



Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

MINUTES

A meeting of the Stratford Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) was held on Tuesday, May 7, 2024, at 11:30 a.m., Stratford Police Administration Building, 789 Erie Street, Stratford ON

Committee Members Present: Roger Koert – Chair Presiding, Diane Sims, Jamie Pritchard, Andy Mark, Heather Contois

Staff Present: Oonagh Vaucrosson – Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator, Nathan Bottema – Project Engineer, Tim Wolfe – Director of Community Services, Mark Hackett – Community Facilities Manager, Adam Betteridge – Director of Building and Planning, Casey Riehl – Recording Secretary

Also Present: Connor Luczka - Media

Regrets: Vicky Trotter – Council Committee Coordinator, Geoff Krauter, Councillor Bonnie Henderson

1. Call to Order

Roger Koert, Chair presiding, called the AAC meeting to order at 11:36 a.m.

Reading of the Land Acknowledgement and a Moment of Silent Reflection.

Reading of the Respectful Workplace Policy.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None declared.

3. Welcome from Chief Greg Skinner and Discussion on New Location

Police Chief Skinner welcomed members of the AAC and staff to their new facility at 789 Erie Street. Working towards improving accessibility, the new location offers a more accessible facility for employees and the public to access services. With the new

location, they are working towards compliance with the 2025 AODA requirements. Chief Skinner stated Stratford Police Services recognizes the challenges they face with accessibility at the current police station at 17 George Street. Once the new location is fully operational, the vast majority of the members of the public who are looking for police services would be directed to 789 Erie Street.

As part of their accessibility strategy, they are working on enhancing the ability have some of the services available online. This would include calls for service either online, via video or another form of technology that would allow for that type of work to be done without any kind of barriers in place.

The Police Service has entered into a 5-year lease at 789 Erie Street. The building has 7,500 square feet on one floor and designed to accommodate employees needs in consultation with the AAC for specific areas of the facility. They have put a lot of thought into making this building accessible not only for the public but for any members of the Service who may find themselves in the situation where they need accessibility accommodation to perform their work.

Chief Skinner thanked the Committee members for visiting their new facility. They are the first group he has hosted in their new meeting room.

4. Accessibility Update for the Stratford Police Station – 17 George Street W.

Mark Hackett, Community Facilities Manager, addressed the Committee regarding the 2024 capital project item for 17 George Street which is the installation of an accessible ramp at the main entrance to the Stratford Police Service.

Community Services has taken this item to budget deliberation for Council to consider with a couple different options. Mr. Hackett shared with the Committee the design that staff believes to be the best option moving forward. Council has approved this project to move forward in 2024. The proposed design is constructing a new north/south modular prefabricated metal ramp that is AODA approved. Mr. Hackett shared a copy of the proposed design with members.

The scope of work for the project includes:

- demolishing a portion of the existing retaining wall, garden and landing;
- removing the existing handrails and replacing with new AODA approved rails;
- installation of the new metal ramp with an anti-slip surface as per the OBC;
- repairing existing garden, curbing, concrete sidewalk and pavers;
- removal of existing entrance door and replacing with new door, new power door operator and push button.

Tim Wolfe, Director of Community Services, stated that due to the uncertainty of future renovations at the 17 George Street location for the Police Service, having a removable metal ramp and the option to use elsewhere makes sense.

Mr. Hackett stated the design is currently with the consultant the City has retained. Once the design is finalized and approved, it can move forward to the tender process. Tim Wolfe stated that if the AAC is satisfied with the design proposed today, there is no need to follow up at another meeting and the tender process can begin immediately and the ramp can get installed as soon as possible.

Diane Sims inquired if there is any work being done to the steps at the entrance to 17 George Street. Mr. Hackett stated that there is a new pad being poured at the top of the steps to level up the landing to the door entrance and then repairs and restoration will take place to the existing steps.

Ms. Sims also stated the importance of keeping the Police Station in the downtown area. Chief Skinner noted that the Stratford Police Board agrees that maintaining a downtown presence is important. In anticipation of a possible expansion/renovation, the site in between 17 George Street and Chocolate Barrs has been assessed and would be suitable land to expand.

Roger Koert inquired if the slope ratio of 1:12 shown on the design should be updated to 1:16 in accordance with the new Code. Mr. Hackett insured members that the consultant working on the design is familiar with the FADM and he will also follow up with them to ensure that the slope is correct. Mr. Koert stated that the more gradual the slope, the more welcoming of an entrance it will be.

Heather Contois inquired about the type of maintenance that a metal ramp that is outside would require and if it would deteriorate quicker than cement. Mr. Hackett noted that staff will keep the ramp clear in the winter and use appropriate ice melter. The ramp is powder coated for long term use.

Andy Mark inquired if there is a curb cut near the start of the ramp? Mr. Hackett stated that there is a curb cut very close and suggested the pavers that are currently in the location of where the ramp is to be installed should possibly be replaced with solid concrete for a more level, flat surface.

Motion by Jamie Pritchard

Seconded by Diane Sims

THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee supports the design concept (option #2) presented by Community Services staff at the May 7, 2024 AAC meeting. Carried

5. Adoption of the Previous Minutes – March 5, 2024 and April 2, 2024

Motion by Andy Mark

Seconded by Jamie Pritchard

THAT the minutes from the Accessibility Advisory Committee meetings dated March 5, 2024 and April 2, 2024 be adopted as printed. Carried

6. Infrastructure Services Update

Nathan Bottema, Project Engineer provided the following update:

- Erie Street road widening tender closes May 8, 2024;
- Moderwell Street reconstruction tender closes on May 10, 2024;
- Kenner Crescent watermain relining, sanitary sewer relining program tender has been awarded;
- Neal/Glendon walkway watermain replacement tender has been awarded;
- St. Vincent Street (between Cambria and West Gore) and Forman Avenue (between Huron and Hibernia) has been awarded;
- the 2023 Albert Street reconstruction project is ongoing with work continuing in the second block;
- sidewalk work continuing on McCarthy Road west and east (at Mornington Street) and O'Loane Avenue (between Brown Street and Orr Street);
- design plans are continuing on the asphalt resurfacing project on Devon Street, additional pedestrian crossovers, downtown intersection improvement projects, the Perth Line 36 culvert replacement and Oakdale Avenue multi-use trail;
- the previous inquiry by Councillor Henderson to add limited parking on St. Andrew Street, mainly for Sundays, has been reviewed by staff, however, according to the parking by-law you require an access aisle behind to facilitate the turn, which is a minimum of 4.5 meters. If you put parking on that area of the street you would encroach that minimum distance;
- the work on the additional accessible parking spaces requested for St. Andrew Street will be addressed during the downtown intersection improvements;

- the requested accessible platform in the park area across from the Lakeside Drive bandshell has gone to the Parks Board and the request was supported by Board members. Staff has inquired on the next steps required to begin designing the space. Roger Koert noted that the new Mobi-mats have been purchased and event organizers can now make arrangement through the City's Event Coordinator to use them to increase accessibility until a permanent solution is completed.

Diane Sims inquired if staff had reviewed the intersection at St. David Street and Wellington Street. Mr. Bottema will have the inspector take a closer look at the three remaining corners that need to be replaced. The annual sidewalk inspections will be beginning throughout the city this month and this intersection has been flagged.

Roger Koert reported that he had an incident this past weekend where he fell out of his wheelchair due to a large crack in the sidewalk near Memorial Park. It is his hope that this area will be on the list for the concrete contractor to repair this year.

Mr. Koert inquired if the curb cut replacements and intersection improvements at the Downie Street and Ontario Street intersection is high on the list to be completed. This is a busy intersection connecting the downtown to the river. Mr. Bottema stated that this large intersection is identified to be improved in 2025.

7. Site Plan Review Sub-Committee Update

Oonagh Vaucrosson, Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator, provided an update that the Review Sub-Committee reviewed the following plans and submitted reports:

- 25 Wright Boulevard;
- 54 Lorne Avenue West;
- 376-396 Ontario Street West.

Sites to be reviewed this month include:

- Milton Street Park playground design;
- 3188 Vivian Line 37 – Long term care home and retirement home;
- 45 Cambria Street;
- 315-317 Huron Street.

Adam Betteridge, Director of Building and Planning is now present at the meeting (12:21 p.m.)

8. Update from the Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator

Oonagh Vaucrosson provided a written report to the AAC members and highlighted the following items:

- Accessibility Steering Committee will be meeting on May 27, 2024 to discuss the More Inclusive Communities Grant. Staff is investigating the possibility of converting one of the rent-geared to income bungalows on Warwick Street into an accessible property for a family;
- ONAP Conference is being held May 9-10, 2024;
- AccessAbility Week is May 28–June 3, 2024 with the Julie Sawchuk presentation and a Walk & Roll around downtown event planned;

9. Update from Council

Deferred to next meeting.

10. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

10.1 Launch of the FADM with Perth-Huron Builders Association

No new updates.

10.2 Developing an AAC Rebate Program

Roger Koert reported that the funds for the proposed AAC rebate program cannot be taken from the Community Improvement line of the 2024 AAC budget as the rebates would be for private businesses, not community space. Council deferred incentive programs to 2025 budget deliberations. Mr. Koert suggested the AAC could work on the details and focus of the program and possibly consider adapting the concept of encouraging the use of the FADM. Specifically, if applicants have done renovations to the specifications in the design manual, they are welcome to apply.

Oonagh Vaucrosson inquired if the program could also be run as a grant program, allowing applicants to submit their plans for accessible renovations to the AAC for consideration.

10.3 2024 National AccessAbility Week Plans & Accessibility Award

Roger Koert provided an update on AccessAbility Week noting the following:

- Andy Mark will take the lead on the annual Accessibility Award and Diane Sims volunteered to assist;
- staff will forward a copy of last year's media release to update for this year;
- Heather Contois will also forward all the information she has on file regarding the award;
- Julie Sawchuk presentation will be held on Wednesday, May 29, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. (location to be determined). Diane Sims, Jamie Pritchard and Roger Koert volunteered to attend the event and set up an AAC information table.

Diane Sims inquired if the Corporate Communications Specialist could interview past recipients of the annual Accessibility Award to have them explain the importance of accessibility to their business and their community.

10.4 Update on Accessibility Audits for City of Stratford Facilities

Oonagh Vaucrosson is working with Mark Hackett, Community Facilities Manager on this project. They would like to have AAC volunteers also attend the site visits with them to provide feedback. Staff will schedule some possible dates for visits with the hope that a minimum of two AAC members will be available to attend. Most outdoor sports facilities have been audited previously, however there are still some outstanding locations to visit.

Oonagh Vaucrosson reported that the City has contracted a digital accessible company to look at ensuring their digital output is also accessible. They will be helping to ensure that the website and PDF's are all accessible.

Roger Koert inquired about a status update on the inaccessible walking path installed at the Packham Road soccer facility. Mr. Hackett stated that staff has reached out to the Stratford Youth Soccer Club to inquire what the process was and why the changes were made. He will provide an update when possible.

11. New Business

11.1 AAC Review of 2024 Playground Submissions for Milton Street (due date for feedback is May 14, 2024)

Roger Koert reported that the Site Plan Review Sub-Committee will review the eight plans submitted and provide their feedback to Community Services by the deadline.

11.2 Update on the SERC Modernization Project

Roger Koert reported that he met with Mayor Martin Ritsma, Tim Wolfe – Director of Community Services and Kylie Wasser – Director of Sport Development and Tourism regarding the SERC modernization project. Staff is supportive on working towards modernizing this facility for accessibility and para sport. Mr. Koert would like to extend an invitation to Kylie Wasser to possibly attend the October AAC meeting to provide an update.

12. Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the AAC will be held on Tuesday, June 4, 2024, at 11:30 a.m. at the Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room, 353 McCarthy Road W., Stratford ON

13. Adjournment

Motion by Diane Sims

Seconded by Andy Mark

**THAT the May 7, 2024, Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting adjourn.
Carried**

Start Time: 11:36 A.M.

End Time: 12:54 P.M.