

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda - AMENDED

September 21, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

Windsor Community Centre / Hants Aquatic Centre, Windsor, NS

Agenda is subject to changes up to and including during the meeting

This meeting is open to the public. It will not be livestreamed on Facebook



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1. Pre-Meeting Facility Walk-Through / Audit
 - a) Windsor Community Centre, 78 Thomas Street
 - b) Hants Aquatic Centre, 306 Stannus Street
 - c) Open discussion

 2. Call to Order (at the Hants Aquatic Centre)

 3. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions

 4. Announcements

 5. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – June 29, 2023

 6. New Business
 - a) Terms of Reference Review
 - b) Review of Community Development Equipment Promotion Video**
 - c) Provincial Built Environment Accessibility Standard Package (Draft)
 - i. Review draft package and develop feedback for the province
 - ~~d) Active Living Strategy Partner Engagement Deferred to the next meeting~~

 7. Next Meeting Date / Meeting Adjournment

Social Time!

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2023, 6:00 p.m.
Windsor Community Centre / Hants Aquatic Centre, Windsor,
NS

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Present

Michel Bourgeois, Resident Member	Jennifer Davison, Resident Member
Kelly Ann Jobson, Resident Member	Roseanna Boyd, Resident Member
Bob Morton, Councillor, District 6	Kevin Waters, Active Living Coordinator
Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk	Jordan Stephens, Resident Member
Troy Burgess, Public Works Operations Manager	Carmen Dewar-Miller, Admin Assistant
	Denise Long, Resident Member

1. Pre-Meeting Facility Walk-Through / Audit 6:00 p.m.
Committee members met in front of the Windsor Community Centre for a walk-through of this facility and also the Hants Aquatic Centre. (To note: the Community Centre basement is now an active construction site and was not included as part of the tour.)

- a) Windsor Community Centre, 78 Thomas Street

Outside ramp entrance to basement:

- Location of the ramp is a deterrent. Not welcoming. No signage. Poor lighting. Narrow, tight, sharp turn halfway down the ramp.
- The only accessible entrance to the lower level.
- Steep grade.
- Community Centre built in the 1940's – a different standard.
- Railing unsecured (rusted out) in spots and the paint is flaking.
- Tree branches hanging directly over the ramp. Falling leaves and low branches create obstacles. The tree blocks lighting.
- No automatic door opener, uneven concrete, drain at bottom of ramp, difficult to open and maneuver through the door within space provided.
- Resident Member Stephens mentioned that he finds older buildings “hard” to navigate, but his frustration comes more with new buildings where there are so many little things that would make a huge difference, missed or overlooked.

Accessible parking for the Community Centre on Gerrish St.:

- Located in front of the ramp entrance to the main level.
- Accessible parking signage was laying on the ground.

- With new regulations / standards, is it possible that the driveway next to the Community Centre’s driveway might be used for accessible parking?

Main ramp into Community Centre:

- Located away from the front entrance on the side of the building. This is not inclusive.
- Wooden railing is shaky, rough surface (splinters).
- Resident Member Stephens needed to exert some effort to wheel to the top of this ramp, and he is a strong, younger person. Many would struggle with the grade of the ramp.
- Automatic door opening was in place and working.

Gym area:

- There is only one accessible exit
- No accessible access to the stage.
- Emergency exits in this area appear unsafe. Back railing missing middle guards, stairs have no anti-slip and are steep and poorly lit. The landing is not big enough, crumbling concrete.
- Door swings in front of stairs. No kickplate.
- Poor signage, equipment blocking door.
- Acoustics in the gym are not great.

Food service counter / kitchen area:

- The food service counter servicing the gym space is not low enough / does not have a lower counter section.
- Entrance from gym to kitchen is narrow. Resident Member Stephens got through but someone in a wider, motorized chair would have difficulty.
- Counter and island space in the kitchen is not low enough, not accessible.
- The exit stairway from the kitchen to outside was somewhat better than the exit stairway from the stage but not an accessible exit.
- Can’t get a wheelchair under the sink or stove - a case of having to “parallel park”.
- “Kitchens are hard.”

Exit from kitchen to front lobby:

- Stairway to the lower level of the building is right there, very steep, no deterrent, warning device or barrier.
- Railing around the stairway is wobbly.
- One suggestion – tactile indicator strips in front of stairway.

Main lobby bathrooms:

- Need more visible signage outside of the bathrooms. Blade signage would work well.
- Ladies' room – sink should be lower, soap dispenser not readily accessible.
- Drainpipe should be positioned sideways, not sticking out the front.
- Accessible stall needs more bars.
- Paper towel dispenser should be lowered.
- Garbage can placed in front of it. This should be moved.
- The door latches are not accessible - should be able to open door with a closed hand.
- No tactile signage.
- Make kickplate lower.
- Could add lights outside each stall to indicate whether in use or not.
- Men's room – garbage can in front of paper towel dispenser.
- Soap too far from usable sink. Have to manually turn on taps, no motion sensor.
- Needle disposal placed too high.
- Wall tiles should be centered above urinal – use grout lines as visual guides.
- Same bar situation as ladies'.
- Stalls seem small.
- Toilet paper dispenser very far from toilet – cannot reach.

Staff Offices:

- Lobby office was cluttered
- Resident Member Stephens can get into the room in his chair.
- Desk not well-positioned.
- Can't reach first aid / AED device.
- A bench inhibiting access to the AED.
- Staff Member Waters' office was a little better for maneuvering.
- Seating area outside of these offices prohibits access to a couple of doors (closets).

Visitors Information Centre (VIC):

- Open, bright accessible space.
- May require a few simple design changes to improve.
- Wide exit to outside ramp, automatic door opener works.
- No auto door opener on the inner door.

At this point the group made their way across the street to the Hants Aquatic Centre.

b) Hants Aquatic Centre, 306 Stannus Street

Walkway and entrance to Aquatic Centre:

- During the walk over to the pool, it was noted that there was too much of a curb for a wheelchair to access the concrete stone path to the facility.
- There was grass growing between the unevenly placed stones. Debris on the walkway.
- There was a ramp to the front entrance, navigable and inclusive.
- There was quite a lip on the front entrance to the pool building, challenging to wheel or step over.

Pool Deck:

- Uneven surfaces on the pool deck – small but awkward transitions from different levels.
- No accessible picnic tables on the pool deck (middle access tables preferred, more inclusive).
- There was a hippocamp on site. Staff Member Waters brought it out to the pool deck for committee members to see.
- The ramp from changing rooms to pool deck could be safer. Add side rails or bumpers, add grippers.

Washrooms / change rooms

- Accessible thresholds are an issue here, too high.
- No latch on bathroom in the changing rooms.
- Garbage can in the stall should be moved.
- Toilet paper dispenser needs to be moved closer.
- More bars should be added in the shower, move the showerhead, possibly include a handheld nozzle.
- There are no hooks in the shower stall.
- There was a lowered sink and cantilevered mirror.
- Soap and paper towel dispenser should both be moved to be more accessible.
- There was a garbage bin placed directly in front of the paper towel dispenser.

- Grab bars should be added at the urinals and there were no bars in the accessible washroom.

Main room of Aquatic Centre:

- Accessibility issue with AED and first aid kit in main area of the centre.
- Centre itself is a large open space, although cluttered (off season).

2. Call to Order (at the Hants Aquatic Centre) – Chair, Councillor B. Morton called the meeting to order at 7:12pm
3. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions
Staff Member Waters requested an amendment to the agenda to add one item – Review of a draft video created by staff to promote new accessible exercise equipment at the Sports Complex. He would like the committee to provide feedback. **This item was added to section 6. New Business, as 6. b).**
Moved by Resident Members Long and Bourgeois that the AMENDED agenda be approved.
Motion Carried.
4. Announcements – Councillor B. Morton acknowledged that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and that this land is governed by the Treaties of Peace and Friendship signed in 1726. West Hants Regional Municipality also recognizes that we are all treaty people and have responsibilities to this land and each other.
5. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – June 29, 2023
Moved by Resident Members Bourgeois and Long that the June 29, 2023, meeting minutes be approved.
Motion Carried.
6. New Business
 - a) Terms of Reference Review (Staff Member Waters)
Staff Member Waters wanted to discuss the committee's Terms of Reference after a new member of the community expressed interest in joining. Staff Member Waters posed the following questions:
 - Who are our Resident Members?
 - How long are their terms?
 - Why are terms so long?

Staff Member Snair advised that current Resident Members are still in their term. Could we look at one and two-year terms for resident members? Staff Member Waters is thinking of individuals who may have recently acquired a disability. Per Staff Member Snair, the committee can amend the TOR, but it has to go to Council in a recommendation report for approval. The TOR can be revisited every January. The following points were raised:

- A one-year term may be too short.
- Always submit something, we shouldn't exclude.
- **Encourage the public to attend meetings.**
- You can amend based on agreed-upon changes. They would be incorporated in January. Good to get this in play now.
- Long period for someone not to have their voice heard.
- When this committee was being formed, they had a challenge to get enough resident members.
- Craig Mac (Craig MacDonald) is a new community member who would like to participate.
- Some committees have put in place that members can apply for three consecutive terms.
- Our community has grown over the last few years. It would be beneficial to have new members.
- An amended Meeting and Procedural Policy is going to Council in January.
- We can only benefit from more perspective.
- Could we word it minimum to maximum? Or include two or three non-voting members?
- Typically they like to go with odd numbers for committee makeup to prevent voting ties.
- Whatever the consensus, we can bring to Council.
- Staff Member Snair will take this discussion into consideration and send out a draft amended TOR to Committee Members for review.

Councillor B. Morton called for a motion to amend the Terms of Reference to add a minimum and maximum number of Resident Members.

Moved by Resident Members Davison and Long.

Motion carried.

Staff Member Snair noted that there could be a meshing of the Accessibility and Diversity and Inclusion committees at some point.

b) New Adaptive Equipment Video from the Community Development Department.

Staff Member Waters presented a video created to promote new workout equipment installed at the Sports Complex walking track. The equipment is accessible and can be used by everyone. Staff Member Waters was filmed as a placeholder, demonstrating use of the equipment from a wheelchair. He wanted to ensure this was acceptable.

There was committee consensus that this is a good video. One suggestion was to change where the bar should be returned on the equipment once a user is finished. Tape or paint could be used to indicate the return position.

It was discussed and determined that someone who used a wheelchair in real life should be filmed demonstrating the equipment. Resident Member Stephens agreed to take part in a reshoot. This video was a great idea. More of this type of promotion needs to be utilized so that people know what's available

c) Provincial Built Environment Accessibility Standard Package (Draft)

Staff Member Waters wanted to review the draft package and develop feedback from the committee to be forwarded to the province. Most members have skimmed through the document. Tonight the focus will be on pages 1-22. Logistics and spaces. Staff Member Waters requested that committee members read the remaining pages at home and send him their feedback. He will forward all notes to the province on the committee's behalf.

Regulations: Scope & Application

General

- These changes need to be in place by 2030. There is continued conversation regarding this target.
- This report is too urban based. For rural communities, it is much more challenging.
- Staff Member Waters would like to see some kind of rural "boost".
- It was noted that the federal government has their own set of regulations.

Site Selections

Accessible Entrance Illumination

- Lighting was discussed in detail during the facility tours (the ramp to the basement entrance at the Community Centre would not pass).
- The question was raised as to whether any of our facilities meet the illumination requirements.
- Highly doubtful that the Community Centre, Aquatic Centre or work site at 76 Morison Drive would. The Sports Complex, having been recently constructed, should meet the requirements.
- Resident Member Long asked if there was any word on a sidewalk from New Boundaries to the Sports Complex? Her clients are limited as to where they can walk.
- There has been lots of discussion, but it is not in this year's budget.
- Staff Member Snair advised that there is a recommendation report to come to Council with an estimate (Class D). For Kings Meadows too. On the dashboard.
- What side would sidewalk be on, where would it be and what is the right way to do it?
- Will it be in time for consideration in next year's budget?

Accessible Entrances

Exterior Stairs, not associated with a building

- No tread surface finishes at the Community Centre.
- A lot of that, we don't meet those regulations. Does this fit?
- There should be a closed in area on railings. The document does not mention that. Vertical coverage.

Parking areas not associated with a building

- Any other spaces that would exceed?
- Possibly at the Sports Complex.
- Need to make room for the truck lifts
- Are Community Centre parallel spots long enough?
- Interesting that they give an either/or choice on symbols of accessibility
- Going back to the Community Centre, the accessible parking spaces out front may not be considered barrier-free.

Maintenance of Parking Areas

- Per Staff Member Burgess, we do not have a formal plan.

On-Street Parking

- Sidewalks are in the municipal specs already.

Temporary Sidewalks

Objects in Path of Travel

- Do we have a signage by-law?
- Yes.
- Does it reflect this?
- Planning document that says you can't use sandwich boards
- New flowerpots have been placed with this in mind, good to see.

Pedestrian Signals

Snow and Ice Control

- Presented to Council, on Facebook
- Province is separate
- Might be useful to put something on the website
- Ours might not fit that regulation.
- What is a pedestrian facility?
- Pedestrian facilities means sidewalks, crosswalks, and paths of travel (Gov. of NS definition)

Emergency Evacuation Plan

Placement of Defibrillators

Lockers

- Sports Complex has lockers on the upper level
- The defibrillator at 1200mm is too high (can they look at lowering the maximum?)
- "Must have accessible lockers" – reading this, lockers must be added. Resident Member Stephens thinks it's not enough lockers.
- Why not make all lockers accessible? That should be the norm.

Pools

- We don't have visual contour, tactile warnings, or accessible entry.

Outdoor Public Eating Areas

- Staff Member Waters believes tables should be mounted. When they get moved, they may no longer be accessible.

Benches

Development of a Plan for Accessible Outdoor Spaces

- Do we even have 10 play spaces?

- Clarification required on government development.
- What qualifies as a geographic region?

Campgrounds

Outdoor Play Spaces

Outdoor Classrooms

- Any final notes?
- The question was raised as to whether this document included specifications for washrooms.

d) Active Living Strategy Partner Engagement

Due to time constraints, Staff Member Waters will send the information related to this agenda item out to committee members in an email.

7. Next Meeting Date / Meeting Adjournment

Staff Member Snair mentioned that meeting frequency can be written into the Terms of Reference.

The third Thursday of every second month works for committee members. The next meeting will take place on November 23 in Council Chambers.

Moved by Resident Members Boyd and Stephens that the meeting be adjourned.

Motion Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24pm

Social Time!

X

Committee Chair