



## **Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, January 13, 2022**

**5:00 PM**

**Online Attendance Only**

Committee Members: Christine Easterbrook, Chair  
Debbie Alexander  
Rachel Jewell  
Diana Kirkbride  
Gord Queen, Vice Chair

Absent: Brad Frenette  
Stephanie Olewski

Administration: Katherine Hebert, Deputy Clerk  
Crystal Sylvestre, Administrative Assistant,  
Legislative and Community Services

### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:12 PM.

### **2. Election of a Chair and Vice Chair**

The Deputy Clerk called for nominations for the role of Chair.

Rachel Jewell nominated Christine Easterbrook for the position of Chair. There were no other nominations for the role of Chair. Ms. Easterbrook agreed to stand.

The Deputy Clerk called for nominations for the role of Vice Chair.

Debbie Alexander nominated Gord Queen for the position of Chair. There were no other nominations for the role of Vice Chair. Mr. Queen agreed to stand.

**Moved By** Rachel Jewell

**Seconded By** Debbie Alexander

That the ECAAC approve Christine Easterbrook as Chair and Gord Queen as Vice-Chair of the committee for the year 2022.

**Carried**

**3. Land Acknowledgement Statement**

We begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomie Peoples.

To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude to those whose territory you reside on, and a way of honouring the Indigenous people who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial.

We value the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all the Original Peoples of Turtle Island.

**4. Recording of Attendance**

All members were in attendance virtually, with the exception of Stephanie Olewski and Brad Frenette who sent their regrets.

**5. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no conflicts of pecuniary interest declared.

**6. Adoption of the Minutes**

**Moved By** Debbie Alexander

**Seconded By** Diana Kirkbride

That the minutes of the December 9, 2021 meeting of the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee be adopted as presented.

**Carried**

**6.1. Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of the December 9, 2021 ECAAC Meeting.

**7. Delegations and Presentations**

**7.1. Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA)**

Kevin Money, Director, Conservation Services, Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) provided the Committee with an update regarding planned and completed projects on ERCA properties that have or will increase accessibility. He summarized as follows:

**Holiday Beach Conservation Area**

Enbridge Gas grant funding provided a nature-based playground at the Holiday Beach Conservation Area. The theme associated with the playground incorporated natural building products rather than manufactured building products. If funding becomes available, ERCA would like to consult with the Committee regarding accessible additions to the playground.

Mr. Money also explained that special funding had been obtained to make updates to the viewing tower and trails at this location. It had been identified that the handrails of the tower were not graspable and a design firm was working to improve the accessibility of this tower. Trail improvements include resurfacing and widening to improve accessibility.

### **Greenway Entrances**

The McGregor Community entrance at Walker Road was rebuilt to include seating, shade structures, and a community garden. Parking lot improvements were completed and gravel pathways from parking lot to trail were added.

The Harrow Community entrance also received improvements including a cement path. New signage was being designed and Mr. Money indicated he would be seeking the advice of the Committee on the final design. Through a partnership with the Town of Essex, the Harrow Crossing received curb cuts and a pedestrian crossing at this trail intersection.

Plans for a new Cypher Systems Greenway Community entrance on County Road 15, in the Town of Essex include accessible parking spots, and if funding allows, tar and chip surfacing will be installed on the remainder of the site.

### **John R Park Homestead**

Service Canada funding was received to address accessibility issues at this historic location. New accessible parking spots were installed at the Heritage Centre and the 2022 budget included a capital project to complete the tar and chip lot. A ramp was installed in rear of building and plans were being considered to install limestone paths between the buildings to replace grassed surfaces.

Mr. Money shared an update on the New Essex Tourism Hub Building at John R Park Homestead that was previously discussed with this Committee. A provision was made in the design plans for a lift to second floor. ERCA was seeking funding

opportunities to complete this portion of the project as soon as possible.

### **New Bench Program**

Through the support of the ECAAC, two benches were purchased in 2021. Discussion included prospective locations to install the benches. Suggested sites included the stretch of trail between Sadler's Pond and Highway 3 and between Walker Road and Middle Side Road in the Town of Essex. Mr. Money agreed to review the locations and share a mockup of the locations in the Spring when the weather was appropriate for the installation.

Discussions also included posting information received through WE Check the Trails feedback and other amenities on the interactive mapping online. Mr. Money explained that information hubs at the Community access points were also being planned.

**Moved By** Debbie Alexander

**Seconded By** Diana Kirkbride

**Carried**

## **8. Communications**

**Moved By** Debbie Alexander

**Seconded By** Diana Kirkbride

That the items listed under item 8. Communications, for January 13, 2022, be received and any noted action taken.

**Carried**

### **8.1. Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC)**

[OHRC letter to Ontario government ministers on the online health card renewal service](#)

Discussion took place regarding the accessibility of Ontario Health Card online renewals. The committee agreed this is a global issue that should be communicated on the County Council agenda as well.

### **8.2. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**

Latest [News and Resources Online](#)

### **8.3. AODA Alliance**

Latest [News and Updates Online](#)

This edition includes the AODA year end report.

#### **8.4. Statistics Canada**

[Pilot Study on Everyday Well-Being - Your Participation is Important](#) - survey closes March 31, 2022

The goal of collecting and analyzing this real-time, self-reported data is to gain a better understanding of the factors, particularly the impact of arts and cultural activities, that can influence the day-to-day changes in emotional moods and mental states of participants, especially at a time when COVID-19 has had an impact on the physical and emotional well-being of so many Canadians.

#### **8.5. Community Living Ontario**

Latest News - [Community Living Ontario](#)

#### **8.6. Inclusion Canada**

[News Feed Online](#)

#### **8.7. CBC News**

December 26, 2021 - [Canadian company builds a better box of chocolates using braille](#)

#### **8.8. Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)**

[Latest News Online](#)

#### **8.9. Canadian Hearing Services**

[Online Webinars and Virtual Events](#)

#### **8.10. The Hill Times**

January 10, 2022 - [Canadians with disabilities 'left behind' say advocates after Ottawa spends \\$797-million in targeted COVID support](#)

#### **8.11. CBC News**

January 10, 2022 - [N.S. government to top court: housing choice for people with disabilities not a right](#)

#### **8.12. CBC News - London**

January 10, 2022 - [People with disabilities can 'have a personal life' too, says London, Ont., man looking for love](#)

## **9. Unfinished Business**

### **9.1. 2022 Activities for ECAAC**

Review of options for the ECAAC to consider for action in 2022. (December 9, 2021 ECAAC Minutes) Looking ahead at the timelines.

The Committee discussed their goals for 2022 and developed a timeline.

#### **February 2022**

- Host a Joint Meeting of the local AAC Chairs and Vice Chairs to determine possible partnership opportunities in the coming year.
- Discuss an Accessibility Flag Design with other local Accessibility Committees. If supported, the goal for completion would be AccessAbility Week in June 2022.
- 2018-2022 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) review and preliminary update by Committee.
- Research opportunities to host a Speaker(s) and/or Workshop

#### **March 2022**

- Continue to promote WE Check the Trails Consultation with CWATS and Local bodies including local AAC's and/or Municipal Staff.
- Invite CWATS to March ECAAC meeting to prepare for WE Check the Trails 2022. Invite local AAC's to participate in the opportunity to meet with CWATS.

#### **April 2022**

- MYAP Public Consultation Period Opens

#### **May 2022**

- AccessAbility Week is May 29 - June 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Visit John R Park Homestead with ERCA to offer feedback to facilities with Kevin Money. Gather information to highlight improvements made to the property to benefit accessibility.
- Delegation to County Council could be May 18 or June 1.

#### **June 2022**

- Red Shirt Day is June 1.

- Potential Guest Speaker (Between June-August)
- Accessibility Walk to promote WE Check the Trails.

### **July 2022**

- MYAP Review and Draft by ECAAC.

### **August 2022**

- MYAP Review and Draft by ECAAC (if needed)

### **September 2022**

- Advertising released for committee members to submit applications for membership toward the end of the month for the next term of Council.
- September 9, 2022: Final MYAP adopted by ECAAC and noted in the minutes in order to be adopted in the October 2022 minutes. Report to County Council following on October 19, 2022.

### **October 2022**

- Final Meeting of ECAAC – October 13
- Final Meeting of Essex County Council – October 19, 2022. ECAAC members to attend

### **November 2022**

- First meeting of County Council new term: November 23, 2022

### **December 2022**

- County of Essex Striking Committee meets by the first week of December to appoint members to board and committees for the coming term of council.

## **10. Reports from Administration**

There were no reports from Administration to discuss at the January 13, 2022 meeting.

## **11. New Business**

### **11.1 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the County of Essex**

Review of the County's [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2018-2022](#)

Discussion included reviewing the existing plan in order to prepare for update.

**11.2 Joint Meeting of the Local AAC Chairs and Vice-Chairs**

County Administration will reach out to the local AAC Coordinators to determine whether there is a desire to participate or host a Joint Chairs meeting this spring.

**12. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting of the ECAAC was scheduled to take place on February 10, 2022, at 5:00PM.

**13. Adjournment**

**Moved By** Christine Easterbrook

**Seconded By** Diana Kirkbride

That the January 13, 2022 meeting of the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee be adjourned at 6:05 PM.

**Carried**