Accessibility Advisory Committee
August 29, 2013 – 2:00 PM

The Accessibility Advisory Committee met on the above date at the County Administration Building with the following members in attendance:

Present: Stan Arnelian, Jim Gow, Christina McDonald, and Councillor Dwight Burley

Regrets: Brooklyn Marx

Staff Present: Sharon Vokes, County Clerk; Ashleigh Weeden, Communications and Accessibility Coordinator; Tara Warder, Committee Coordinator; Patti Gardiner, Administrative Assistant and Kathie Nunno, Recording Secretary

Municipal Representatives:
Bill Klingenburg, Chief Building Officer, Georgian Bluffs; Don Tedford, Chief Building Officer, Hanover; Carol Watson, Clerk, Township of Southgate; Tracy McKenna, Human Resources Manager, The Blue Mountains; and Kevin Eccles, Mayor of West Grey

Others: Natalie McDonald

Call to Order

Ashleigh Weeden called the meeting to order at 2:21 PM.

Introductions

Ashleigh welcomed the group and introductions were made.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Ashleigh Weeden called for nominations for Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the remaining Council term.

AAC01-13 Moved by: Jim Gow Seconded by: Stan Arnelian
THAT Dwight Burley be nominated as Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the remaining Council term.

On motion by Stan Arnelian, nominations closed.

Mr. Burley accepted the nomination. Mr. Burley was acclaimed Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Ashleigh Weeden then called for nominations for Vice Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the remaining Council term.

AAC02-13 Moved by: Councillor Burley Seconded by: Jim Gow

THAT Stan Arnelian be nominated Vice Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the remaining Council term.

On motion by Councillor Burley, nominations closed.

Mr. Arnelian accepted the nomination. Mr. Arnelian was acclaimed Vice Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Mr. Burley then assumed the Chair.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None were declared. Chair Burley noted that a conflict may be declared at any time in the meeting.

Business Arising from the Minutes

Accessibility Advisory Committee minutes dated May 9, 2012

These minutes are for information only as they were adopted by Grey County Council on July 3, 2012.

Review of Mandate, Legislation and Intentions

Roles, Responsibilities and Requirements of the Committee and Members

Ashleigh Weeden addressed the committee, noting the areas of responsibility mandated by legislation and the goals and objectives of the committee.

Adopt the Terms of Reference

Ashleigh Weeden presented the Terms of Reference for consideration by the committee.
AAC03-13 Moved by: Stan Arnelian Seconded by: Christina McDonald

**THAT the Terms of Reference for the Accessibility Advisory Committee be adopted as presented.**

Carried

**Review Applicable Legislation**

Ashleigh Weeden reviewed the legislation to familiarize committee members with the aspects of the legislation that the committee is required to fulfill. Ms. Weeden noted that seven of the nine Grey County municipalities participate in the joint accessibility advisory committee. Ms. Weeden added that the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) has mandatory standards for accessibility that municipalities, public, and private institutions need to be in compliance with and timelines scheduled for the completion of various aspects. Municipal compliance with accessibility standards also falls under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA); however, the wording is less specific.

The Integrated Accessibilities Standard Regulation, Ontario Regulation 191/11 (IASR) sets the particular requirements for municipalities and the remainder of the Province. These are explicit and have particular compliance deadlines, with the objective that the Province of Ontario be fully accessible by 2025.

From a municipal perspective, documents on government websites must be accessible by January 1, 2014, backdated to January 1, 2012. For built environment such as trails, pathways, etc., the compliance date is 2016. The compliance dates for various aspects are staggered with the intention that by 2025, the Province has achieved total accessibility. The province is the first to be required to meet the deadlines followed by municipal government, and then the private sector.

Retrofitting may not be covered under the legislation, but there are opportunities where there is significantly redeveloped or new construction. There are new regulations coming into effect January 2014 (current is 2006). Mr. Tedford conducted an initial review of the new legislation and suggested that there does not appear to be a great deal of change from the 2006 legislation.

Insurance companies do not contribute to barrier-free reconstruction in reconstruction of a building lost to fire. This is an obstacle and could be an opportunity for this group to bring forward to the Province.

Grey County does not regulate transportation, license taxis or provide fee-for-service transportation; therefore, this committee is not addressing those concerns at this time. Note was made that fees for services provided to those with disabilities must not exceed fees for those same services provided to persons without disabilities.
Changes to older arenas were discussed. Mr. Klingenberg noted that some municipalities have passed motions that B-51 standards will be undertaken during maintenance and renovations of public areas. The Accessibility Advisory Committee, on June 15, 2006, resolved to adopt Accessible Design for the Built Environment Can CSA-B651-04 which was endorsed by Council on July 4, 2006.

The group asked about enforcement of regulations. It was suggested that external enforcement could potentially be governed by the Ministry of Labour. This committee reviews items that are coming forward that are significant Grey County accessibility concerns such as creating a new recreational trail or significant changes to a building or facility. Changes to on-street parking for a highway with significant structural change can also be brought to this committee for consideration. Grey County has a responsibility to consult with the general public.

Mr. Amelian noted that new businesses are challenged with the costs associated with making their facilities wheelchair accessible. There is potential lack of awareness in the private sector. There is opportunity for member municipalities to liaise with local chambers of commerce to share information and increase awareness.

Sharing information with the private sector was addressed. It was suggested that municipal chief building officials could share information during the application process. Downtown improvement area groups, business improvement organizations and chambers of commerce can also share information with the private sector. The importance of awareness was recognized. Ms. Weeden noted that the responsibility for accessibility has changed at the provincial level from being within the portfolio of the Ministry of Community and Social Services to the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment.

Business access for customers with mobility restrictions was mentioned, noting that 15.8% of the population has a disability and that there is a huge loss of potential revenue for a business that is not accessible. Ms. McDonald noted that businesses who have renovated for accessibility do not always share this information.

Ms. Weeden noted that members of this committee can share awareness and provided a link to an infographic that highlights the economic opportunities related to increased accessibility. The link for this infographic is: http://www.mcss.gov.on.ca/en/mcss/programs/accessibility/understanding_accessibility/index.aspx

Ms. McDonald wondered if there was a map or book that outlined availability of accessible trails or tourist destinations, noting that Sauble Beach works for wheelchairs because the sand is hard enough to drive a wheelchair on. The topic of what Grey County offers for accessible tourism was introduced.
There is an opportunity for the Grey Bruce visitor map to include a symbol to indicate accessible tourism locations. Ms. Weeden added that Grey County trails are being explored to outline levels of accessibility and to support appropriate signage.

Set Intentions for the Grey County Accessibility Advisory Committee

Ms. Weeden polled the group to see if there are any specific goals or objectives for this committee to achieve in this term of Council and perhaps beyond. Chair Burley noted that just the networking alone is a valuable outcome of this committee. Current areas of responsibility include the following five:

1. Development of accessibility policy
2. Multi-year plan
3. Design of public places and accessibility features
4. Materials going out to the public
5. County-wide resource sharing and awareness

Introduce Potential Reform to the Accessibility Advisory Committee Post 2014 Election

Opportunities to meet the accessibility requirements have been discussed at other groups. In order to have a joint accessibility advisory committee function as a fully joint committee, membership from across the county is encouraged. Discussion ensued regarding increasing membership of persons with disabilities and the challenges in recruiting members for this committee.

Ms. Weeden suggested that one possible way would be for municipalities to recruit their own members and added that the intent is not to exclude multiple members from one municipality, but rather to include all municipalities and that recruitment of members with disabilities is a challenge.

Note was made that urban centers are largely more accessible for persons with disabilities.

Grey County Accessibility Policy

Introduce Proposed/Draft Grey County Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

The current and draft Grey County accessibility policy and procedure were reviewed. Ms. Weeden expressed that review by all committee members will assist in establishing the baseline from which we can move forward. Ms. Weeden confirmed that each municipality needs to have its own accessibility plan and encouraged resource sharing.
Grey County Multi Year Accessibility Plan

Introduce Proposed/Draft Grey County Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

It was noted that the local municipal multi-year plans are required to be posted on the local municipalities' websites; whereas, historically, the annexes for each municipality had been forwarded to Grey County.

Ms. Weeden introduced the draft multi-year accessibility plan for 2013 – 2017, Working Toward an Accessible and Inclusive Grey County. This committee was requested to review the document with a view to amend and approve at the next meeting to enable endorsement by Grey County Council within the requirements of the legislation.

Provincial Reporting Requirement

Introduce Reporting Process, Questions and Reporting Requirements

Ms. Weeden noted the reporting requirements that need to be fulfilled by December 31, 2013. Ms. Weeden will present a summary report for approval at the September accessibility advisory committee meeting.

Other Business

Items for Clarification or Further Direction

There were none.

Review of Tasks Due at Next Meeting

Please read the documents provided and make note of comments. Please feel free to connect with Ashleigh in the interim. Ms. Weeden is hoping that the committee will feel comfortable supporting the policy and multi-year plan at the next meeting.

Next Meeting Dates

Tuesday, September 24, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. in the Seminar Room at the Grey County Administration Building

On motion by Christina McDonald, the meeting adjourned at 3:50 PM.

Dwight Burley, Chair