



County
of Huron

Accessibility Advisory Committee



Minutes - June 22, 2007

GODERICH, ONTARIO

The HURON COUNTY ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE met at the Municipality of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh, on June 22, 2007 at 9:30 a.m. with all members in attendance, except Dave Wilson, Doreen Koopmans, Heather Williamson, Sandra Thompson, and Christine Hoffmann.

1. Minutes

Moved by B. Fisher

Seconded by J. Austin

That the minutes of the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of March 16, 2007 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

2. Brochure

The first batch of HCAAC brochures were printed in early March and distributed to the committee. A second batch of brochures was printed in early April and are available should committee members require additional copies.

J. Cowan, along with various committee members including B. Fisher, J. Austin, M. McCauley, L. Falconer, and S. Thompson attended local Municipal Council meetings to distribute the brochures and give the councillors the opportunity to ask questions about the committee and/or its programs. The committee members made presentations for North Huron, Goderich, Morris-Turnberry and Huron East.

L. Falconer presented, along with J. Cowan to the Municipality of North Huron. L. Falconer wanted the committee to know that the presentation was very well received from the municipality as well as with media coverage in the local paper.

M. McCauley suggested having a common presentation for all presentations with an attached motion for municipalities to provide consistency.

C. Dodds, questioned why not all municipalities were presented to. J. Cowan let the committee know that not all municipalities received presentations on the basis that it was difficult to schedule presentation times to all local councils. Those who did not receive a presentation from the committee, however, received a letter with copies of the brochure indicating that should they wish to be heard from the committee, we were willing to present to the local council.

FOR INFORMATION

3. 2006-2007 HCAAC Accessibility Plan

J. Cowan requested comments from the committee on the updated format of the Accessibility Plan as well as with the Municipal reviews.

M. McCauley had a few questions regarding the actual implementation of the plan. She suggested the plan become clearer in regards to the roles of the ODA Working Group and the scope of the plan itself. L. Rotteau pointed out the operational and by-law reviews are intended to focus on issues as well as physical environment. L. Rotteau referred to page 28 of the Accessibility Plan as an example: Morris – Turnberry has purchased a magnifying sheet to be put at the front counter to aide those who are visually impaired.

Moved by J. Austin

Seconded by R. Hicks

That the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee Plan be referred to County Council for adoption.

CARRIED

4. Networking

J. Cowan has received correspondence back from Saugeen Shores AAC, Kincardine AAC, as well as Perth County's AAC. Perth County's AAC representative, Christel Hollinger noted, "as an advisory committee, we are definitely interested in sharing ideas and identifying gaps. I believe both Huron and Perth counties are faced with the same challenges." Kincardine AAC noted they are "attempting to initiate incentive programs for business to make themselves more accessible – sticker programs promotional advertising in municipal correspondence etc."

C. Dodds noted there appears to be a gradual shift in the ways in which municipalities are providing incentives to their local communities in an attempt to make their downtowns more accessible for tourism.

FOR INFORMATION

5. Site Plan Review Group

On May 4, 2007, J. Cowan met with C. Dodds, J. Layton, B. Fisher, G. McLachlan and S. Thompson to review the proposed Residential Guideline Design Checklist. Some minor additions were made to the checklist. J. Cowan requested input from the committee on the Residential Guideline Design Checklist.

C. Dodds explained to the committee the difference between Site Plan Control, and the Ontario Building Code in regards to residential vs. commercial facilities. Site Plan Control deals specifically with the exterior aspect of construction, where as the Ontario Building Code deals with a larger base including residential interior/exterior as well as various commercial facilities. (see attached chart)

G. McLachlan raised the concern that while Site Plan Control is exclusively designed for exterior building, that doesn't dictate whether or not the interior or a building is considered to be accessible. C. Dodds further explained what municipalities are able to do under the Planning Act. C. Dodds recently attended a meeting with a developer in Exeter who is interested in building an apartment complex with accessible units.

E. Bezaire noted that approximately 15% of the population is living with some form of disability and this is why a barrier free community is necessary.

J. Layton noted the Building Code has a section devoted to accessibility, and therefore, he sees progress is being made in that area.

M. McCauley noted we need more support from the municipalities to ensure that progress is being made for implementation.

A. Simpson, planning student with the County of Huron presented on the Site Plan Control Guideline project that the committee showed an interest in. She noted that while the project is only in the beginning stages, there should be a document ready by the end of the summer.

D. Kelly suggested having a meeting with the Clerks as well as Building Officials to gauge feedback.

The committee raised a few questions regarding the Residential Design Recommendation Checklist regarding font size, website and a time line. C. Dodds suggested providing a large font document online as an alternative to the paper document that will be available from the municipality/Planning Department.

G. McLachlan noted that the grab bars in the bathroom diagram are not in a very accessible place. The grab bars need to be amended in the picture in order to accommodate a persons weight.

Moved by R. Armstrong

Seconded by G. McLachlan

That the Residential Guideline Checklist be endorsed as amended.

CARRIED

6. Avon-Maitland District School Board Meeting

On April 26, 2007 J. Cowan attended the Avon-Maitland District School Board's Annual Accessibility Plan Working Group meeting. The group discussed their Accessibility Plan on the topics of Physical/Environmental, Policies etc., Transportation, Technology and Architecture. The next meeting is scheduled for August 23, 2007.

FOR INFORMATION

7. 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?

Some businesses could be contacted via telephone (example, accommodations) to determine if their facility is accessible. Some businesses will require a visit.

South Huron: G. McLachlan

ACW: R. Armstrong

Huron East: B. Fisher

Morris-Turnberry: J. Cowan

Central Huron: G. McLachlan

Goderich: R. Armstrong and J. Austin

North Huron: L. Falconer

L. Rotteau suggested sending a letter to each local B.I.A to give an advance warning for the businesses. M. McCauley suggested having a document prepared for the businesses in advance to determine what is required to make their business accessible. J. Cowan will return back to the committee with a more comprehensive document before moving forward with this project.

FOR INFORMATION

8. Huron County Tourism Association Annual Brochure Swap

On April 19, J. Cowan attended the Huron County Tourism Association's annual Brochure Swap in Blyth. The reason for this exercise was to increase the awareness of the committee to the general public, as well as to encourage local businesses to ensure their business is accessible. J. Cowan spoke to some people about making their business accessible and noted if they required assistance the committee would be able to consult on some projects. J. Cowan also contributed to the Huron Tourism News on how to make a business accessible.

FOR INFORMATION

9. Accessibility Awareness Week

Accessibility awareness week is generally held in the first week of June. Due to time constraints and scheduling abilities J. Cowan requests the Accessibility Awareness Week events be deferred until 2008 whereby a detailed plan for the week can be prepared. This would allow for more volunteers and more brainstorming. For 2007, the public education event should be considered the distribution of the brochures to local councils as well as the general public.

Moved by R. Armstrong

Seconded by R. Hicks

That the Accessibility Awareness week events be brought back for proper preparation and planning.

CARRIED

10. City of Oshawa Accessibility Forum

On May 7, 2007 J. Cowan attended an Accessibility Forum, hosted by the City of Oshawa. The first topic that was presented was called "Building Accessible and Inclusive Communities" and was presented by John Draper. Mr. Draper's presentation showed that things aren't always as they appear. He presented on common myths and misconceptions that most people have about people with disabilities. Some included:

- Myth: A person's disability defines who they are as an individual
- Myth: people with disabilities are sick and in constant pain.
- Myth: people with disabilities are special and should be treated differently.
- Myth: people with disabilities are dependent and always need help.
- Myth: people with disabilities cannot lead a full and productive life.

Mr. Draper is in a wheelchair and can't speak, but is able to communicate using a laptop computer that is equipped with speakers. Mr. Draper graduated from Durham College with a Journalism Diploma.

The second topic that was presented was titled "Aspire to Inspire Before you Expire". This topic was presented by Arnel Shiratti and focused on Public Awareness. Mr. Arnell suggested developing a communications plan prior to any public awareness opportunity.

The third, and final topic that was presented dealt with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). A few key points that were raised included:

- The AODA was the first in Canadian jurisdiction to regulate accessibility standards
- The 2001 ODA was a voluntary document and had no standards, and limited enforcement. There was no obligation by the private sector, but encouraged to develop and implement accessibility initiatives.
- There are currently standards committees that are established to address barriers. Some are common standards such as customer service, built environment, employment and information/communication; as well as sector specific standards that would apply to transportation.
- The proposed standards will have required implementation stages: within the first five years, and within subsequent five year periods.
- The first set of Customer Service standards were available for review in October 2006.

The presentation also touched on the role of the AAC's as well as the role of the Accessibility Directorate.

The day was also a chance to do some networking and look into some best practices. The City of Oshawa has developed its own Accessibility Standards in relation to municipal buildings. The Oshawa Accessibility Advisory Committee has published a brochure outlining some of the initiatives of the committee.

FOR INFORMATION

11. Correspondence

- a) AMO – Notification Process for Permits Seized under MTO's Accessible Parking Permit Program.
- b) Ministry of Community and Social Services – Accessibility Leads of Public Sector organizations under the ODA, 2001.
- c) City of London -- FADS Online newsletter.
- d) Canada.com – Via Rail ordered to make changes to accommodate those with disabilities – March 23, 2007.
- e) CNIB – New APS Research.
- f) Goderich Signal Star advertisement – Liberty Series grand opening in Kenilworth – April 13 2007.
- g) Carol Mitchell, M.P.P., Huron-Bruce, correspondence received April 24, 2007.

FOR INFORMATION

12. Accessibility Activity Updates

- a) In-Vehicle Incentive Program Update

J. Cowan has received approximately 50% response from the County's service stations. A representative from the U.P.I head office contacted J. Cowan to find out more information about the In-Vehicle Incentive Program and to let her know U.P.I. is looking into signage costs for an outdoor sign at their Seaforth location. B. Fisher suggested sending the Seaforth U.P.I a letter to acknowledge their renovations with a copy to the Seaforth newspaper.

b) Housing

S. Thompson received a response from Monte Solberg referring to her resolution addressed to the Prime Minister regarding recommendations for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

c) Website

A website meeting has been planned for this afternoon with Marian Doucette, L. Adams, B. Leamen and J. Cowan to discuss the expansion of the current website. J. Cowan will report back to the committee at the next meeting with the report.

d) Accessible Parking

G. McLachlan reported on accessible parking in private parking lots and whether or not tickets can be issued on private property. G. McLachlan is waiting on a response from the government and will report back to the committee at the next meeting.

e) Building Code

A few questions were raised regarding the Ontario Building Code. J. Layton responded to the questions accordingly.

f) Emergency Preparedness Guide for People with Disabilities/Special Needs

L. Rotteau distributed an emergency preparedness guide at the meeting for information.

FOR INFORMATION

13. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee will be held on August 10, 2007 at 9:30 a.m., Goderich Council Chambers.

14. Adjournment

Moved by R. Armstrong

Seconded by R. Hicks

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

CARRIED

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Chair