



## **REGION OF PEEL**

# ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)

## **MINUTES**

AAC-2009-6

The Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee met on June 23, 2009 at 1:35 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Region of Peel Administrative Headquarters, Suite A, 10 Peel Centre Drive, Brampton.

Members Present: H. Bajwa; G. Barnes; W. Goursky;

J. Hardman; N. Husain; E. Kolb\*;

S. McFadden<sup>+</sup>; M. Tymkow

Members Absent: S. Hames, due to other municipal business;

R. Paterak, due to other municipal business;

J. Spry

Also Present: N. Trim, Commissioner of Corporate Services

and Chief Financial Officer; J. Payne, Deputy Clerk and Acting Director of Clerk's; C. Reid, Director of Transition; J. Daly, Acting Manager, Regulatory Compliance; M. Sikand, Accessibility Planning Specialist; H. West, Legislative

Specialist; V. Montesdeoca, Committee Clerk

William Goursky, Chair, presided.

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

<sup>\*</sup> See text for arrivals

See text for departures

William Goursky, Chair of the Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. and welcomed everyone present.

William Goursky introduced Jane Clarkson, advocate for speech therapy as the new advisory member of the Committee and welcomed her to the Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee. Jane Clarkson will delegate to the August 25, 2009 AAC meeting.

## 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

# **RECOMMENDATION AAC-16-2009**:

That the minutes of the May 26, 2009 Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC-2009-5), be approved.

Naz Husain, Vice-Chair, Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee inquired if anyone attended the June 3, 2009 meeting hosted by the Peel Poverty Action Group (PPAG) to discuss the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

Harvinder Bajwa, Committee member, commented that she did attend the meeting. She advised that various issues and concerns were raised regarding the current ODSP process. She noted that a suggestion was provided by the PPAG to form a Committee that would review current practices and procedures and recommend changes to the current ODSP process.

William Goursky suggested that Edna Toth, Chair, PPAG be invited to a future AAC meeting to provide an update on ODSP. Meenu Sikand, Accessibility Planning Specialist, stated that she has received two documents from Edna Toth regarding a Hamilton peer-mentoring project. There is an interest by the PPAG in doing research on the services offered in Peel, in the area of service delivery for persons with disabilities. The PPAG would like to organize an ODSP peer-mentoring project in Peel and is requesting comments from the Region of Peel AAC. Meenu Sikand, with the assistance of various Regional departments will work on compiling the information to be provided to the PPAG.

## STAFF DIRECTION AAC-06-2009-1:

Meenu Sikand, Accessibility Planning Specialist, Region of Peel, provide the AAC members with information relating to the Peel Poverty Action Group meeting regarding the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and information on the proposed peer-mentoring project.

Regional Chair Kolb stated that a collaborative approach should be taken with the Provincial government so that any funding assistance will be based on determining the needs of the most vulnerable.

## 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

# **RECOMMENDATION AAC-17-2009:**

That the agenda for the June 23, 2009 Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting be approved.

#### 4. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

a. **Member Communication** – **Alert:** Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), dated May 15, 2009, Advising that AMO will Continue to Raise Concerns to the Minister of Community and Social Services regarding the Ability of Municipalities to Meet the Obligations of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA)

# Received

b. **Media Alert:** The Province of Ontario, dated June 12, 2009, Informing that Charles Beer has been Appointed to Conduct an Independent Review of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act* (AODA)

# Received

William Goursky questioned the rationale for the independent review of the AODA. He expressed concern that the review may alter the accessibility standards, threatening the democratic process.

Glenn Barnes, Committee member clarified that the review strategy was put in place to analyze processes carried out by the various standards development committees. He cited the example of the Transportation Standards Development Committee, noting that there was a division between the transit service providers and the group representing persons with disabilities. Glenn Barnes noted that the process may not have been consistent across the different standards committees and the different groups experienced varying challenges.

Naz Husain, Vice-Chair, Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee clarified that the process was a democratic one with the intent of strengthening the AODA. She noted that the development of the standards was very intense with not enough time alloted for review and therefore, process checks need to be carried out.

Meenu Sikand further pointed out that the review is required to ensure that the dates and deadlines set are realistic and that the Committees are on the right track. It is anticipated that the review process will be finalized by December 2009.

#### 5. PRESENTATIONS

a. William Goursky, Chair, Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee and Drew Goursky, Manager, Housing Initiatives, Providing an Update on the Provincial Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy Consultation Session

# <u>Received</u>

Drew Goursky, Manager, Housing Initiatives presented an overview of the current Provincial initiative to conduct and complete a long term affordable housing strategy for Ontario. He noted that public consultations have been set up throughout the Province, with a session scheduled in Brampton on Monday, June 29. Jim Watson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing will be in attendance at the

Brampton session. The purpose behind the strategy is to build upon initiatives which include:

- Poverty reduction strategy;
- Provincial and Municipal fiscal service delivery review

The purpose of the consultations is to get input and information from the community and those trying to access affordable housing. The meetings are scheduled for completion by September 2009 and written submissions should be completed by December 2009. Key areas of focus in the consultation process include:

- i. The role of each level of government in housing;
- ii. Changes for existing affordable housing and homelessness programs;
- iii. Changes required under the Social Housing Reform Act;
- iv. Suggestions for creative ideas and innovation (AAC to play vital role); and
- v. Suggestions for poverty indicators related to affordable housing.

Drew Goursky requested the assistance of the Committee to form a working group with Regional staff, to compile a consultation package for submission to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The intent is to provide an AAC submission which will illustrate the state of affordable housing in the Region of Peel.

Discussion occurred among Committee members as to the key messages that can be stressed in the submission. Some suggestions were:

- Improved rent-geared-to-income funding; and
- Ensuring that people stay in their current accommodation longer.

William Goursky stated that it is necessary to gather feedback and understand what the community requires regarding accessible affordable housing and how the needs are going to be met.

The following members volunteered to participate on the working group: Glenn Barnes, Naz Husain and Maureen Tymkow.

Regional Chair Kolb departed at 2:15 p.m.

b. **Meenu Sikand, Accessibility Planning Specialist, Region of Peel,** Providing Information on the Upcoming 2009 International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) Event

## Received

Meenu Sikand, Accessibility Planning Specialist, Region of Peel, advised that planning is under way for the 2009 International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) event to be held on December 2, 2009. The theme for this year will be titled, "Diverse and Positive Images of Disabilities". The day will consist of keynote speakers, panel and community consultations. Meenu Sikand noted that David Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario has formally been requested to participate as the keynote speaker. She indicated that a Planning Committee will coordinate the event and requested volunteers from the AAC to participate.

Glenn Barnes commented that the event is an opportunity to engage the community regarding disability since it impacts everyone, not just the individual living with the disability.

The following members volunteered to be on the IDPD planning committee: Harvinder Bajwa, Glenn Barnes, William Goursky, Jim Hardman, and Naz Husain.

Glenn Barnes inquired why the Joint Municipal AAC meetings were no longer taking place and stated that the IDPD event would be an ideal forum for the municipalities to share information.

# STAFF DIRECTION AAC-06-2009-2:

John Daly, Acting Manager, Regulatory Compliance, undertook to follow up with the municipal counterparts to try to reinstate the Joint Municipal AAC meetings.

Councillor McFadden departed at 2:40 p.m.

## 6. REPORTS

# a. Monthly Activity Report - June 2009 (Oral)

Update by Meenu Sikand, Accessibility Planning Specialist, Region of Peel

## Received

Meenu Sikand, provided an update on the activities completed by the Accessibility Planning Program during the last month. Some of the highlights include:

- National Access Awareness Week Staff event at 10 Peel Centre Drive; very successful; good turn-out; message well received.
- Provincial AAC Forum "Making Accessibility Happen" guide launched; good feedback from Accessibility Directorate of Ontario; valuable information for AAC members and Chairs.
- Emergency Preparedness Roundtable Municipalities, service organizations and emergency preparedness stakeholders discussed emergency preparedness of communities regarding persons with disabilities.
- Presentation by Region of Peel staff at the Ministry of Children and Youth Services staff day – presentation well received; positive feedback; Peel recognized as leader in accessibility.

# b. Employment Accessibility Standards Development Committee Update (Oral)

Update by Naz Husain, Vice-Chair, Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

# Received

Naz Husain indicated that the Employment Accessibility Standard Committee will be meeting the week of June 22, 2009 upon the closure of the public review period. A review of the comments will be finalized and the standard will receive a final vote in August, 2009.

# c. Accessible Transportation Standards Development Committee (Oral)

Update by Glenn Barnes, Member, Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee

## Received

Glenn Barnes noted that he will be attending a forum hosted by the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) regarding barriers passengers with disabilities face using TTC services. He anticipates attendance from members of the Accessible Transportation Standard Development Committee who may have further information on the status of the Transportation Standard. Glenn Barnes will communicate any new information at the next AAC meeting.

## 7. OTHER BUSINESS

William Goursky informed members of the AAC of his appointment to the Canadians with Disabilities Ontario Board of Directors. He encouraged members to participate in the webinar series via the Internet, where various topics related to disabilities in Ontario will be discussed.

## 8. NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, August 25, 2009
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, 5<sup>th</sup> floor
Regional Administrative Headquarters
10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A
Brampton, Ontario

## 9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:01 p.m.