



MINUTES

Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee

Meeting Date, Time, and Location
Tuesday, March 29, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. at the Town Hall – Conference Room #1

Members	Staff Resources
Dennis Hernandez-Galeano, Chair Bev Ferris, Vice-Chair Gary Kooistra Adam McLeod Barbara McLeod (regrets) Lori Brant Veronica (Faith) Sparling Councillor Ann-Marie Noyes Ashley Greaves, On-Demand Transit Rep. (regrets)	Keegan Gennings, Chief Building Official Sean Hutton, Facilities Supervisor (regrets) Bev Bradnam, Manager, Strategic Initiatives

1) **Call to Order**

The March 29, 2022 Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting was called to order at 4:24 p.m.

2) **Approval of Minutes**

Recommendation No. 1:

Moved by: Gary Kooistra

Seconded by: Bev Ferris

THAT: The December 7, 2021 Minutes of the Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting be approved as printed.

(CARRIED)

3) **History Happened HERE**

Presentation and discussion with Signe Hansen, Manager, Community Planning and Jane Davies, Manager, Museum and Cultural Services. This has been deferred until the April AAC meeting.

4) **Outstanding Matters**

1) Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee

Faith advised that the Regional AAC meetings were postponed as a number of Regional staff had been redeployed during COVID.

2) Parking Concerns

Bev B. advised that she followed up with Tim Marotta, Manager, Engineering, who advised that the drawings are done and the construction on Ridge Road is planned for this summer or fall. Tim advised that they will be coordinating the addition of two accessible spaces in downtown Ridgeway, keeping the busy season in mind. When asked about the accessible space on Erie Road, Tim advised that he has not received guidance yet as to the location and is not aware of the Crystal Beach BIA's intentions on pursuing the road closure similar to the request last year.

3) Fort Erie Active Transportation Committee (FEAT)

No updates were provided.

4) Pool Lift – E.J. Freeland Centre

Bev B. described all of the work that Lori Brant has done to try and have a pool lift installed at the Boys & Girls Club, including writing letters to both the Ridgeway and Fort Erie Lions Club. Bev advised that a call took place with Stephen Passero, Dennis and herself regarding the Fort Erie Lions interest in funding a portion of the pool lift; however, they required a formal letter from the Committee. Dennis signed off on letters for both Clubs. Bev was then connected with the Treasurer of the Fort Erie Lions Club who provided a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for their involvement. The MOU states that the AAC will need to fundraise from the community and Bev has responded "The Accessibility Advisory Committee's role is to advise Council on accessibility matters and we do not 'fundraise' but we do have funding available through the committee and our Facilities Manager. Hopefully these matching funds will be sufficient to meet the requirements mentioned in the MOU". Bev advised that she has not yet received a response to her March 25, 2022 e-mail. The Ridgeway Lions Club have requested that someone from the AAC attend one of their meetings in April to explain the project. Lori and Bev will be attending the April 27 meeting to provide an overview of the project and hopefully obtain a financial commitment to help with the cost of the lift. Councillor Noyes also suggested that we could follow-up with other businesses such as Meridian Credit Union or FENA Insurance. Discussion took place regarding the role of the Committee and it was noted that the Lions were contacted as they had come before the Committee when they were funding the Bay Beach Playground and had asked us to contact them if we had any other projects. Remain on outstanding.

5) **Site Plans**

1) 179 Garrison Road

Keegan presented details of the site plan for 170 Garrison Road (previously the Garrison Club). Keegan advised that they will be tearing down the existing building. The site plan showed the front section of the building as commercial and the second and third storeys as residential. Parking will be under the second storey and shows both a Type A and Type B accessible space. Keegan noted the inclusion of 3 separate delineated walkways through the parking area and one connecting walkway, all of which are a good width. There will be 12 residential units per floor and an elevator so there will be barrier free path of travel requirements and 15% of the units will be accessible. Keegan advised that he will recommend that accessible parking spaces be in line with the number of accessible suites.

2) 412 Ridgeway Road

Keegan presented details of a three-storey mixed use building to be located at the corner of Ridgeway Road/Erie Road and Ryan Avenue. Keegan explained that there will be one storey commercial at the front of the building with two storeys of residential on top of the commercial (three residential units) and the remainder of the building will be three storeys of residential (eight residential units). It was noted that there are no accessible units and no elevator; however, the site plan shows one accessible parking space, possibly for commercial use.

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

Review of the public comments received during the MYAP consultation were deferred due to time constraints.

7) **Other Matters**

1) Leading with Impact: Understanding the needs of the disability community

Bev reviewed the slide deck from the National Disability Survey as a response to COVID-19 which was part of a recent webinar hosted by the Abilities Centre in Oshawa. The presentation is attached to the minutes as Appendix “7.1”

2) Clearing our Path – CNIB 2022 Summit

Bev provided a brief overview of some of the highlights of the Summit and advised that a number of best practice documents were shared. With respect to a round-a-bout, discussion was led by an engineer who stated that round-a-bouts are safe for persons with low vision or who are blind. One of the participants, who was blind, challenged the engineer to come out to a local round-a-bout and try to cross safely with his vision was limited.

7)

Other Matters, continued

3) Right to Read inquiry report – released by the Ontario Human Rights Commission

Bev advised that on February 28, 2022 the Ontario Human Rights Commission released the “Right to Read” Inquiry Report, which includes 157 recommendations to the Ministry of Education, school boards and faculties of education on how to address systemic issues that affect the right to learn to read. The Report can be found at: <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/right-to-read-inquiry-report>.

4) Fort Erie On Demand Transit

Lori advised that during a snowy day she had difficulty accessing a personal appointment as the roads and sidewalks would not allow her to park and her lift to deploy. Lori advised that she called the On-Demand Transit as she was led to believe that they offered accessible transit and would pick her up at her home. She was told that she would have to call Specialized Transit (FAST). Lori noted that FAST usually has to be booked two days in advance and she would like to enjoy the freedom of making plans the day of an event. The issue she had was that she could not reach a bus stop which was a substantial distance from her home and due to the inclement weather. Lori proposed that there be an exception, not all year but during the winter, for persons with disabilities in the urban area to be able to be picked up by On-Demand at their home. Councillor Noyes advised that the FAST service is in place to provide door-to-door service and that she may have been able to meet her appointment if she had reached out to FAST as ridership has decreased and they may have had a vehicle available. Lori described an incident where her van had broken down and she had to call an accessible cab and questioned if On Demand would have helped in this case and perhaps this is a gap in service delivery. Councillor Noyes advised that the On-Demand is a fairly new service and they have made some improvements based on feedback for routes in Stevensville and Douglstown and they have also added a lot of stops for frequently visited places such as the museum, Town Hall, and the Boys and Girls Club. Councillor Noyes advised that she will bring the matter up at Infrastructure Service Business Sub-Committee tomorrow and perhaps there can be dialogue between the two providers. Councillor Noyes noted that a bus shelter is going to be erected at Walmart and she will get a listing of bus stops and circulate to the Committee. Councillor Noyes also noted that the On-Demand Transit has exceeded pre-COVID ridership numbers and is doing a phenomenal job. All six vans are on the road now and they will be coming back to Council to discuss the addition of more vans. Lori explained that when she lived in Barrie she was provided with a number to use when she called the specialized transit and perhaps something similar could be done here so that if On-Demand could be used in the winter as a door-to-door service for a person with a disability, they could provide their number to verify their approval. Lori stated that we should be providing the same opportunity for flexible, equitable, accessible ridership with the On-Demand service. Without this flexibility, persons with disabilities feel restricted and do not have the same ability to make last minute plans for dinner out, etc.

7) **Other Matters, continued**

- 5) Friendship Trail Crossing Recommendations (to be presented at April meeting by Signe Hansen, Manager, Community Planning).
- 6) Councillor Noyes wanted to celebrate a recent accessibility improvement at Fort Erie Not For Profit Housing (FENFPH). Councillor Noyes advised that Stephen Passero (previous AAC Council representative) also sits on the FENFPH and together they demonstrated the need for a more accessible bathroom for a mother who had a child in a wheelchair. The previous bath tub was not accessible and the FENFPH replaced the tub with a zero-threshold shower at a cost of \$20,000. There was no funding available and the cost came out of the FENFPH budget. Councillor Noyes gave kudos to the FENFPH for undertaking the project as it has made a huge improvement.
- 7) Councillor Noyes inquired about sidewalk criteria in relation to deep ditches right at the edge of the sidewalk, which could be a hazard for individuals and children on bicycles or skateboards. Keegan noted that a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) was put in for her inquiry and that it has been assigned to the Road Department for review.

8) **Date for Next Meeting**

The next AAC meeting will take place on Tuesday, April 26, 2022 at Town Hall - Conference Room #1 at 4:00 p.m.

9) **Adjournment**

Recommendation No. 2:

Moved by: Bev Ferris
Seconded by: Adam McLeod

THAT: The March 29, 2022 meeting of the Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee does now hereby adjourn at 5:56 p.m.

Minutes recorded and prepared by:

Minutes approved by:

Bev Bradnam, DPA, CMM III
Manager, Strategic Initiatives

Dennis Hernandez-Galeano
Chair