

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, May 25, 2016

Burgoyne Woods Room at 1:30 p.m.

Attendance:

Shelley Stewart, Co-chairperson
Diane Foster, Co-chairperson
Ian Crawford
David Reed
Stacey Headey-Komenda
Tracey Hrick
Julie Morris
Mary Jane Waszynski

Absent:

Bob Asham
Steve Byers
Linda Marie O'Hagan

Staff Representatives:

CAO's office; Diana Lecinski, Erin Lowry
TES; Christine Adams, Dave Stringer, Vince Covatta, Anthony Martuccio, Jim Jervis
FEMS; Frank Donati
CSS, I.T.; Ronnie Audeh, Karthik Venkataraman,
PRCS; Jennifer Douglas, Lori Mambella, Jennifer Green, Simone Phelan
Transit; Graham Morrison, Adam Arbour

1. **Call meeting to order**

Diane Foster called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.
Round-table introductions were made.

2. **Motion to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting**

Wednesday, April 27, 2016

Moved by: Shelley Stewart

Seconded by: Julie Morris

That the Minutes of April 27, 2016 be approved.

CARRIED

3. **CNIB demonstration of BlindSquare: Adam Dupuis and David Best, CNIB**

Julie Morris introduced BlindSquare by giving a brief personal experience about the application. She then introduced the speakers: Adam Dupuis and David Best from CNIB.

Adam Dupuis introduced the application BlindSquare as a new technology to promote independence and self-determination for those that are visually impaired. He described how the largest challenge for the visually impaired is obtaining information, but with this GPS like app it is made possible. BlindSquare is helpful in allowing the visually impaired to engage with the environment independently and obtain critical information about their surroundings.

David Best informed the group of the information provided that can guide a user to points of interests and beacons can be placed throughout buildings to tell you where certain things or people are located. However, the app is not of any value to users if the infrastructure and technology is not implemented.

David Best then gave a brief demonstration of BlindSquare using the application on his phone. A Youtube video of BlindSquare being used was then shown.

Questions or comments were sought from staff in attendance and Accessibility Advisory Committee members. A number of technology clarifications were made.

Diane Foster thanked the presenters for their presentation on BlindSquare and thanked the stakeholder staff members who attended.

4. Business arising from the minutes

3.1 Accessibility Plan:

Diana Lecinski reports that the new Accessibility Plan and updated Sidewalk Action Statement have been put up on the City of St. Catharine's website for public viewing.

3.2 Other:

Fort Erie's Accessibility is for Everyone

This event will be held on Thursday, June 2nd, 10-3 at the Fort Erie Leisureplex. Diana Lecinski will plan transportation for those members who require it. Pick-ups will be for 9 am. She will send a follow-up email when transportation has been confirmed. Lunch will be provided on site, if you have any specific dietary request bring them forward.

Seniors Day

The AAC will host a display table at this event on Monday, May 30, 10-2, to promote its initiatives, new Accessibility Plan and its terms of reference include older adults. The AAC was in favour of a "Tell us what you think form" to gain community feedback from older adults relating to accessibility within City facilities, programs and services. A poster display board will be set up at the table and complimentary eye glass cleaners will be handed out. Diana Lecinski asks that AAC members attend if possible and lunch will be covered for members who volunteer at the AAC table.

4. New Business

4.1 Student Introduction

Erin Lowry introduced herself to the Accessibility Advisory Committee. She shared that she has a background in Child, Youth and Family Studies and a graduate certificate in Autism and Behavioural Sciences. She has experience

working in therapy centers for children with autism. Erin Lowry explained she approached Diana Lecinski in hopes of obtaining a different experience in terms of accessibility and gain exposure to a wide range of disabilities and aspects within the community. She will be attending Brock University in the fall for a Masters in Applied Disability Studies.

5. AAC Updates:

5.1 Site Plan;

Ian Crawford and David Reed said there was not much to report. They shared that they have seen the drawings for the old General hospital site.

5.2 Community access and media;

No report

5.3 City Projects, Christine Adams, TES;

- Update on new pedestrian signals at Lake/Lakeshore: Shelley Stewart commented that she did not have the same difficulties as before pressing the buttons
- AAC members agreed that the volume in the First Ontario Performing Arts Center elevators is not loud enough to be heard. Diana Lecinski said that during the AAC's November 2015 facility inspection the volume had been commented on and she wondered if it could be that the product is not adequate for the environment. Staff will follow up regarding the volume and research products that may be better suited for that environment.
- Mary Jane discussed the unconnected sidewalk sections along the west side of Ontario Street. She believes it is a safety hazard to the public. AAC members agreed with the statement. Christine Adams noted its listed as a concern by the City, however the Regional roadway and its easement is limited. Christine said she would follow up with the City for an update on the plan. Bob Asham suggested speaking to the councilors for action. Diana Lecinski ask that it be added to agenda items for the next meeting – to get feedback and make a plan of action.

- Tracey Hrick commented on the Mobi Mats located at Lakeside Park. She discussed that many children have been playing on it. She suggests that appropriate signage be implemented to inform the public on what they are intended for. Diana Lecinski will follow up and ensure appropriate signage is added.

5.4 Other Business

- Diana Lecinski handed out tickets for “Fort Erie’s Accessibility is for Everyone” event for the AAC members attending.

6. Date of next meeting

Wednesday, June 22, 2016 at 1:30 p.m., Burgoyne Woods Room, City Hall

7. Motion to Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Moved by: Ian Crawford

Seconded by: Tracey Hrick

That this meeting is adjourned.

CARRIED