Present: Sandi Bell, Darlene Burkett, Pat Cameron, Fran Chesney, Sharon Derkach, Bob Helwig, Brian Lane, Aznive Mallett, Dr. Tomas Manzuk, Kim Nolan, Tim Nolan, Robert Semkow, Mary Smithson, Marlene Thomas, Terri Wallis

Regrets: Roger-Wayne Cameron, Deborah Eker, Elizabeth Wagner

Also Present: Councillor Bernie Morelli, Drina Omazic, Mayor’s Office, Jane Lee, Maxine Carter, Customer Service, Access & Equity Division, Corporate Services, Irene Sturgeon, Mary-Ann Meyer, City Clerk’s Office

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

Chair Nolan introduced Councillor Bernie Morelli, Drina Omazic from the Mayor’s Office and Mary-Ann Meyer from the City Clerk’s office, and advised that they will now be attending future meetings.

PRESENTATIONS

The Committee were advised that the presentations by the Fire Department and the Culture and Recreation Division will be rescheduled.

On a motion (S. Bell/S. Derkach), the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities (in conjunction with the Canadian Hearing Association) unanimously moved to nominate Mary Smithson for the Hamilton Municipal Senior of the Year Award. Darlene Burkett, Sharon Derkach and Marlene Thomas volunteered to help Sandi Bell complete the necessary paperwork.
1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

The following items were added to the agenda.

(i) The Snow Removal Report was added as item 5.9
(ii) Memo update from the Strategy Working Group was added as 4.4

The Committee approved the agenda as amended.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(B. Lane/K. Nolan)
That the minutes of the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities meeting held on February 12, 2008 be approved as presented.  
CARRIED

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

4.1 Transportation Sub-Committee

No update was provided.

4.2 Customer Service Sub-Committee

No update was provided.

4.3 Built Environment Committee

Darlene Burkett reported on the Built Committee’s investigation into alternate locations for the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities meetings. The Committee viewed alternate meeting facilities in the City, including First Place, Central Library and the Standard Life Building. The Built Committee will continue to look into the issue until a more suitable location is found. Councillor Morelli offered a few suggestions and advised that he would consider the matter.

4.4 Strategy Working Group

Staff advised that the Report that is being prepared by the City Manager regarding the Structure of the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities will be going forward to the Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled on April 7, 2008. The Committee Clerk advised that she would
forward a copy of this report to members of the Committee once it became public.

Committee deferred the discussion of the report prepared by the Working Group until the next meeting.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

5.1 Leave of Absence—Roger Cameron

Chair Nolan advised the Committee that Roger Cameron would not be attending meetings for the next few months.

On a motion (A. Mallett/D. Burkett), Committee concurred with Mr. Cameron’s absence from the Committee.

5.2 City Of Hamilton Confidentiality Policy

The Committee wishes to note that they appreciate and support City Council’s confidentiality policy with respect to the non-disclosure of personal information of committee members.

5.3 Priorities List from the 2007 Accessibility Plan

Maxine Carter asked the Committee to review the Priorities List and suggested that the discussion be deferred to the next meeting, at which time the Committee will be able to take 30-45 minutes to discuss the list.

Aznive Mallett asked the Committee to consider a full day session in May to review the Action Plan and to set timeframes on the movement of issues. The Committee concurred.

Jane Lee agreed to bring back a suggested outline and timeframes for the session at the next meeting.

5.4 Curb Cuts – problematic location

Mary Smithson distributed copies of a report on Curb Cuts for review. She discussed the accessibility problems for blind and hearing impaired individuals caused by curb cuts.

A brief discussion ensued and the following comments and/or concerns were raised:

- Curbs are designed for scooters and wheelchairs, but pose problems for the visually impaired.
- Changes to certain sidewalks have occurred near institutions for those with disabilities, but the changes should be City-wide.
• Of specific concern are the curb cuts between Queen Street and Wellington Street and between Hunter Street and Cannon Street.
• Guide dogs can only respond to changes in texture, not colour changes.
• There are two issues: design and installation.
• The urban-Braille design was developed by the committee and was to be implemented throughout the City. It may need to be re-evaluated.

Mary Smithson asked the Committee to send her any comments that they might have. Tim Nolan noted that Public Works staff were to complete a Final Report of Audible Signals for the Committee’s review, but that the Report has not yet been received by the Committee.

The curb cuts issue will be referred to the Built Environment Committee for follow-up.

Committee concurred.

5.5 SCI Pilot Presentation

Azivne Mallett presented a report on a Spinal Cord Initiative Pilot. The initiative focuses on improving access to resources for patients with spinal chord injuries to help manage the issues that they face. She would like to see the City more involved with this initiative. The Committee thanked Azivne for her presentation.


Chair Nolan advised the Committee that the Ontario Human Rights Commission has recently drafted a report entitled “Policy on Mental Health Discrimination and Police Record Checks. The Report deems the notation “Assist to Hospital” on Police Record Checks to be a violation of the spirit of the Ontario Human Rights Code. He asked Councillor Morelli to bring this matter to the attention of the Police Chief.

Councillor Morelli agreed to discuss this with the Police Chief and suggested that it might be beneficial to review this on a province-wide basis.

5.7 DARTS Contract

Azivne Mallett advised Committee that discussions are currently taking place regarding the contract between the Accessible Transportation Services and DARTS.
On a motion (S. Bell/S. Derkach), a member of the Transportation Sub-Committee will contact Charles Fitzsimmons from Accessible Transportation Services to request an update at the next Transportation Sub-Committee meeting. Kim Nolan advised that she would speak with Charles Fitzsimmons regarding this and report back to the Committee.

Staff advised that the Public Works Committee will discuss the DARTS contract at the meeting scheduled on April 14, 2008.

On a motion (D. Burkett/M. Thomas), the Committee agreed that they would like to speak to the issue at the Public Works Committee meeting in April. Staff were directed to arrange this.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the HSR’s purchase of high-floor buses. Kim Nolan will address this issue with Charles Fitzimmons from Accessible Transportation Services and will report back to the Committee.

5.8 Update: DARTS Eligibility Criteria Committee

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

5.9 Snow Removal Report

A final draft of the report on Sidewalk Snow Removal in the City of Hamilton was presented. Darlene Burkett suggested that an amendment of the by-law be done in consultation with the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities.

On a motion (T. Manzuk/K. Nolan), the draft report will be amended by adding the following recommendation (c) to read as follows:

(c) That the review and enforcement of by-law procedures be completed in consultation with the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities.

CARRIED

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 New Business for Future Agendas

(a) Hamilton Conservation Authority

B. Lane introduced the issue of accessibility in conservation areas due to the Hamilton Conservation Authority’s proposal to make the Bruce
Duncan Gardens accessible. Committee will discuss advocating for accessibility in conservation areas.

(b) Curb Cuts

Referred to the Built Environment Committee.

(c) Attitudinal Barrier due to appearance, dress, etc.

B. Lane introduced the issue of attitudinal barriers due to appearance, dress, etc. Committee agreed that this is not within the scope of the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities.

Jane Lee advised the Committee that the City currently provides customer service training to employees and always looks to update their training with current examples. Jane advised members of the Committee that complaints involving City employees could be addressed through the Access & Equity Officer.

7. ADJOURNMENT

On motion, the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Tim Nolan, Chair
Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities

Irene Sturgeon/Mary-Ann Meyer
Legislative Assistant
March 11, 2008