
- Principle of Age-Friendly; respect, inclusion, engagement, livability, accountability
- Principle of the AODA and Accessible Customer Service (O. Reg. 429/07); dignity, independence, integration, equality

Diane Foster noted the City already uses FADS as its minimum standard. She handed the chair to Mary Jane Waszynski in order that she could make a motion for Council's consideration.

On behalf of the Accessibility Committee:

**Moved by: Diane Foster**

**Seconded by: Linda Marie O'Hagan**

On behalf of the Older Adults Committee:

**Moved by: Fred Stevens**

**Seconded by: Bonnie Purser**

That both the Accessibility and the Seniors Advisory Committees receive the presentation by Virginia Stewart, Community Coordinator, on behalf of the Niagara Age-Friendly Initiative as a follow-up to Report COM 11-2011 distributed to the City of St. Catharines Council March 3, 2011; and

That both the Accessibility and the Seniors Advisory Committees reviewed the Year-1 Niagara Age-Friendly Community Initiative Report and forward to Council; and

That both the Accessibility and the Seniors Advisory Committees endorse to Council the recognition of common themes between seniors and accessibility; and

That both the Accessibility and the Seniors Advisory Committees inform Council that most Age-Friendly requirements are already addressed through the AODA Standards and the City's own proactive initiatives to remove and prevent barriers in its goods, services and facilities; and further

That both the Accessibility and the Seniors Advisory Committees support the City of St. Catharines recognizing an age-friendly community by virtue of its commitment to preventing and removing barriers at City facilities, the 4 Older Adult Recreation Centres, and the Provincial Access legislation under the AODA.

**CARRIED**

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

### **a. Accessibility Plan / AODA**

JAAC Workshop – report from attendees

Co-chairpersons, Shelley Stewart and Diane Foster along with staff Diana Lecinski attended this workshop hosted by the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (JAAC). JAAC is comprised of 6 Niagara municipalities; Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln, Pelham, Thorold and Niagara-on-the-Lake. Chairpersons and staff members from the various AAC's throughout Niagara were in attendance. Alfred Spencer, Director of Ontario's Accessibility Directorate's Office (ADO) provided the group with an overview and update of the Province's access initiatives and standards. There was an excellent discussion period and that was a good opportunity to learn what other municipalities are doing. Diana Lecinski shared St. Catharines' corporate training guide on accessible information and communication.

### **b. MACOA's access discussion with the Province**

As discussed at a previous MACOA meeting, the ADO had asked to meet with the members of MACOA on June 27 to receive candid feedback on its accessibility initiatives to date. Unfortunately, staff received a call that this date has been cancelled by the Province. It is hoped that this opportunity could be rescheduled later in 2012.

## **6. Updates:**

### **a. Site Plan Review;**

Ian Crawford and David Reed noted being very disappointed with 2 fast food locations for avoiding accessibility advice through the site plan process. The concerns about the A&W on Glendale and the Taco Bell on Welland have been forwarded to the Development Agreement Coordinator. It is recognized by MACOA that the OBC is a requirement and that FADS is a best practice, however most developers implement MACOA's advice to ensure a more accessible environment for their customers, otherwise they risk losing those customers and their acquaintances.

Diana Lecinski reviewed the planning concepts for a design-build spectator facility. This type of planning requires immediate input on specifics that need to be included in the designs. Staff provided MACOA with a draft list, that outlined FADS as the minimum requirement but provided additional detail on access issues. MACOA offered additions to the list. This list will

be circulated to all members for input within the next week before being submitted to staff leads for the spectator facility. There was a public meeting held earlier in May and several attendees flagged their concern that accessibility needs to be a primary design concept. Many noted the barriers in the existing facility and provided some solutions that would work for various disabilities.

b. DDRC;

Diane Foster attended the April 11<sup>th</sup> Planning Charrette on behalf of Julie Morris, MACOA's DDRC rep. Diane Foster provided input, noting it was an excellent opportunity to promote accessibility into future planning.

c. Parks and Trails – Access Audit update

Diana Lecinski held on-site park access audit training at the Russell Community Centre, where the Catherine Street Park, leash-free park, and St. Patrick's Park were audit by all in attendance. Thank you to Julie and Kelly Morris, Diane Foster and Shelley Stewart who participated. Julie, Kelly and Diane have since audited Lakeside Park and Rennie Park. Several members noted being interested outside of work hours or weekends. Staff reminded members that this is an initiative MACOA put forward. Diane Foster offered to contact members and arrange further audits. Staff reminded any team auditing the Walker Creek Trail, that Ben Hannon should be contacted as that neighbourhood association is very interested in improving access of the trail.

d. Accessible On-street Parking

A staff report went to Council on May 7 regarding the design/build of on-street accessible parking and the addition of accessible parking spaces at the City lot located at St. Paul and Westchester. The report was included under information items on the agenda.

## **7. Information Items:**

- a. The March of Dimes, Breaking the Barriers Awards will take place on Wednesday, May 30, 11-2, St. John Ukrainian Hall, 91 Lakeshore Road. MACOA's congratulations to Bob Asham was noted at the beginning of the meeting.
- b. Mary Jane Waszynski passed around flyers for the upcoming Niagara Centre for Independent Living (NCIL) Open House. Staff suggested that it could be circulated electronically to MACOA as well.

c. MACOA's summer meeting schedule

Members agreed to meeting as regularly scheduled on July 25, but to forego August's meeting.

Moved by: Linda Marie O'Hagan

Seconded by: Bob Asham

That MACOA cancel its August 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

CARRIED

**8. Next Meeting:**

a. Wednesday, June 27, 2012 at 1:30 p.m. in Committee Room #1

NOTE: The meeting with the Province at Kiwanis Aquatics and Library facility was cancelled, so the meeting location will remain as usual in Committee Room #1.

**9. Adjournment:**

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

Moved by: Linda Marie O'Hagan

Seconded by: David Reed

That this meeting do now adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

CARRIED