

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

REPORT 7-2006

Minutes of a meeting of the Region of Niagara Accessibility Advisory Committee (RNAAC), Ontarians with Disabilities Act held in Committee Room 4, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on Tuesday, November 28, 2006, commencing at 12:43 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Committee: Jocelyne Gagne, Chair; Jean Bennett, Grimsby; Tony DiPaloa, St. Catharines; Krystine Donato, St. Catharines; Geoff Eden, Welland; Janet Genge, Welland; Ian Greaves, Niagara Falls; Brian Kon, Niagara Falls; Diana Lecinski, St. Catharines; Anita MacKenzie, Niagara Falls; Carol Walker, Niagara-on-the-Lake; Mary Lou Whitty, Port Colborne.

Staff: Anne Hepplewhite, Corporate Services – Clerks; Diana Lecinski, City of St. Catharines; Steve Murphy, Community Services; Nancy Winslow, Planning; Gord Low, Public Works; Larry Bousfield, Public Works; Robyn Slee, Corporate Services – Clerks.

Guests: Renee McKinley (Interpreter); Norman Ocampo, Quartek Group.

Before dealing with the agenda items, the Chair asked everyone at the table to introduce themselves.

Diann Krieger has not been well, and a card was circulated for everyone to sign. She will be asked to bring an update of the Fort Erie Inter-Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee Forum in the new year.

MINUTES

46. Report 6-2006

Moved by Carol Walker
Seconded by Anita MacKenzie

That Report 6-2006, being the minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of Tuesday, September 5, 2006, be approved as distributed.

Carried.

47. Draft 2007 Meeting Schedule

The draft meeting schedule for 2007 was discussed. The issue of frequency of meetings was raised; however, it was determined that every six weeks would be adequate as it coincides with the three-week rotation for committee and council meetings. Special meetings may be scheduled if necessary.

48. Addition to Committee

A new committee liaison, Margaret Sanderson, will be attending the meetings in 2007 under the auspices of Brock University. Robyn will send her the 2007 draft meeting schedule by e-mail.

49. PWA 186-2006 – November 1, 2006

On-Street Disabled Person Parking
Regional Road 3 (Main Street West)
City of Port Colborne

Report PWA 186-2006 recommending that two disabled parking stalls be designated on Main Street West in the City of Port Colborne, was received for information.

It was noted that Niagara Region is attempting to comply with Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) as compared with other municipalities. St. Catharines zoning by-laws have been amended to reflect these standards.

Main Street in Grimsby, which is a regional road, underwent construction last year but no accessible spots were created. Anne Hepplewhite will contact the appropriate people in Public Works to bring this to their attention.

50. Notice of Public Information Centre

City of St. Catharines Class Environmental Assessment Study
St. David's Road Pedestrian and Cycling Needs Study

Attendance at the public information session on November 28 was encouraged. Those wishing to have additional information may contact project team members as indicated in the notice.

An e-mail from Linda Crabtree is included as part of the correspondence package (69-2006) indicating that she is continuing to work on this project.

PRESENTATION

51. Council Chamber Renovations – Quartek Group

Norm Ocampo of Quartek Group made a presentation regarding changes to Regional Council Chambers that would make it more accessible. These changes included reducing the number of levels by the use of ramps, adjustments to allow an adequate turning radius for wheelchairs and scooters, as well as narrowing of the existing handrail and installation of a second rail, an accessible podium, power door operator, moveable seating and remote microphone. Many of the desired changes have been made more difficult because the existing ramp has been cast in concrete.

The issue of the ramp incline of 1:10 was raised as it does not comply with the minimum FADS of 1:12. Electric wheelchairs may become stuck or tip over at this angle, which would put both the person involved and the Region at risk.

It was also noted that the plan does not include those with visual or hearing impairment, those who may require physical assistance other than wheelchairs, or those who cannot sit on the gallery benches due to back problems. The suggestion was also made that it would be preferable to see a design that would allow councilors to face the audience rather than sitting with their backs to the gallery.

Larry Bousfield indicated that Regional staff has been attempting to achieve accessibility within financial limitations that would include some limited access for both council and staff.

As there were a number of concerns raised regarding safety and a more inclusive plan, it was determined to go back to the table to see how they may better comply with FADS. Larry will also check the standards regarding exits.

It was also suggested that committee members have the opportunity to view Council Chambers firsthand, and this will be arranged for the January 17, 2007 meeting.

Moved by Geoff Eden
Seconded by Mary Lou Whitty

That the draft accessibility plan for Regional Council Chambers be sent back to Public Works to redevelop the plan to comply with Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS), to include accessibility at all levels, and to attach new financial figures for Council consideration.

Carried.

52. Correspondence

Items of correspondence were accepted as distributed, with particular mention of the MacBain Community Centre and the outstanding job that was done in making the facility accessible.

53. Initial Proposed Customer Service Standard – July 28, 2006

Brian Kon explained to committee members that he was one of 28 people involved in preparing the Initial Proposed Customer Service document. Criteria for acceptance of the items was not unanimity but “can you live with this.” He emphasized that public input was therefore crucial in its development and implementation.

Please see attached appendix with changes and modifications made to the above document as submitted by the committee members and compiled by Diana Lecinski.

54. 2006-2007 Niagara Region Accessibility Plan

The 2005-2006 Niagara Region Accessibility Plan was attached to the agenda package instead of the 2006-2007 final plan. The latter will be e-mailed to committee members and the plan will be revisited at the January 16, 2007 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Carol Walker that the Committee be adjourned at 3:58 p.m. to meet again on Tuesday, January 17, 2006 at 12:30 p.m. in Committee Room #4.

Jocelyne Gagne
Chair

Robyn Slee
Administrative Assistant, Council Support