



County
of Huron

Accessibility Advisory Committee



Minutes - March 16, 2007

GODERICH, ONTARIO

Goderich, Ontario
March 16, 2007

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. Wilson, J. Layton, L. Rotteau, S. Thompson, C. Hoffman, C. Dodds, R. Armstrong and D. Koopmans.

1. Minutes

Moved by G. McLachlan

Seconded by B. Fisher

That the minutes of the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of January 12, 2007 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

2. Brochure

The HCAAC brochures were printed in early March and were available to the Committee at the March 16th meeting.

J. Cowan requested volunteers from the Committee to distribute some of the brochures with an attached memo/letter from the Committee. B. Fisher volunteered to deliver brochures in Seaforth. G. McLachlan volunteered to deliver brochures in Exeter and Clinton.

FOR INFORMATION

3. ODA Working Group

The ODA Working Group met on February 21, 2007 at the Museum in Goderich to discuss the 2006-2007 County Accessibility Plan. The group had a few questions about the attachments, but had no major issues with moving forward with the plan as is. The municipal review deadline has been set for May 4, 2007. Once these have been submitted, the reviews will be available to the Committee for comment.

Huron East submitted their reviews for 2007 at the meeting indicating they would look at a parking by-law; the Brussels Library; and signage on the Main Street of Seaforth and parking spaces for people with disabilities.

D. Kelly noted the City of London incorporates accessibility reviews directly into their by-laws, and suggested the possibility of doing the same.

FOR INFORMATION

4. 2006-2007 HCAAC Accessibility Plan

Due to some Committee members not receiving their agenda packages questions and comments on the updated 2006-2007 Accessibility Plan have been deferred to the June 15, 2007 Committee meeting. *(Plan was distributed to members under separate cover.)*

Moved by R. Hicks

Seconded by H. Williamson

That the 2006-2007 HCAAC Accessibility Plan be deferred to June 15, 2007 for questions and comments.

CARRIED

5. Networking

J. Cowan prepared letters to the following Municipalities to gauge the interest from surrounding municipalities in working in collaboration with Huron County's Accessibility Advisory Committee on similar projects: Brant County, Dufferin County, Wellington County, Perth County, Oxford County, Saugeen Shores Accessibility Advisory Committee, Kincardine Accessibility Advisory Committee, Lambton County, Middlesex County, and Grey County.

M. McCauley suggested the Ontario Network for Accessibility Professionals (ONAP) as a source for networking as well.

FOR INFORMATION

6. Site Plan Review Group

a) Benmiller Bridge

On February 1, 2007 the HCAAC Building Review Working Group met at the request of the Highways Department to review the Benmiller Bridge Rehabilitation Project site plans.

In attendance were: Dave Laurie – Highways Department, County of Huron, Glen McLachlan, Sandra Thompson, Bob Fisher and Jennifer Cowan.

Mr. Laurie informed the review working group that there are no accessibility guidelines to follow when considering bridge rehabilitation in a rural road cross-section area. Mr. Laurie indicated that the County's Highways are a system of arterial roads intended to move volumes of traffic at highway-speeds. These rural highways are not designed nor intended for pedestrian traffic. The working group's main concern was whether or not there would be a sidewalk on the bridge. Mr. Laurie informed the group that the existing sidewalk would be kept on the new bridge. In addition to the sidewalk, the group requested ramps on either end of the bridge to access the sidewalk. Mr. Laurie informed the group, asphalt ramps would be included in the construction of the bridge. Mr. McLachlan requested the ramp paving be extended past the end of the ramp to allow for a smooth transition for a person in a wheelchair. The current ramp design ends at the gravel in a sloping direction. If the ramp paving could be continued outward so that there is approximately ten feet of paving that is flat on the ground, a person in a wheelchair wouldn't be hitting the gravel portion of the road from a sloped direction. This would be considered a safety feature and should be taken into consideration when constructing paved ramps onto gravel roads/shoulders.

The HCAAC Building Review Working Group Recommends:

That the paved sidewalk ramps that will be installed at either end of the Benmiller Bridge be extended an extra ten feet (approximately) past the end of the sidewalk ramp for a flat transition onto the gravel shoulder.

Mr. Laurie responded to questions regarding: a bike path, tourism, drains, alternative positions for the access ramp, bridge walls and snow removal. Mr. Laurie also discussed the Egmondville Bridge and the Crediton Bridge and similarities between the three bridges in discussion.

FOR INFORMATION

b) Building Review Working Group – Site Plan Control Meeting

On February 21, 2007 Jennifer Cowan met with Claire Dodds, Maureen McCauley, and Jeff Layton to develop a Site Plan Review Checklist and/or Accessibility Guideline for site plans.

The group discussed a number of topics ranging from Site Plan Control in Huron County to what type of document would best suit the needs of the County and those requesting site plan reviews. The group decided it would be best to design two guideline “packages”. The first “package” would be a Site Plan Approval package, with a checklist specifically intended for Site Plan Control. The second “package” would be a Guideline for Residential Buildings. The Guideline for Residential Buildings would be an information package and a recommendation guideline to be used if an accessible residential home was being built.

The group used the time as a preliminary meeting to brainstorm ideas and decide what kind of direction this project would take. A second meeting will be held to gather relevant information for the “packages”, after which, the group will request Committee consultation.

M. McCauley suggested inviting Mr. Laurie to future Site Plan Control meetings as discussions may benefit all parties involved if he was in attendance.

FOR INFORMATION

7. Avon-Maitland District School Board Meeting

On February 20, 2007 J. Cowan attended the Avon Maitland District School Board’s Annual Accessibility Plan Working Group Meeting.

The group discussed the reports presented by the subcommittee working groups on their achievements in 2006 on the topics of: policies, procedures and practices; physical/environment; transportation; technology; and architecture.

The subcommittee working groups also discussed the plans for the 2007-2008 year in relation to barriers to address in the upcoming year and on different consultation and communication strategies. The School Board is in the process of launching a new website that includes an “accessibility” section, where parents and students can go to determine if a specific school is accessible based on certain criteria.

The physical/environmental subcommittee working group discussed issues with snow removal, specifically in relation to the Board of Education in Seaforth. J. Cowan let the group know she would try to be of assistance if this became an agenda item. The group also discussed having a disability awareness day to demonstrate the varying abilities. J. Cowan mentioned the Committee would be interested in being involved in this type of project.

FOR INFORMATION

8. Accessible Businesses in Huron County

J. Cowan requested Committee volunteers to audit the businesses in Huron County to determine if the business is accessible based on the following criteria:

- Is the building entrance accessible?
- Does the building have washrooms? Are those washrooms accessible?

J. Cowan didn't receive the check lists prior to the meeting and will defer the matter until the next meeting.

A long discussion ensued regarding zoning by-laws and the Building Code. M. McCauley expanded on the proposed guidelines. It was suggested a letter be sent to the Municipalities, the County Planning Department, and private Contractors as a reminder to include accessibility provisions when designing new structures or when issuing building permits.

FOR INFORMATION

9. Correspondence

- a) Ministry of Transportation Ontario letter
- b) Ministry of Community and Social Services letter
- c) Toronto Star article
- d) Goderich Signal Star article – Feb. 14, 2007
- e) Goderich Signal Star article – Feb. 21, 2007

G. McLachlan requested that the Goderich Signal Star article from February 14, 2007 be re-run in all County papers.

FOR INFORMATION

10. Accessibility Activity Updates

- a) In-Vehicle Incentive Program Update

J. Cowan mailed the In-Vehicle Incentive Program packages out to County service stations in early February and has received a few responses and feedback. Once more responses and feedback forms have been received, J. Cowan will make arrangements for media coverage and to have the signs printed for the stations.

Edward Fuels contacted J. Cowan to let her know Edward Fuels is on board with the program.

FOR INFORMATION

- b) M.P.P.

On February 19 2007, J. Cowan met with Richard Harding, Central Huron Clerk and Brian McBurney, a representative from Carol Mitchell's office to determine the next steps in this process. After surveying various options for renovations, Mr. McBurney informed Ms. Cowan that their office would like to cooperate with the Committee, but at this time, it does not appear feasible.

L. Adams suggested, with the upcoming provincial election, that a letter be sent to the leaders of the three political parties, and copied to the Accessibility Commissioner, asking what the provincial government expects of their constituency offices.

Moved by G. McLachlan

Seconded by M. McCauley

That a letter be sent to the three political parties, with a copy to the Accessibility Commissioner asking what the provincial government expects of their constituency offices.

CARRIED

c) Library Board

J. Cowan was contacted by the Town of North Huron regarding the Blyth Library. J. Cowan was informed that the Library Board was trying to get a Trillium Grant to ensure all library entrances are accessible in the County.

FOR INFORMATION

d) Website

J. Cowan let the group know that no progress had been made on the website. L. Adams let the group know it is going to cost more than the Committee originally thought.

FOR INFORMATION

e) Other Business

G. McLachlan informed the Committee that the Ministry of Transportation Office in Clinton has moved to a new office on the main street, and is now accessible.

M. McCauley requested an open dialogue on how to get awareness of the Committee out. M. McCauley also asked the County how the Accessibility Committee fits into the existing Committee structure.

L. Adams suggested attaching a letter, with the brochures, to the lower tiers and having representatives attend a local council meeting, along with J. Cowan to distribute the brochure. L. Adams let M. McCauley know that the Accessibility Committee reports directly to County Council but does not fit into the structure as other Committees do.

G. McLachlan requested a short accessibility checklist for his interview with the newspaper when they will audit Main Street in Seaforth from an accessibility point of view.

FOR INFORMATION

11. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee will be held on June 15, 2007 at 9:30 a.m. at the Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh.

12. Adjournment

Moved by R. Hicks

Seconded by G. McLachlan

That the meeting adjourn at 10:50 a.m. and be declared a half day meeting.

CARRIED

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Chair