

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, April 26, 2017

City Hall, Burgoyne Woods Room at 1:30 p.m.

Attendance:

Diane Foster, Co-chairperson
Shelley Stewart, Co-chairperson
Melissa Abrams
Bob Asham
Ian Crawford
Tracey Hrick
Bob Mahony
Linda Marie O'Hagan
David Reed
Mary Jane Waszynski

Regrets:

Steve Byers

Staff Representatives:

Diana Lecinski, Accessibility Coordinator, Office of the CAO
Christine Adams, Transportation & Environmental Services

1. **Call meeting to order**

Shelley Stewart called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. Round-table introductions were made.

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

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

Moved by: Diane Foster

Seconded by: Linda Marie O'Hagan

That the Minutes of March 22, 2017 be approved.

CARRIED

Diane Foster attended the April 20, 2017 Social Sustainability Pillar (SSP) meeting. She submitted the 2016 report on the 2016-2020 Accessibility Plan to the SSP for their endorsement. She noted the AAC's plan to make a presentation at a Council meeting, and also attend Seniors Day with a promotional accessibility display, both on May 29, 2017.

3. **Presentation/Discussion:**

Bonnie Nistico-Dunk, City Clerk, had a discussion with the membership to get their input on on-line voting options for municipal elections. The AAC was unanimous in support of this option as on-line voting provides an option for people with a disability who find that getting out to polls, advanced or otherwise, can be an undertaking to arrange transportation, support assistance, or considerations of various barriers that may be present to individuals. Although accessibility at municipal election polls is highly addressed and generally accessible, voting can still be an issue for older adults and people with a disability. A few of the points made in favor of on-line voting by the members included; independence of voting vs. loss of autonomy by having a support person help by taking an oral oath of friend of elector to assist, no need to arrange para-transportation or go out on a cold Fall day, income tax can be secure and done on-line, accessible audio vote tabulator can be very helpful for people with vision or dexterity disability, but it takes longer and separates people with a disability from the other voting methods.

Moved by: Linda Marie O'Hagan
Seconded by: Bob Mahony

That the Accessibility Advisory Committee endorses and supports on-line voting as added option/alternative for more accessible and independent voting in the future.
CARRIED

4. Business arising:

a) Accessibility Plan;

The 2016 annual report on the 2016-2020 Accessibility Plan is scheduled for presentation by the AAC to Council on May 29. Shelley Stewart and Diane Foster will present to Council.

Given some previous discussions from both AAC members and the public, it was decided that an "AAC friendly reminder" should be made and distributed to all stakeholders (internal and external) regarding accessible sidewalk closure and notice of service disruption. Christine Adams will be asked to help promote with all construction (internal and external) and noted that AAC members would participate if any associated training can be arranged.

Moved by: Tracey Hrick
Seconded by: Bob Mahony

That the following statement be shared and distributed with appropriate stakeholders;

A friendly reminder from the City of St. Catharines
Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC):

All pedestrians, and particularly pedestrians with a disability, want to easily and safely get from point A to B.

Summer is an active time for both pedestrians and construction. Contractors are reminded that service disruptions must be posted and alternative barrier-free access should be provided.

Example: Sidewalk closures

- ✓ Closures or temporary disruptions require notification regardless of duration (minutes, hours, days or weeks)
- ✓ Provide notification signage;
 - about the closure, expected duration and access alternatives
 - at a location before the closure so pedestrians can make informed alternative and barrier-free choices on their route
- ✓ Ensure that a safe barrier-free route through or around construction is maintained
- ✓ Sidewalk closures should use more than short pylons to indicate closure. Tall pylons and rails should create a physical barrier for a person who is blind
- ✓ Road closure signs or roadway construction bollards should not be stored on or block pedestrian pathways

Your attention to providing adequate notice, signage, accessible alternatives and safety is greatly appreciated.

Thank you from the members of the AAC

In response to on-going questions, staff confirmed that;

- Paratransit bookings can be made during any time, up to 2 weeks in advance of a trip. As an example the City of London only accepts paratransit bookings up to 3 days in advance of a trip.
- FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre main entrance threshold meets FADS requirements and is beveled on both sides of the threshold.

b) Rick Hansen Foundation grant;

The funding is being used at Lakeside Park for the Beach Sun Shelter and an event that promotes accessibility. The AAC will host and participate in the organization of the event once an event date has been determined. This will be based on expected construction completion. Niagara Centre for Independent Living (NCIL) confirmed the Next to Lead rep is Abby Green and she will support the event's community engagement of youth.

The first organizing "team meeting" took place on April 25 and AAC reps, Diane Foster, Tracey Hrick, Linda Marie O'Hagan (regrets) and Abby Green shared details on plans for the ceremony. Another meeting will be scheduled in May and a site visit will be arranged for all involved for early June.

The beach sun shelter signage, banner and plaque have been ordered, Momentum Choir and Kristen Kit have been scheduled, dignitaries will be scheduled via the Mayor's office, beach balls and beach totes have been ordered for give-away. Lake levels continue to be of concern.

5. AAC Updates:

a) Site Plan;

Agenda item upon request.

b) Community access and media;

Agenda item upon request. Media items will be circulated electronically.

c) City Projects, Christine Adams, TES;

Christine Adams noted that several contracts are underway and several reaching final planning stages.

It was confirmed that the St. Catharines Transit Commission did receive the Federal funding it applied for as noted at the last meeting. The funding will go to bus stop accessibility improvements and Transit staff have met with TES and the Accessibility Coordinator in determining priority locations. This funding also included the retrofitting of 4 buses to address undesirable rear-facing accessible seating and tie-downs.

Christine Adams also noted that areas involved with road or sidewalk reconstruction will also be assessed for bus stop accessibility.

d) Other;

Reminder for the AODA accessibility forum on May 3 in Stoney Creek. Accessibility staff passed out the tickets for those who asked to attend.

5. Date of next meeting

Wednesday, May 24, 2017 at 1:30 p.m.,
City Hall, Burgoyne Woods Room.

6. Motion to Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Moved by: Ian Crawford

Seconded by: Bob Asham

That this meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED