



# MINUTES

## Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee

### Meeting Date, Time, and Location

Tuesday, October 26, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. at the Town Hall – Committee Room #1

### Members

Dennis Hernandez-Galeano, Chair (at 4:32 p.m.)  
Bev Ferris, Vice-Chair  
Gary Kooistra  
Adam McLeod  
Barbara McLeod (regrets)  
Lori Brant (regrets)  
Veronica (Faith) Sparling (regrets)  
Councillor Ann-Marie Noyes  
Ashley Greaves, On Demand Transit  
Representative

### Staff Resources

Keegan Gennings, Chief Building Official  
Sean Hutton, Facilities Supervisor  
Bev Bradnam, Manager, Strategic  
Initiatives

### 1) Call to Order

The October 26, 2021 Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting was called to order by the Vice Chair at 4:15 p.m. Ashley Greaves, On-Demand Transit Representative, was introduced to the Committee and advised that she has submitted her application for consideration by Council. Due to a lack of quorum until the Chair arrived, Bev reviewed the Annual Accessibility Status Report with the Committee. Councillor Noyes asked that her representation on the Fort Erie Not For Profit Housing Authority be included as she brings many accessibility matters to the Board. Councillor Noyes also noted that each year they are trying to make accessibility improvements in 1-2 units.

The Chair was turned over to the Chair at 4:34 p.m.

### 2) Approval of Minutes

#### Recommendation No. 1:

Moved by: Gary Kooistra  
Seconded by: Adam McLeod

**THAT:** The September 28, 2021 Minutes of the Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting be approved as printed.

**(CARRIED)**

3) **Outstanding Matters**

1) Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee

Bev explained to Ashley that one of the AAC members also participates on the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee and this item remains on each agenda so that the Committee can be provided with an update.

2) Parking Concerns

Bev advised that she has followed up with the Manager, Engineering, on the accessible spaces that were approved by Council in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. Due to budget constraints the Ridge Road accessible spaces were put on hold and the Erie Road space was put on hold given the ideas over changing use of the road allowance. It did not seem prudent to work toward a solution that might become untraveled. The Manager, Engineering, advised that he will get guidance on the Erie Road space. The Ridge Road spaces will be budgeted in 2022.

3) Fort Erie Active Transportation Committee (FEAT)

Dennis had no new updates.

4) Bollards at Optimist Park

Sean had staff slide one of the parking curbs enough to provide an access between them for a wheelchair to get through (but not enough for a car to get through), a minimum of 34 inches is required. Dennis asked if this is a temporary fix or more permanent as he had concerns if an emergency occurred that an ambulance would not have access to the field. Dennis noted that he spoke with some paramedics and was told that gurneys are not made for the grass and can become tipsy. Depending on where in the field the accident occurs, time may be important. Dennis asked if a gate with a lock to prevent unauthorized entry could be considered. Sean advised that there would be an issue with driving around the perimeter of the field and ambulances getting stuck. Remove from outstanding.

5) Pool Lift – E.J. Freeland Community Centre

Bev followed up with the St. Catharines Kiwanis Aquatics Centre and the lift they have is in the changeroom that transfers someone from an adult change table into the water wheelchair, where they are pushed down a ramp into the water. The staff member advised that their Accessibility staff person advised that this was the most accessible way to enter the pool. Bev explained that this does not allow for independent access to the water but thanked the staff person for their time. On October 15, 2021 one of the vendors (Motion Specialties) was doing an onsite visit to the E.J. Freeland Community Centre and Lori had provided comment that she had attended the visit and they will be submitting a quote. Lori had also advised that she had found a lift that was less costly. Councillor Noyes advised that some lifts for private use that may cost less would not be suitable for public use. Remain on outstanding.

3) **Outstanding Matters, continued**

6) Bernard Beach - Accessibility

Bev advised that this matter is also included in the Annual Accessibility Status Report as the Boardwalk was not built in accordance with the AODA - Design of Public Spaces Standard that requires any new construction to meet accessibility requirements. Sean advised that the new boardwalk is accessible but right now the path to the boardwalk isn't. A hard pathway (limestone or asphalt) and beach mats to connect the top of the boardwalk to the parking lot has been planned. This should be complete for the start of beach season next year. Remain on outstanding until work is complete.

4) **Site Plans**

1) 255 Emerick Avenue

Keegan provided site plan details for 225 Emerick Avenue (old Rose Seaton School). Keegan advised that the upstairs have already been converted to apartments and currently the main floor is being used as a day care/nursery school. The site plan shows the conversion to additional apartments on the main floor and a total of 35 units in the two-storey building. Keegan confirmed that there are no plans for an elevator but a percentage of the residential suites will be accessible. There are three accessible parking spaces shown on the plans. Bev F. noted that previous comments she had heard during a public meeting on the property was that the apartments should be for assisted or senior living. Councillor Noyes noted that the Town does need more of this type of housing.

2) 43 Jarvis Street

Keegan provided site plan details that showed a total of 9 apartments for the building. Apartments already exist on the second floor but they will be modified to provide additional units. Modification to the back of the main floor will allow for 3 residential units. Commercial business will continue in the front of the building. Bev F. noted that a number of store fronts on Jarvis Street are not accessible. Keegan advised that there would have to be a change in all floor levels if the entrances were altered. It was noted that there is a Capital project in the 2022 Budget for improvements on Jarvis Street and, similar to discussions during the Ridge Road construction, staff should be working with the businesses to provide accessible entrances. A streetscape view was pulled up on the screen which showed an accessible entrance to one of the commercial spaces, but the other 2 are not. Keegan advised that he believed the three commercial spaces would remain separate from each other. Keegan advised that there are 9 parking spaces in the back for the residential units. The commercial space is exempt from requiring designated parking spaces. The Committee asked that 1 accessible space be included in the parking area. Sean noted that unit 102 on the plans showed an accessible bathroom.

5) **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2019-2023**

Bev provided an overview of the Annual Status Report. Bev explained that the Annual Status Report is a requirement under the AODA and reflects action taken on the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. Bev explained the changes in compliance related to the new On-Demand Transit and the non-compliance of the Town's present website. Bev confirmed that she submitted the Compliance Report to the Province, which is done every other year, and the non-compliance may trigger an audit. The Report also provides details on:

- The Commitment of funding by Council;
- Review, comment and implementation of AODA Legislation;
- Review of Site Plans/Secondary Plans/Park Development;
- Removal of Barriers;
- Representation/Interaction with other Organizations; and
- Other Accomplishments.

The following recommendation was passed by the Committee.

**Recommendation No. 2:**

**Moved by: Gary Kooistra**  
**Seconded by: Councillor Noyes**

**THAT: The Accessibility Advisory Committee approves the draft Annual Accessibility Report that will be presented to Council at the November 8, 2021, Council-in-Committee meeting.**

**(CARRIED)**

6) **Other Matters**

Ashley advised that feedback on the new On-Demand Transit service has been very good. Douglas Heights residents are very happy that the new service is available for motorized wheelchairs and the two accessible vans are out for the full day and all requests have been accommodated so far. Councillor Noyes asked what kind of restraints are being used in the accessible vans and Ashley advised that Q-strains are being used. Rachets were used at first but it was felt that the Q-strains are more secure. Ashley advised that the optimized system average time was 30 seconds when the Planner was building the route and that time has been changed to allow 5 minutes for loading a passenger with a mobility device and could possibly be up to 10 minutes, especially in the winter months. Ashley advised that the volume of ridership has been good and she has been notified by the Town that last week was the third highest ridership count for the year. Discussion took place regarding larger mobility devices and the challenges with accommodating them in smaller accessible vans. Discussion also took place regarding access to the service in Black Creek/Douglastown and Stevensville as there are only two bus stops where riders are picked up. Councillor Noyes advised that those stops reflect the fixed route service from the previous provider and should be revisited.

7) **Date for Next Meeting**

The next AAC meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 30, 2021 at Town Hall - Conference Room #1 at 4:00 p.m.

8) **Adjournment**

**Recommendation No. 3:**

**Moved by: Gary Kooistra**  
**Seconded by: Adam McLeod**

**THAT: The October 26, 2021 meeting of the Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee does now hereby adjourn at 5:14 p.m.**

**(CARRIED)**

Minutes recorded and prepared by:

Minutes approved by:

Bev Bradnam, DPA, CMM III  
Manager, Strategic Initiatives

Dennis Hernandez-Galeano  
Chair