



County
of Huron

Accessibility Advisory Committee



Minutes - August 11, 2006

GODERICH, ONTARIO

Goderich, Ontario
August 11, 2006

The HURON COUNTY ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE met in the Council Chambers, Court House, Goderich at 9:30 a.m. with all members present except D. Koopmans, D. Wilson, A. Gingerich, R. Armstrong, and C. Hoffman.

1. Minutes

Moved by B. Fisher

Seconded by G. McLachlan

That the minutes of the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of April 13, 2006 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

The CAO announced that he received a letter of resignation from Andrea Gingerich who fills one of the professional appointments of the committee. Ms. Gingerich has accepted a teaching position in British Columbia. It was also announced that Doreen Koopmans will be absent for an undetermined period due to illness.

Moved by G. McLachlan

Seconded by B. Fisher

That the County advertise and invite applications for two members to fill the professional discipline requirements of the committee; and further that the Chair send a letter of appreciation to Ms. Gingerich.

CARRIED

2. Accessibility Advisory Committee Assistant

We are pleased to announce that Jennifer Cowan has joined our team as Accessibility Advisory Committee Assistant effective July 5, 2006. In this position she will be providing services to the committee representing the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee at meetings and functions related to accessibility. Jennifer recently graduated from Carleton University with a Bachelor of Arts (Political Science) Honours, with a concentration in Public Affairs and Policy Analysis. Ms. Cowan was welcomed with applause.

FOR INFORMATION

3. Resolution

This correspondence received May 2, 2006 is a resolution from the Town of Newmarket requesting that Canadian Petroleum Products Institute be requested to review the need to ensure that all gas stations make provisions for full service to patrons having special needs; and that the Province of Ontario address the issue of accessibility to gas station service in Provincial policies and guidelines pertaining to the accessibility needs of Ontarians.

A lengthy discussion ensued. G. MacLachlan spoke about the difficulty in finding stations that have attendants to pump gas. The trend for stations is towards self service. L. Falconer added that the trend for paying options is also changing. Paying by debit requires drivers to get out of vehicles, again making it difficult for the disabled. B. Fisher commented that signage for attendant services should be mandatory and each community should ensure that there are at least one or more stations that provide accessible gas or operators available to assist.

The CAO suggested sending a letter to all local stations requesting they make provisions for full service to patrons. P. Gandon suggested that the committee conduct a program similar to Healthy Eating Awards that are given to restaurants that provide healthy eating options on their menus. It was requested that a list of stations in the County that provide full service be made available for distribution.

Moved by D. Layton

Seconded by L. Falconer

That the resolution from the Town of Newmarket be endorsed.

CARRIED

Moved by S. Thompson

Seconded by J. Austin

That staff prepare a resolution, in consultation with G. McLachlan, regarding the loss of full service gas stations throughout the County for the committee's review at the next meeting.

CARRIED

4. Disabled Parking Spaces

At the April 13, 2006 Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee (HCAAC) meeting it was: "Moved by G. McLachlan, Seconded by R. Armstrong, That a resolution be drafted, with the support of Lower Tier Clerks, requesting two levels of handicapped parking spaces i) Wheelchair Space only to be double wide space and ii) Mobility/Disability Space. Carried". The motion was adopted by County Council at its May 2, Session. Chair, Phil Gandon, sent the attached letter to the Huron County Clerks and Treasurers Association (HCCTA) requesting assistance in drafting a resolution that could be forwarded to the Province and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).

The HCCTA met on June 23, 2006 and discussed the committee's request. A subcommittee to include Larry Adams, Linda Andrew and Lori Rounds was formed to draft a resolution. This subcommittee along with Jennifer Cowan met on August 1, 2006 to prepare the resolution.

The resolution was distributed and read by the CAO. It was questioned if dimensions should be included. L. Rotteau informed the committee that this would be the first stage in getting the ministry to accept the concept. Technical material would be included in any zoning by-law changes.

There was a discussion on conducting an awareness exercise for the Warden and members of Council. Participants would ride in wheelchairs, be driven to locations and requested to experience the difficulties in getting in and out of vehicles first hand. The press is also to be invited. There was consensus that the public exposure would be good for the committee and help build public awareness of its existence.

The CAO suggested that members of the Warden's Task Force be invited to participate. The task force is meeting September 15, 2006 and the exercise can be planned for 11 a.m. following their meeting.

Moved by D. Layton

Seconded by L. Falconer

That a disability awareness exercise be held on Friday, September 15, 2006 at 11 a.m. and that the members of the Warden's Task Force be invited to participate along with the press.

CARRIED

A copy of the resolution will be distributed to the lower tier municipalities. The Accessibility Advisory Committee Assistant was directed to proceed with planning the handicap parking trial, i.e. contact Town and Country to book two (2) vans. Joe Austin and Glen McLachlan have volunteered to assist with the arrangements. The committee would like to see this exercise held on an annual basis.

Moved by D. Layton

Seconded by S. Thompson

That the resolution be forwarded to the Committee of the Whole for endorsement and support requested from the Minister of Community and Social Services and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

CARRIED

5. Accessibility Forum

Doreen Koopmans, Joe Austin, Bob Fisher, and Phil Gandon attended the London Accessibility Forum on April 26, 2006 and Glen McLachlan attended the forum in Woodstock on April 27, 2006.

J. Austin reported that the forum was good and thought that London was doing well with their accessibility activities. He expressed disappointment with Goderich's new harbour adding that it is not that accessible. B. Fisher felt that every member of the committee should attend if they conduct the London forum annually.

G. McLachlan submitted a package of available materials that were available at the Woodstock forum. He discussed the London by-law and the difficulties the city has with enforcement. He also expressed frustrations with dealing with government; the lack of tangible things being done for accessibility; and the slowness of the process.

P. Gandon reported that it was a great opportunity to talk to other people and share information. London's committee has a web page that is a wealth of information; www.accessibility.london.ca. He also submitted the attached permission form from the City of London which authorizes the use of its 2006 Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS). The Chair went over the options outlined in the form and requested the committee's preference. In his opinion, he wished to use London's standards as a design aid.

A lengthy discussion ensued. Planner, C. Dodds, had questions about the document. She encouraged the committee to think about a process that would include the entire County and warned that this document pertains only to the City of London buildings. It could be a valuable resource if used as a guide. She also reported that she had conversations with an employee who worked on the document and that London too has problems incorporating standards into their by-laws.

The committee agreed to hold off on the design standards until it is determined how the resolution for parking is accepted from the Lower Tiers and County Council.

FOR INFORMATION

6. 2003-2004 Accessibility Plan

Currently the County of Huron and Municipalities are updating their Accessibility Plan. Ms. Cowan plans to contact the municipal representatives who have not sent in their plans for 2006. Ms. Cowan distributed the Municipal Activities for 2006. The 2006 plan is due to be submitted to the province by the end of September 2006.

B. Fisher questioned what the repercussions are if the plan is late. L. Rotteau informed the committee that there are no penalties for late submissions. The ministry conducts spot checks and will send letters to those municipalities who have not complied. In her opinion there has been good participation across the province. There was also a brief discussion about the lack of a municipal building official on the committee.

It was noted that the plan does meet the committees' approval in principle. The plan only pertains to public municipal buildings. Revisions are of a housekeeping nature and it was agreed that it can go forward without the committees review. It is expected that the 2007 Plan can be reviewed thoroughly by the committee.

FOR INFORMATION

7. New Business

QUALITY HOMES

S. Thompson distributed a package from Quality Homes Limited and announced the completion of the company's introduction of their Liberty Series which provides clients with expertise in designing and building accessible homes specific to individual needs. Ms. Thompson has worked with this company extensively to have accessible homes an option for the public. There will be two shows produced on the A Channel regarding this initiative. They are also going to be highlighted at the Canadian Home Builders Conference. Ms. Thompson was thanked for her contribution and received a round of applause from the committee.

BROCHURE

L. Falconer requested that the committee begin work on a brochure for Huron County, similar to the one prepared by Kincardine. She has worked independently to make places more accessible at banks, the post office and the recreation centre in Wingham. In discussions with other handicapped people, she finds that it empowers them to know that there is a committee that can help and be a voice for them. The committee noted that change often is accomplished by individual initiatives and persistence.

The Chair, P. Gandon, informed the committee that he has discussed the idea of a brochure with the new Accessibility Advisory Assistant as well as promoting the committee i.e. news articles etc. The assistant is to begin work in this area and report back to the committee.

G. McLachlan informed the committee that he also has been working to get the M.P.P.'s office in Clinton to be more accessible. With his attempts the M.P.P.'s office did attempt to correct the problem, but the fixes do not really meet an acceptable accessible standard.

Moved by B. Fisher

Seconded by J. Austin

That a letter be sent to M.P.P., Carol Mitchell, inviting her to meet with committee representative, Glen McLachlan, to show her first hand how her local office is inadequate as being handicapped accessible; and further that the local press be invited.

CARRIED

Mr. G. McLachlan requested that his phone number be included in the letter. He also expressed his disappointment with the renovations of the Shipping Store in Clinton. They spent a lot of money renovating and did not make it accessible. He felt that the onus should be put on building officials to encourage accessibility. A short discussion ensued on the committee's influence and where strides could be made for change.

8. Correspondence for Information

- a) Email received Jun 29, 2006 re: Message from John Gerretsen, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.
- b) AMO, Member Communication Alert, Government Announces next Steps in ODA.

FOR INFORMATION

9. Next Meetings

The next meeting of the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee will be held on Wednesday, October 18, 2006 at 9:30 a.m., Council Chambers, Court House, Goderich.

10. Adjournment

Moved by L. Falconer

Seconded by S. Thompson

That the meeting adjourn at 11:09 a.m. be declared a half day meeting.

CARRIED

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Chair