



## **Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes**

**Wednesday, March 12, 2014  
5:00 p.m.  
City Hall Council Chambers**

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**PRESENT:** Denise Miault, Chair  
Ruth Bowiec  
Bayley Kurtz-Ostenfeldt  
Diane Pelletier  
Barb Penner (arrived 5:05 pm)  
Deanne Sutton (arrived 5:05 pm)  
Sharon Smith, Council  
Kerri Holder, Administrative Assistant

**GUEST:** Wayne Ficek

**REGRETS:** Marion McKay  
Ken Puckall  
Rod McKay, Council  
Heather Kasprick, Deputy Clerk

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**Denise Miault called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.**

### **A. Introductions & Welcome**

Denise welcomed the Committee members and introduced the guest presenter, Wayne Ficek.

### **B. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest & the General Nature Thereof:**

#### **1) On Today's Agenda**

#### **2) From a Meeting at which a Member was not in Attendance**

There were none declared.

### **C. Confirmation of Minutes:**

#### **Moved by R. Bowiec, Seconded by B. Kurtz-Ostenfeldt & Carried:-**

That the Minutes of the last meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee February 12, 2014 be confirmed as written and filed.

It was clarified that under Meeting Format in the February 12, 2014 Minutes, it should state that the Committee will meet on the second Wednesday of the

month rather than the second Tuesday of the month.

## **D. Items:**

### **1. Presentations/Deputations**

Wayne Ficek distributed copies of the City of London's 2007 Facility Accessibility Design Standards report to the Committee and provided some history about the document. He mentioned that many communities across the country, including Winnipeg and Thunder Bay, have adopted this document into their own practices. He went on to say that he would like the Committee to request the City of Kenora adopt this report also. Wayne drew the group's attention to the opening paragraph stating the report addresses new construction and retrofit buildings, and descriptions of the types of disabilities addressed. He also pointed out the seven Principles of Universal Design listed in the introduction: equitable use, flexibility in use, simple and intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort, and size and space for approach and use.

Wayne recognized that building permits issued by the City of Kenora comply with the Ontario Building Code. If accessibility design standards like the City of London's were part of the City's practices, new builds and retrofits would result in better accessibility solutions. He expressed disappointment in some recent construction projects, noting that there had been opportunity to go above and beyond the Ontario Building Code. There were many examples mentioned including areas that had available space to exceed standards and others that could have made alternative access rather than grandfather in the existing situation. There was discussion about some ramps being too steep causing ascending to be difficult and the descent too fast. The Ontario Building Code standard for ramps is set at 1:12, which means that for every 12 inches of length, the ramp must rise one inch. Wayne suggested that a manageable ramp slope of 1:15 be recommended, noting the City of London uses 1:20 or 1:25 slopes. Wayne suggested that the Committee bring this to the Chief Building Official for the City to adopt better than Ontario Building Code. He recommended that the City's Building Inspectors work with contractors to achieve this level also. Wayne stated that the Ontario Building Code does not go far enough to address this and without accessibility design standards of our own will never change. His hope is that the City will want to be a leader in this change and he would like to see this Committee work with the Chief Building Official to adopt better than provincial standards similar to the City of London. Adopting this report would be one step further to building a fully accessible community.

It was noted that Kevin Robertson, Chief Building Official, was invited on short notice to this meeting but could not attend. Kerri to send the City of London 2007 Facility Accessibility Design Standards report to Kevin.

Wayne also provided copies of Section 3.8 Barrier-Free Design of the Ontario Building Code for reference. There was an inquiry whether or not the Barrier-Free Design document was from Ontario Building Code or was it from the City's by-law. Wayne confirmed it was taken from the Ontario Building Code. It was noted that the City's by-law had been developed based on the Ontario Building Code.

Councillor Smith acknowledged that there have been accessibility problems adding she had been in talks with Charlotte Caron about having best practices in place for new businesses to help with this. She suggested having a member of

**K. Holder**

this Committee connect with the City's Building Inspectors and contractors to make decisions on what would work to make the most effective accessible situation, taking a proactive approach to meeting the accessibility standards. A further suggestion was made that the next step for this Committee should be to make a work plan to accomplish what the Committee has been talking about, with the first step to take action on the information provided in the City of London's report.

There were several ideas mentioned that should be passed on to the Building Department for consideration, including that in other communities building permits come to the accessibility committee for review and to create an information package to make all contractors and architects aware of the City's preferred accessibility standards. Sharing the City of London's Facility Design Standards report was also mentioned.

It was suggested to arrange a meeting with Wayne Ficek, Kevin Robertson, Chief Building Official, and Charlotte Caron, Manager of Property and Planning. Councillor Smith to make the connection.

**S. Smith**

There was discussion around the downtown pavilion ramp and that the City had consulted with this Committee before construction. The Committee was able to advise on the accessible features. It was noted that this was a successful practice and the final ramp was built with better than Ontario Building Code standards with gentle ramp slopes and lower rails.

It was agreed that there will be many communities in our area adjusting older buildings to meet the requirements of the Ontario Disabilities Act by 2025 and the City of Kenora should be a leader in proactive standards to advance accessibility by that deadline.

Before Wayne left the meeting, Denise announced the wheel chair curling team that she and Wayne are on won a bronze medal at the Ontario Winter Games in Orillia, Ontario. Congratulations were extended by all.

*Denise thanked Wayne for attending and he left at 5:51 pm.*

## **2. Business Arising**

Councillor Smith lead a discussion about initiating a work plan focusing on the issues the Committee wants to address. Three goals were identified were:

- 1) Work with the Chief Building Official to adopt facility accessibility design standards similar to those used by the City of London;
- 2) Develop a communication plan for the Committee to increase awareness; and
- 3) Introduce the Stop Ramp Project to the community.

There was some discussion about how each of these goals could be achieved and all agreed these are good starting points for the work plan. Councillor Smith asked the group to forward other ideas to Kerri. A work plan template will be created for the next meeting and at that time Committee members can sign up for a project that suits their interests and areas of expertise. This could be a multi-year plan with many goals. It was suggested that once a work plan is completed, a deputation be made to Council sharing the goals of the

Committee.

### 3. Old Business

It was noted that the accessible parking availability was still an issue on Main Street in front of King Furniture and also Pine Portage Road continued to be a problem. It was reported that some people with accessibility needs stayed inside all winter as they could not get out in the snow. There has been no improvement seen in those areas since last meeting. It was suggested that an invitation be sent to Krishanth Koralalage, Roads Supervisor, to attend the next meeting.

There was discussion about a recent water main break near a care home where the access to the home was blocked when the street in front of the home was dug up. The main concern was that ambulance, fire and police had no access to the home which could be detrimental to staff and residents. Councillor Smith recommended if the Roads Department could not be reached, contacting Karen Brown, Chief Administrative Officer, is an alternative if there were emergent concerns.

### 4. Updates and Information

Denise Minault read a letter addressed to the Committee regarding a disabled person's unpleasant and lengthy experience on Handi Transit recently. The person requested that Handi Transit consider types of disabilities when scheduling pickups and bus routes as in this case the length of the route proved to be difficult for this person. Denise responded to discuss the issue and confirm that she would pass the letter on to the Committee. It was suggested that Denise forward the letter to the Handi Transit Board for their consideration. It was also mentioned that this person may also want to make a deputation to the Handi Transit Board on her own.

D. Miault

### 5. New Business

City of Kenora Strategic Plan Survey

Councillor Smith explained that the City of Kenora recently began a new strategic planning process and is looking to gather feedback from the community. An on-line survey has been launched to gather community input. Also a public consultation session will take place on April 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Rotary Room at the Kenora Recreation Centre. All were encouraged to take part in the survey and attend the session. Kerri to send the survey links.

K. Holder

### 6. Next Meeting Date

- Wednesday, April 16, 2014

Meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.