

## HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

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### ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 17, 2007

PRESENT: Mr. Alan Farquhar, Chair  
Mr. Gary Russell  
Ms. Rebecca King  
Ms. Helen McFadyen  
Ms. Mary Newcombe  
Ms. Helen Cianfaglione  
Ms. Sanaz Gerami  
Councillor Gary Meade  
Councillor Patrick Murphy

REGRETS: Mr. Kevin Bulley

STAFF: Superintendent Cliff Falkenham, HRP  
Mr. Laughie Rutt, Diversity Consultant  
Ms. Phil Townsend, Manager, Capital Projects  
Ms. Pam Morrison, Project Manager, Special Delivery  
Mr. Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Developments  
Mr. Jim Donovan, Manager, Permits & Inspections  
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Legislative Assistant  
Ms. Melody Campbell, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. in Halifax Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall.

**2. INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair asked members of the committee to announce their presence for the benefit of visually impaired members.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**MOVED by Councillor Meade, seconded by Mr. Russell, that the minutes from July 16, 2007 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**4. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

**Addition:**

9.1 Metro Transit Signage

**Deferred:**

7.1 Presentation by the Society of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Nova Scotians will be deferred to either the October or November meeting.

**MOVED by Ms. Newcombe, seconded by Ms. Gerami, that the Order of Business, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**5. REPORTS**

**5.1 Accessible Development (Private and HRM) - Inclusion of Accessibility**

Mr. Dunphy, Director of Community Development, suggested that many of the issues brought forward with accessibility in shopping centres and larger developments such as Bayers Lake is more in line with building codes, not development agreements. Discussion ensued in regard to disabled persons access at Bayers Lake, and the difficulty in accessing businesses from the bus stops. Generally any movement throughout the park is very difficult.

Mr. Russell discussed the lack of platforms at bus stops for wheel chair accessibility. Mr. Dunphy informed the Committee that this would fall under the jurisdiction of Transportation and Public Works.

Mr. Russell raised concerns about the West End Mall and the inability of the Access-A-Bus to reach some entrances of the mall. Passengers have to be dropped off in front of the Winners area and travel down to the Access Nova Scotia entrance. There are seven-foot high steel barriers that impede entrance by larger vehicles. If there were an emergency, it also could be an issue. Councillor Murphy questioned under which jurisdiction this would fall, HRM or private property owners. Mr. Dunphy stated that this would be under the HRM Fire Services Operational issue, the barriers would have been approved by Fire Services.

Councillor Meade questioned staff as to the status of the provincial regulation that approved 5% of all new building units be wheelchair accessible. Mr. Donovan replied that new developments took some time to go through the approval process and are now being built.

**MOVED by Councillor Meade, seconded by Ms. Newcombe that staff provide a report and review of the process to look at access and barrier free access when leasing property. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Councillor Meade, seconded by Ms. McFadyen that staff provide recommendations on development standards for business parks with connectivity between the streets, sidewalks and buildings. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Councillor Meade, seconded by Ms. Newcombe that staff provide recommendations to the Provincial Government to fill the legislative gaps for private developments in regard to accessibility and compliance with barrier free access. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

## **5.2 Accessibility Audit - Phillip Townsend & Pam Morrison**

Phillip Townsend, Manager of Capital Projects, discussed the ongoing projects which will assist with the initiatives of the Committee to provide information to the public on accessible sites. Mr. Townsend and Laughie Rutt have been meeting and doing some research into various aspects of accessibility audits. Mr. Townsend advised that his department is responsible for HRM-owned infrastructure. It was suggested that if information was required for buildings and infrastructure that is privately owned, members of the Committee should meet with various stakeholders, such as hospitality, health and entertainment to gather information on their sites. Accessibility information could be conducted on HRM-owned property by various methods, such as data gathering by staff. This could be accomplished by a checklist, which could be filled out by staff members in various buildings and areas of responsibility. The checklists could be recorded and become part of the Asset Management Project. Information could be made available to the public, possibly on the HRM website. First consideration could be given to high traffic areas, such as Recreation Centres. Mr. Townsend and Ms. Morrison will require the Committee to provide recommendations as to the type and amount of data that will be required.

Ms. MacFadyen suggested a sub-committee to determine the type and amount of data required. The checklist of components could possibly comprise of up to twenty points that could be added to the database. Ms. McFadyen and Ms. King volunteered their services with Mr Russell preparing reports. The report will be submitted to the Committee, which will

be forwarded to Mr. Townsend. The data list will be prepared for the October meeting. Councillor Meade discussed the need to have this project initiated in order to have accessibility identified for the budget process.

### **5.3 Cultural Advisory Committee - Gary Russell**

Mr. Russell advised of his role in the Cultural Advisory Committee. He expressed concern that accessibility issues are not discussed and meetings are being held in various HRM offices making it difficult as a committee member with a disability. He received clarification as to the process of if he wished to resign as a member of the Committee.

## **6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS**

### **6.1 Set a date for the Wheelchair Simulation Event**

Mr. Rutt stated that all materials are in place. A date is yet to be determined. Once a date is set, notification will be sent out to all members of the Committee by email. Mr. Rutt advised that all persons taking part in the simulation will be requested to sign a waiver for insurance purposes.

## **7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS**

### **7.1 Society for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Nova Scotia - Presentation**

Presentation will be held on a later date in the fall.

## **8. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - NONE**

## **9. ADDED ITEMS**

### **9.1 Metro Transit Signage**

Helen McFadyen advised new Metro Transit scheduling signs are placed too low on poles and could cause injury to blind persons who walk into them. Some of the scheduling signs are placed as low as 5.2 feet above ground. A report was made to 490-4000 on Sunday, September 16<sup>th</sup> regarding a low sign at the Mumford Terminal. A notification will be sent to Metro Transit advising of the concerns.

### **9.2 Accessible Trails**

Mr. Paul Euloth, Regional Trail Coordinator, will be attending the meeting scheduled for October 15<sup>th</sup> to offer a presentation regarding Accessible Trails throughout the Halifax Regional Municipality.

## **10. NEXT MEETING DATE**

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES 6 Sept. 17, 2007**

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The next meeting of the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities will be October 15, 2007 from 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, City Hall.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Melody Campbell  
Legislative Assistant