



Accessibility Advisory Committee

MINUTES

Date: September 14, 2023

Time: 4:00 pm

Location: Oakville and Trafalgar Rooms

Members: David Underwood, Chair
Julie Romanow, Vice-Chair
Councillor Gittings
Karen Bodolai
Deborah Metrakos

Regrets: Devin Bright
Nora Lavell

Staff: Andrea Coyne, Manager of Elections, Policy, Print Services
Joanne Phoenix, Manager of Planning and Administrative Services
Lisa Vallis, Manager of On Demand Services
Andrea Wood, Project Leader – Accessibility
Jill Marcovecchio, Council and Committee Coordinator
Natasha Coric, Council and Committee Coordinator

A meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee was held on September 14, 2023, in the Oakville and Trafalgar Rooms of the Oakville Municipal Building, commencing at 4:00 p.m.

These minutes will go forward to the Council meeting of November 20, 2023, for approval. Please view those minutes to note any changes Council may have made.

1. Regrets

As noted above.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

No declarations of pecuniary interest were declared.

4. Discussion Item(s)

In accordance with Section 2(8) of the Procedure By-law, the items were considered out of order.

4.1 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair 2023

Jill Marcovecchio, Council and Committee Coordinator, called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the year 2023. Deborah Metrakos nominated David Underwood for the position of Chair. David Underwood accepted the nomination.

There being no further nominations put forth, the nominations were closed on a motion by Councillor Gittings.

Moved by Deborah Metrakos

That David Underwood be appointed Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the year 2023.

CARRIED

Jill Marcovecchio called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the year 2023. Deborah Metrakos nominated Julie Romanow for the position of Vice-Chair. Julie Romanow accepted the nomination.

There being no further nominations put forth, the nominations were closed on a motion by Councillor Gittings.

Moved by Deborah Metrakos

That Julie Romanow be appointed Vice-Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the year 2023.

CARRIED

David Underwood assumed the Chair.

3. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

3.1 Minutes of June 8, 2023

Moved by Julie Romanow

That the minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of June 8, 2023, be approved.

CARRIED

4. Discussion Item(s)

4.2 AAC 2022 Accomplishments and Proposed 2023 Workplan

Andrea Coyne, Manager of Elections, Policy, Print Services, reported on the AAC 2022 Accomplishments and Proposed 2023 Work Plan as provided in the PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Coyne advised that the accomplishments and proposed workplan was being presented at this meeting as there was a delay in recruiting the committee for the 2022-2026 term, and the new committee had its orientation at the June 8, 2023 meeting. Ms. Coyne recognized the hard work and effort of the previous committee in 2022. Ms. Coyne asked for the committee's feedback on the proposed work plan. Staff look forward to sharing ideas and collaborating with the committee on the proposed workplan.

The committee provided the following comments for consideration:

- the difficulty in reviewing site plans online for accessibility of sites and how to know when to do this;
- how to review a digital site plan online for accessibility as there are different file sizes and the screen view to be able to do this in a simple way; and
- digital site plan programs and training are very expensive, keeping up to date with site plans, and the public does not have that accessibility for site plans.

Ms. Coyne responded to questions regarding site plan review, advising that site plans can be accessed online on the town website, and that should the members have questions they may contact Christina Tizzard, Manager of Urban Design, Planning Services. Ms. Coyne advised that Christina Tizzard plans to speak to the committee at the December 14, 2023 meeting to address site plan review process.

Ms. Coyne advised that "regular monthly meetings" will be corrected to "quarterly meetings" of the committee under Section 2 - Community awareness and collaboration Deliverable: Promoting awareness of accessibility and inclusion in Appendix A to the staff report before it's posted to the town website.

Moved by Councillor Gittings

That the Accessibility Advisory Committee's 2022 Accomplishments and proposed 2023 Workplan be endorsed.

CARRIED

4.3 Facilities and Construction Management (FCM) Update

Andrea Wood, Project Leader – Accessibility, reported on the Facilities and Construction Management (FCM) Update as provided in the PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Wood highlighted the categories of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Design of Public Spaces Standard (DOPS) compliance areas that were targeted which is the focus of the 2021-2024 work plan, and the town facilities planned to have work done in 2023. Ms. Wood advised that the items will be included in the 2023 Annual Accessibility Status Update for improvements made during the year, and as town facilities have improvements made they are also updated in the asset management program and checked off the AODA tracking sheets. Consulting will be ongoing as required, specifically for accessible parking changes in quantity or location and rest areas. Ms. Wood welcomed any suggestions for future plans to town facilities.

The committee provided the following comments for consideration:

- the mobility of a pedestrian walkway at Iroquois Ridge Community Centre East Entrance as it's very difficult to run a wheelchair over a stone surface; and
- follow up on and/or surveys and feedback from the public on town projects that have been completed and future projects.

Ms. Wood responded to questions regarding the work plan for town facilities advising of the following:

- the seniors entrance at Iroquois Ridge Community Centre East was a paver walkway and it's now asphalt with a hard smooth surface and a proper running slope; and
- staff received feedback from a user on the community centre entrance, and other feedback regarding tactile plates and compressed curbs was received directly to the community centre.

Moved by Deborah Metrakos

That the report dated September 5, 2023 from Facilities & Construction Management be received.

CARRIED

4.4 Oakville Transit Annual Accessibility Plan 2023

Joanne Phoenix, Manager of Planning and Administrative Services, Oakville Transit, reported on the Oakville Transit Annual Accessibility Plan 2023 as provided in the PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Phoenix advised that the plan was presented to the committee annually for review, and that she will report back at the March 2024 meeting. Ms. Phoenix provided an overview of the 2023 plan, addressing barriers, barriers addressed, and actions planned. Ms. Phoenix advised that once the plan was completed it will be posted on the town website. Ms. Phoenix asked for the committee's feedback on the transit accessibility plan which will be incorporated into the development of the plan for 2024.

The committee provided the following comments for consideration:

- reduce the wait time for specialized transportation services;
- consult with transit riders on surveys;
- providing bus driver/operator checks prior to the transit route, and testing requirements for audio and visual of the bus;
- concern with the level of sound and volume on buses, and any measures that are in place to determine what is needed on buses for riders to hear announcements;
- data on reporting and tracking issues with sound/audio on buses;
- the public was pleased with the new suite of electric buses on the road;

- accessibility of buses;
- the criteria for an operator to kneel or lower the bus for a rider and communication of this, some operators just lower the bus and they should not be making judgements on this;
- it's more about the kneeling the bus, it takes less time to do this, it's helpful to have the bus kneeled for low vision and it's very inconsistent how it's done;
- concern with where to make transfers taking the bus, and maps are difficult to understand;
- trip planning online is very difficult; and
- communication with Metrolinx on riders taking trains, difficulty with getting on the eastbound platform of station and can't get into the building, and taking the train and transferring to the eastbound line and missing the train.

Ms. Phoenix responded to questions regarding transit services, advising of the following:

- staff will get back to the committee on reducing the wait time for specialized transportation services, indicating that at this time there is not an established target;
- staff completed an online survey for the public and to inform the plan, 527 responses and other comments were received, the survey was not specifically focused on the specialized community but all members of the public;
- bus driver/operator checks of the bus is part of the circle check process, and audio and video checks are part of the maintenance process;
- there is a process for deficiencies if a transit vehicle is not operating as expected;
- the operator may hear announcements differently than customers, for example the plexiglass screens which were put in place during COVID;
- staff have conducted audits of the announcements, and want to continue with these checks;

- sound isn't operator controlled, speakers are part of the operating systems, and staff will include this in the plan and take it back for action;
- the first suite of electric buses have been received, replacing buses with electric vehicles, eight electric buses are on the road now for on demand and specialized services;
- specialized service is care-A-van;
- adjustments and modifications have been made to new electric buses for accessibility, such as additional armrests and handles for riders to hold on, staff are making modifications as they learn;
- staff are reviewing the passenger needs and accessibility, and which specialized vehicle is best suited for customer base;
- criteria for an operator to deploy the bus ramp when a rider needs assistance;
- a customer service representative will help a customer trip plan by telephone and email, and tool is on website;
- the Metrolinx forum on their accessibility plan is an opportunity to provide feedback; and
- staff will pass on the concerns regarding communications with Metrolinx to their connections.

Moved by Karen Bodolai

That the Oakville Transit Annual Accessibility Plan 2023 be received.

CARRIED

4.5 Provincial On-Site Inspection

Andrea Coyne, Manager of Elections, Policy, Print Services, reported on a provincial on-site inspection for the town that was scheduled on August 15, 2023. Staff worked with the ministry representative to provide three sample sites on AODA requirements under the Design of Public Spaces Standard (DOPS), and compliance with the inspection requirements on the notice given in July 2023. Ms. Coyne advised that in addition to the on-site inspections, it's a provincial compliance reporting year for the town and a compliance report would be submitted by November 1, 2023.

Ms. Coyne responded to questions regarding the provincial on-site inspection related to the sites in consultation with staff from Recreation and Culture, and Parks and Open Space, and the inspections are new for the ministry. Ms. Coyne will ask the ministry representative if they can inspect other sites in town, and will report back to the committee, indicating that there is a feedback form on the provincial website. She will provide a copy of the provincial on-site inspection report to the committee once it's available.

The committee provided the following comments for consideration:

- request further inspections of sites, such as the Oakville GO Station, Bronte GO Station, Service Ontario on Cross Avenue, and Service Canada as the public have concerns, such as doors don't open the right way and clearance;
- concern with meeting the AODA accessibility requirements for municipalities in the province by 2025; and
- the difficulty with accessibilities not being there in public spaces, there's a lot of work to be done, talk to people with accessibility needs who can tell you what the issues are, and government agencies or officials don't always know where the problems are.

Moved by Deborah Metrakos

That the Provincial On-Site Inspection Report dated September 5, 2023 be received for information purposes only.

CARRIED

5. Information Item(s)

5.1 Metrolinx -2023 Virtual Accessibility Consultation: September 28, 2023

5.2 Treat Accessibly

Moved by Councillor Gittings

That the information item(s) be received.

CARRIED

6. Date and Time of Next Meeting

December 14, 2023
Oakville Municipal Building
Oakville and Trafalgar Rooms - 4:00 p.m.

7. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Gittings

That this meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.