



MINUTES

Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee

Meeting Date, Time, and Location	
Tuesday, May 31, 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 Lori Brant Veronica (Faith) Sparling Councillor Ann-Marie Noyes Ashley Greaves, On-Demand Transit Rep. Bev Ferris chaired the meeting until 4:46 p.m.	Keegan Gennings, Chief Building Official Sean Hutton, Facilities Supervisor (regrets) Bev Bradnam, Manager, Strategic Initiatives Guests: Tim O'Brien, IBI Group (to 4:46 p.m.) Stacey Willick, IBI Group (to 4:46 p.m.) Jane Davis, Manager, Museum and Cultural Services (to 4:55 p.m.) Signe Hansen, Manager, Community Planning (to 5:24 p.m.)

1) **Call to Order**

The May 31, 2022 Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m.

2) **Approval of Minutes**

Recommendation No. 1:

Moved By: Gary Kooistra
Seconded by: Faith Sparling

THAT: The March 29, 2022 Minutes of the Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting be approved as printed.

(CARRIED)

3) **Parks Development Updates**

Signe Hansen, Manager, Community Planning provided a brief overview of Council's decision to move forward with a splashpad at Lions Sugar Bowl Park to replace the Kinsmen Pool. The splashpad will be inclusive for everyone. Bev F. noted that there would also not be a need for lifeguards and it will not require as much intensive maintenance. Signe advised that \$500,000 in funding was received through the government and Trillium funding for the universally accessible splash pad.

3) **Parks Development Updates, continued**

Signe advised that the total cost of the project is \$1.5 million to replace the pool and construct accessible washrooms in a new building. It was noted that the present changerooms cannot be accessed nor are they accessible. The IBI Group was retained to develop the project and Signe introduced Tim O'Brien and Stacey Willick. The project will take place in a number of phases and background studies and geotechnical and soil studies have also been completed to determine hazardous material in the pool and current building. Survey work has also been completed.

Public consultation with other stakeholders is currently taking place and the AAC recommended that FEIA, Our Lady of Victory and Peace Bridge School be including in the consultation. The Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee will be consulted next week and a public house is taking place on June 16, 2022 for in person feedback as well as a Let's Talk Fort Erie page to capture online submissions.

A report will be going forward to Council in July and the project will be tendered in August. Signe noted that the splashpad needs to be constructed by May 11, 2023 in order to meet funding requirements.

A presentation was provided to the Committee by Landscape Architects, Tim and Stacey, and four preliminary concepts were shared in order to obtain feedback on where the splashpad should be located in relation to the playground, which is also being replaced. Discussion took place regarding the location of the toboggan hill, which is well used and the AAC also questioned parking. Different types of shade structures were reviewed as was the different styles of accessible washrooms. Signe noted that Council has provided direction to consider accessible washrooms in other parks, which the AAC was very pleased to hear. Signe advised that the universally accessible washrooms will have two gender neutral stalls and there will be 1-2 adult change tables and a bench. Councillor Noyes asked that the washroom entrance have a concrete pad joined across both entrances to allow for a proper turning radius. The 6 themes for the splashpad were reviewed (1 – Under the Sea; 2- Beach; 3 – Niagara Wildlife; 4 – Garden; 5 – Pirates; and 6 - River Journey).

Dennis questioned if the same mulch will be used for the playground and Signe advised that a rubberized surface will be used so that the mulch does not get tracked into the splash pad area.

The AAC recommended the concept that is centrally located, increased connectivity through additional pathways, providing shade and taking into account the sun, the orientation of the washroom to improve surveillance from the street, and providing benches/seating.

The AAC thanked the IBI Group for their presentation.

Tim and Stacey left the meeting. The Chair was turned over to Dennis at 4:46 p.m.

4) **History Happened HERE**

Signe Hansen, Manager, Community Planning and Jane Davies, Manager, Museum and Cultural Services, provided an overview of the heritage signage program that was started last year. The signage program was approved by Council in 2021 and a pilot project will be implemented in late 2022 and early 2023. Ashley suggested a QR code on the signage that could link to a podcast to assist those with low vision. Councillor Noyes advised that she wanted the AAC to review the design as she feels that the blank space could be better used and the vertical text was difficult to read. Lori noted that the design would draw her to it and Adam, who has low vision, advised that the font was sufficient and he like the sign. The AAC recommended that if the font could be increased a bit it would be better. Keegan suggested the top of the post should be angled such that kids will not try and crawl on top of it.

Jane left the meeting.

5) **2022 Park Projects**

Signe advised that four playground replacements are scheduled for 2022:

- 1) Ridgeway Lions Park;
- 2) Bowen Road Park;
- 3) Lions Sugarbowl Park; and
- 4) Ferndale Park.

Dennis asked if the rubberized surface works well at the Sugarbowl Park, if it will be installed in other playgrounds? Signe advised that as playgrounds are replaced it will be considered.

6) **Friendship Trail Crossing Recommendations**

Signe advised that the recommendations will come forward at a future AAC meeting.

Signe left the meeting.

7) **Outstanding Matters**

- 1) Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee
No updates were provided.
- 2) Parking Concerns
No updates were provided.
- 3) Fort Erie Active Transportation Committee (FEAT)

Dennis advised that FEAT met with returning staff member, Chris Millar, and the Committee reviewed where they were at with Chris.

7) **Outstanding Matters**

4) Pool Lift – E.J. Freeland Centre

Bev advised that both Lori and herself presented at the April 27, 2022 Ridgeway Lions Club meeting and received confirmation from both the Ridgeway and Fort Erie Lions Club that they would be able to donate \$1,250.00 each towards the pool lift. At the May 30, 2022 Council-in-Committee meeting, Council approved the purchase of the pool lift. The Committee thanked Lori for all of her work on making this possible. Lori noted that the beach mats are a good example of an accessibility improvement that everyone uses and the pool lift will be similar. Lori thanked Bev for her assistance. The Purchase Order was placed this morning and Bev will advise when the installation takes place. A photo opportunity will take place with the AAC and both the Ridgeway Lions Club and the Fort Erie Lions Club as well as the Boys and Girls Club of Niagara.

7) **Site Plans**

1) The Mill, 2594 Dominion Road

Keegan presented the site plan for a greenhouse addition on the east side of the current building. The site plan shows accessible spaces in front and noted that everything is on one level. The new addition will also have some retail space and Councillor Noyes asked if there would be automatic doors installed. Keegan advised that while there is not a requirement but he will suggest automatic doors.

2) 244 Ridge Road North

Keegan presented the site plan for a three storey build that will have commercial on the first floor and apartments on the upper floors. The accessible parking space will be under a portion of the building with three other spaces. The remaining parking spaces will be outdoors. There is an elevator that goes to the roof top patio. There are accessible suites and 5 residential units on each floor. The plan also shows an amenity space on the flat roof.

3) 745 Crescent Road

Keegan presented the site plan for a 3-storey apartment building with 18 units to be built on the old water tower site. The drawings include a common room, staff room and scooter room as well as an elevator and accessible suites. There are two accessible parking spaces shown. Keegan will confirm the placement of the hatch marks, noting that Dennis' side loading van requires a flat surface, rather than the entire hatch marks being raised. Faith asked if the proposed building date is known and Keegan explained that it is in the planning process stage and could technically start this year. For a build of this size, Keegan noted that it could take 1 – 1.5 years.

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

No new updates.

9) **Other Matters**

1) E-mail Font for Town e-mails

Keegan raised this matter at a previous meeting, asking that the Town emails default to Arial 12 for all staff. Keegan and Bev met with Digital Services staff who explained that the receiving party sets the type of font that is preferred.

2) Proclamation of National Access Awareness Week

Since 2005, Council has affirmed its commitment to creating an accessible Town of Fort Erie by recognizing National Access Awareness Week (now known as National AccessAbility Week - NAAW). NAAW was established in 1988 in response to a request from Rick Hansen following his Man in Motion World Tour. Its aim is to bring together in a spirit of partnership, persons with disabilities, organizations who serve them, business, labour and governments to affect meaningful changes in the daily lives of persons with disabilities.

Council has been an avid supporter of the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) since its inception and continues to value the work of its members to raise awareness for persons with disabilities and create a welcoming and inclusive community.

A great deal of accessibility improvements have been made over the past 17 years in both the public and private sector, but we still have a lot of work to do! Due to timing this year, Council was requested at their meeting on April 25, 2022 to proclaim the following:

THAT: Municipal Council proclaim the week of May 29 – June 4, 2022, as “National AccessAbility Week” within the Town of Fort Erie.

3) Canadian Congress on Accessibility

The First Annual Canadian Congress on Accessibility, hosted by Employment and Social Development Canada, took place on May 26-27, 2022. Bev participated in some of the sessions. Faith advised that she attempted some of the sessions but kept getting thrown off. Faith advised that some of the sessions dealt with the struggles that schools have or are dealing with and the lack of product accessibility and funding struggles.

9)

Other Matters, continued

4) Enabling Ottawa Conference

Both Faith and Bev participated in the Enable Ottawa on-line Conference earlier today and there were some great sessions on adaptive technologies. Faith described some of the display boards used by children to communicate and stated that there needs to be a needs-based board. The recordings and presentations will be made available and can be shared once received.

5) Healthcare Standards Development Committee – Final Report and Recommendations

The initial Recommendations Report was posted between June and November, 2021. The final report and recommendations are now posted publicly by the Ontario Government. Links are available on the Standards Development Committee webpage or by using the following link:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/development-health-care-standards-final-recommendations-report-2022>

6) Election Inspections

The Election Assistant has reached out to see if AAC members would be available on Thursday, June 16 and Friday, June 17 in order to conduct inspections of three locations for the fall election. Bev had advised that the preference is that the inspections take place in the afternoon. Several members are interested in participating. Further details will be provided once times are confirmed.

7) Ready, Willing and Able

The Employment Outreach Coordinator for the Community Living program will be at the June Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting to provide details of their programming.

8) Generators in Not for Profit Buildings

Councillor Noyes advised that the Board of Fort Erie Not For Profit Housing recently purchased generators to ensure that elevators and lights would still work during power outages. Councillor Noyes described a previous 5 hour outage and residents that lived in the upper apartments that had to use the stairs in the dark. Councillor Noyes advised that we should be encouraging the installation of generators for any multi-storey apartment buildings.

10) **Date for Next Meeting**

The next AAC meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 28, 2022 at Town Hall - Conference Room #1 at 4:00 p.m. Councillor Noyes advised that she will not be able to attend the June 28 meeting.

11) **Adjournment**

Recommendation No. 2:

Moved by: Bev Ferris
Seconded by: Gary Kooistra

THAT: The May 31, 2022 meeting of the Fort Erie Accessibility Advisory Committee does now hereby adjourn at 6:09 p.m.

(CARRIED)

Minutes recorded and prepared by:

Minutes approved by:

Bev Bradnam, DPA, CMM III
Manager, Strategic Initiatives

Dennis Hernandez-Galeano
Chair