



Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date, Time and Location

Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. at the Town Hall – Conference Room #1

Members

Lori Brant, Chair
Dennis Hernandez-Galeano, Vice Chair (at 5:00 p.m.)
Bev Ferris (regrets)
Ashley Greaves (regrets)
Adam McLeod
Gary Kooistra
Joe Kissman
Marilyn Abbs (regrets)
Jennica Giesbrecht
Councillor Ann-Marie Noyes

Staff Resources

Keegan Gennings, Chief Building Official
Sean Hutton, Facilities Supervisor
Bev Bradnam, Manager, Strategic Initiatives
Mark Z., Personal Support Worker

1) Call to Order

The January 30, 2024 AAC Meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m.

2) Roll Call

All Accessibility Advisory Committee members were present with the exception of Bev Ferris, Ashley Greaves, Marilyn Abbs and Dennis Hernandez-Galeano, who joined the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

3) Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

4) Adoption of the Agenda

Recommendation No. 1

Moved by: Joe Kissman
Seconded by: Gary Kooistra

THAT: The January 30, 2024 Agenda of the Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting be approved as printed.

(CARRIED)

5) Adoption of Minutes

Recommendation No. 2:

Moved by: Joe Kissman
Seconded by: Adam McLeod

THAT: The December 5, 2023 Minutes of the Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting be approved as printed.

(CARRIED)

6) Parks and Open Space Update

Bev provided an update from the Landscape Architect, noting that there are six playgrounds on the list for replacement this year: Sugarbowl, Bowen Park, Ridgeway Park, Goderich Park, Bill Connolly Field Playground and AC Douglas Park. The Committee reviewed the layout for Ferndale Park that just showed the scale of the playground. Sean advised that all new park washrooms will be universal (for all genders) as it makes the most sense. Joe noted that it would be nice if all washrooms were universal as it is difficult if he has a female support worker.

Tikki has advised that as Douglas Park has already installed EPDM (Ethylene propylene diene monomer) rubberized pavement (blue and yellow), it would be an excellent case study to the Town's future reference to have both EPDM and Pigment rubberized playground pavement to be installed the same year and in a similar geographic location. This relates to the Sugar Bowl Park playground and the installation of a black rubberized surface. The Committee shared their concern at the last meeting regarding how hot the black surface would become. Tikki advised that both products have a 10-15 year life span with five year warranties.

In terms of material and the Committee's concern about the black surface being too hot, Tikki advised that both meet the CAN/CSA standard, ensuring that heat will not cause injury based on the colour difference. Councillor Noyes advised that staff could come back to Council and request additional funds if there is good rationale. Bev was asked to follow-up with Tikki to determine how hot the product does get. *(Following the meeting, Tikki advised that she will be pricing out a red/possibly green surface colour, rather than the black).*

7) Site Plans

- 1) 247 Ridge Road North – the development consists of 18 units in downtown Ridgeway with a commercial unit on the lower level and some parking underneath, including the accessible space. The development has an elevator to reach the top two floors and a total of 4 suites with a barrier free path of travel. Concern was shared with the layout of the bathroom and the wall between the shower/bath and where the toilet would go. The Committee noted that barrier free does not necessarily mean accessible and that the units should have roll in showers. Gary questioned if the parking would accommodate a van and Keegan advised that it would, also noting that there is no parking required for the commercial units in the downtown core.
- 2) 203 Niagara Blvd – Keegan advised that the existing building will be demolished and a four storey mixed-use building with a basement underneath built. The main floor is L-shaped with parking under the building's upper storeys. There is an elevator and the accessible parking space is closest to the building with a ramp. The development has a one bedroom accessible unit on the 2nd floor; a 2 bedroom accessible unit and one bedroom accessible unit on both the 3rd and 4th floors and a roof top patio. The Chair advised that the layout of the one bedroom unit is not ideal as the washroom should be closer to the bedroom and asked Keegan to check on the rules on what is required between the toilet and shower.

8) Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2019-2023

Audits will begin in the late spring/early summer of all facilities and parks/playgrounds.

9) Outstanding Matters

- 1) Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Region's AAC met on January 23, 2024 and their next meeting is scheduled for April 23, 2024. The minutes stated that they have hired a consultant for public consultation as part of their multi-year plan and stated non-compliance with the Province for the web site and site plan review as the reviews are conducted by the lower tier municipalities. Fort Erie AAC members would like to be part of any public consultation and asked that Bev reach out to their staff resource to see if that is possible.

- 2) Parking Concerns

Joe has confirmed that the accessible parking signs are now up on Jarvis Street. Jennica noted that the new dog park at Crystal Ridge needs signage and Sean advised that he would follow-up.

9) Outstanding Matters, continued

3) Adult size Change Table at Bay Beach

Tikki Yuen has confirmed that the product does not go all the way to the floor. The table is adjustable from 22” to 37” according to the specification. Remain on outstanding until the table is installed.

4) Stop Gap Ramp Project

Additional funds have been requested as part of the 2024 Budget process to offer additional applications in 2024. Once funds are approved, additional details will be distributed to business owners that may be interested in obtaining a ramp. Lori advised that she used two of the ramps recently – at Planks and Tangl’d.

5) Barrel Restaurant Access

Keegan advised that there is no update at this time. Remain on outstanding.

6) Accessible Taxi Service

Lori advised that she followed up again with Regional Councillor Insinna but has not received a response. The Mayor, who had stopped in to the meeting, advised that he would follow-up on Lori’s behalf. Remain on outstanding.

7) Beatties/Staples – accessible door

No update at this time. Remain on outstanding.

8) South Niagara Hospital Consultation Opportunity – February 1, 2024 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Gale Centre in Niagara Falls – 5152 Thorold Stone Road

Councillor Noyes, Lori and Bev have registered as has Marilyn for the virtual portion. An update will be provided at the next meeting. Remain on outstanding.

9) Niagara AAC Workshop – Spring 2024

Bev advised that the Niagara Falls AAC Chair is awaiting numbers to determine a location and date. Remain on outstanding.

10) Ramp at Royal Bank, Jarvis Street

Bev has provided Keegan with the file from years ago in which the AAC had requested that the hand rails be moved to the outside of the ramp so that the width was not limited. Keegan advised that there has been a report that the base plate is now a tripping hazard and he will follow-up with the bank. Remain on outstanding.

9) Outstanding Matters, continued

11) Transit Issues

Joe described an issue he had with the FAST bus in late December and the provider advised that he always needs a helper for his trips to Trailsides. Joe advised that his support worker meets him at the site. Joe advised that he now needs to fill out another application stating he does not require assistance to ride the FAST bus. Joe was told by the Regional staff that BTS (service provider) should never have let him on the bus unaccompanied as his original application stated he required assistance.

12) Wendy's accessibility improvements

Joe reported that the doors were not staying open long enough and details were forwarded to Keegan. Joe had sent a follow-up email advising that the doors now stay open longer but noted that it is still not long enough. Mark advised that he was almost caught by the doors when assisting Joe and they do not want anyone getting hurt. Keegan advised that his will be noted as a deficiency. Joe questioned how long it takes to comply and Keegan advised that the file stays open until the matter is resolved. Remain on outstanding.

10) New Business

1) FAST Bus – Joe Kissman

The Mayor was called in to the meeting to discuss the hours of the transit system. Joe advised that he would like the bus to run longer so that he can enjoy time out with his friends and not have to leave early. It currently runs to 9:00 p.m. The Mayor advised that he is the Vice Chair of the Niagara Transit Committee and the hours are set for 2024 and there is not a call for expansion until 2025. The Mayor advised that any expansion will be based on budget considerations. Joe asked that changes be made now; however, the Mayor explained that the hours are set and already budgeted for in 2024. Fort Erie does not control the service anymore as it is now Region-based.

2) Accessible Ontario by 2025

Dennis noted that it seems we are years away from the mandate of the AODA to be an Accessible Ontario by 2025 and questioned if the Province themselves are compliant with the legislation. Bev advised that she would recirculate the link to the 4th Review of the AODA by Rich Donovan that speaks to how far behind Ontario is from reaching the mandatory goal.

3) Lori questioned the Access2 card that was mentioned at the last meeting and its use at Niagara Parks Commission venues and advised that she will follow-up for a list of businesses where the card can be used. *(Following the meeting, Lori advised no card is required by the NPC - Admission fees and fares for accessibility support persons (when accompanying a person with a disability) who specifically identify themselves as support persons shall be waived at all Niagara Parks attractions and transportation systems. No identification will be required in order to waive the admission fee and fare.*

11) Date for Next Meeting

Joe asked that the meeting schedule not be changed as it is difficult for him to book his transportation when changes are made. Bev advised that the dates agreed to in December are the meeting dates for 2024, as follows:

- Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 30, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, May 28, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, September 24, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 29, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. (followed by Christmas dinner)

The next AAC meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

12) Adjournment

Recommendation No. 3:

Moved by: Joe Kissman
Seconded by: Councillor Noyes

THAT: The January 30, 2024 meeting of the Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee does now hereby adjourn at 5:28 p.m.

(CARRIED)

Minutes recorded and prepared by:

Minutes approved by:

Bev Bradnam, DPA, CMM III
Manager, Strategic Initiatives

Lori Brant
Chair