



## Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

### MINUTES

A meeting of the Stratford Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) was held on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 11:30 a.m., in the Mansbridge Room at the Stratford Rotary Complex.

**Committee Members Present:** Roger Koert – Chair Presiding, Andy Mark, Geoff Krauter, Councillor Bonnie Henderson, Diane Sims

**Staff Present:** Oonagh Vaucrosson – Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator, Nathan Bottema – Project Engineer, Casey Riehl – Recording Secretary

**Regrets:** Heather Contois, Jamie Pritchard

#### 1. Call to Order

Roger Koert, Chair presiding, called the AAC meeting to order at 11:33 a.m.

Land Acknowledgment

Moment of Silent Reflection

#### 2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None declared.

#### 3. Adoption of the Previous Minutes

Approval of the January 23, 2024 meeting minutes deferred to the March Meeting.

#### 4. Infrastructure Services Update – Nathan Bottema, Project Engineer

Nathan Bottema, Project Engineer provided the following update:

- a cost breakdown to drop the curbs for the two on-street accessible parking spots on Ontario Street and Albert Street will be forwarded and the AAC can decide if they want these projects to proceed as part of the 2024 Engineering budget.
- Staff are working with the Manager of Parks, Forestry and Cemetery to put together information to present to the Board of Park Management regarding a plan for the pathway on the park land across from the Bandshell on Veteran's Drive.
- The Mobi-mats have been purchased with the 2023 Engineering accessibility budget and are stored at Public Works for use at City events. He will contact Community Services to inform them that they are available for use and to include them on the events application. He will also ask the Corporate Communications Specialist to do a post to inform the community what Mobi-mats are and that the mats are available for use.
- a map will be provided of the missing sidewalks at the March meeting. Roger Koert suggested that the AAC could evaluate the budget and possibly use the remaining funds to complete some of the missing links.
- projects scheduled for 2024 pending budget approval include:
  - a) installation of a multi-use trail on Oakdale Avenue from O'Loane to Forman;
  - b) improving some of the downtown intersections to improve pedestrian moveability;
  - c) bridge improvements including replacing a culvert on Perth Line 36 (Quinlan Road) at the most westerly crossing of the Court Drain which will require a closure on Quinlan Road to complete the work;
  - d) completing a resurfacing project for Erie Street from the downtown core to approximately the railroad tracks (at Moderwell Street) with the second year of connecting link funding;
  - e) discussing and seeking approval from the MTO to widen Erie Street to allow them to include bike lanes;
  - f) completion of the second phase of the Albert Street reconstruction project (remaining 25%) plus another two blocks;
  - g) completion of a reconstruction project on Moderwell Street (from St. Vincent Street to Monteith Avenue); and

- h) completing various pedestrian crossovers, sidewalk infills and other various improvements as budget and time allows.

**5. Site Plan Review Sub-Committee Update – Oonagh Vaucrosson - Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator**

The Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator updated the AAC that the Review Sub-Committee reviewed a plan for 80 Lorne Avenue. The new building is a large building and will have adequate parking, including accessible parking, wide entrances to the building and a large accessible washroom.

**6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

**6.1 Launch of the FADM with Perth-Huron Builders Association – Geoff Krauter/Oonagh Vaucrosson**

Geoff Krauter will e-mail representatives at the PHBA and report back at the March AAC meeting.

**6.2 Developing an AAC Incentive Program – Roger Koert**

Roger Koert has sent information to the Clerk for clarification on the parameters of the AAC organizing an incentive program for local businesses to complete accessible improvements. He will report back to the AAC once he has more information.

**6.3 2024 National AccessAbility Week Plans**

Roger Koert noted that at the last meeting members discussed ideas for National AccessAbility Week such as a launch of the updated FADM, the possible incentive program, how to increase accessibility awareness for Council with assistive devices and linking up with the Access Now map. The Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator suggested holding an education forum with speakers discussing accessibility. She also noted the new Accessibility Coordinator at the Stratford Festival has introduced some interesting new initiatives at the Festival and would be a great source of information. Diane Sims suggested Council members could visit local businesses with varying degrees of accessibility to see what it is like. Members like the idea of setting up in Market Square with their banner and postcards to spread awareness. Councillor Henderson shared information regarding Red Shirt Day.

## **7. New Business**

### **7.1 Accessibility Audit Process – Roger Koert**

Roger Koert inquired about the checklist that was created for auditing buildings for accessibility. Members noted that it is included in the FADM, which is also posted online. The Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator stated that the Manager of Community Facilities has been doing reviews of City facilities and using the checklist.

Mr. Koert suggested making the checklist more readily available and visible so that local businesses can access it to do a self-assessment of their business. The Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator will work with the Corporate Communications Specialist to post information on the City's website and social media. The Project Engineer noted that there should be instructions in place so as not to have businesses complete the City's accessibility checklist and advertise that they are now accessible, that these are strictly guidelines. Roger Koert suggested that in addition to site plan reviews, the AAC could possibly review accessibility checklists and provide further feedback to businesses.

The Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator plans to continue the accessibility audits of City facilities this year with the Manager of Community Facilities to ensure that all buildings have been completed.

### **7.2 Onboarding of New AAC Members – Roger Koert**

Members discussed what additional information could be provided to new AAC members when they begin their term with the AAC. Currently, all Advisory Committee members receive the Terms of Reference, meeting dates/times/location and copies of previous minutes for their information. Members suggested that new AAC members could also receive a copy of the FADM, link for the AAC information on the City's website, information on what the AODA is and videos or sections that are pertinent to the Committee and the absent sidewalk map.

### **7.3 Steering Committee Update – Oonagh Vaucrosson - Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator**

The Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator updated the AAC that the City's Steering Committee's top priority is working towards achieving web accessibility.

She also raised the issue of remuneration of all AAC members for discussion at the Steering Committee. She has discussed this with the Clerk and has all the steps that Huron County used to bring this legislation into place and she will be moving forward with a proposal for the AAC. She noted that many municipalities are already remunerating their committee members.

#### 7.4 Accessibility Apps and Websites

Councillor Henderson noted that on the City's website, there are some apps listed that state Stratford is participating, however Stratford is not always on the app when you actually try it, such as the GoHere Washroom app. She will forward the information to the Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator to review. Councillor Henderson will also send her the Perth County washroom app and age-friendly community information.

#### 7.5 Tax Deferral Program Update

Councillor Henderson explained the background of the tax deferral program that the AAC has previously proposed. Diane Sims inquired if the AAC could receive a status update on where this project stands.

**Motion by** Diane Sims

**Seconded by** Geoff Krauter

**THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee requests a status update from staff on the Accessibility Tax Deferral Program. Carried**

### 8. Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the AAC will be held on Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 11:30 a.m. in the Mansbridge Room, Stratford Rotary Complex, 353 McCarthy Road, Stratford.

### 9. Adjournment

**Motion by** Andy Mark

**Seconded by** Diane Sims

**THAT the February 6, 2024, Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting adjourn. Carried**

Start Time: 11:33 A.M.

End Time: 12:35 P.M.