

To Chair and Members of Committee of the Whole, staff and fellow citizens,

I delegate today on behalf of Burlington Seniors' Advisory to advise committee and council that there are aspects of the Parking Standards Review, particularly as it relates to Accessible Parking stall sizes which require clarification and amendment prior to adoption by council.

Seniors advisory committee have concerns that adoption of that review will result in an unintended weakening of City Parking Standards with serious consequences for seniors, who are disproportionately reliant on accessible parking stalls.

The concerns arise from the fact that there are four, sometimes conflicting, documents referenced in the review recommendations. The four documents are;

1. The Access for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (For ease I'll refer to it as The Ontario Standard)
2. Burlington Accessibility Design Standards 2016. (For ease I'll refer to it as The Burlington Standard)
3. Burlington City-Wide Parking Standards Review, Final Report by IBI 2017 (The IBI Report)
4. City-Wide Parking Standards Review **Report PB-43-19**. 2019 (The Parking Review)

The first two documents referred to are standards for the size of handicap stalls.

The Ontario Standard width is 2750 millimetres minimum (7'-10 1/2")

The Burlington Standard width is 3400 millimetres minimum (11' -2")

The length for both is the same at 5200 millimetres or (17' 00") as is the hatched access aisle, 2000 millimetres or (6'- 6 3/4")

I would like to start by pointing out that even at Burlington's wider standard, it can be difficult for persons using a mobility device to maneuver within those spaces.

I had the experience of being with Ron Baliko, a person that uses a mobility device from Burlington Accessibility Advisory, in the Regional Police Station parking lot while he was boarding his wheelchair adapted van.

The parking stalls in the Police Station parking lot are sized to meet the larger Burlington standard.

With no other car in the adjacent parking spot, Ron was not able to maneuver his device on to his van's lift platform without manoeuvring outside of the hatch lines.

He told me of incidents where he has been stuck for hours when a car, even properly parked in the adjacent spot, denied him the space he needs to operate his wheelchair lift.

Surely Burlington can do better than that.

I draw your attention to:

**Page 15 of Report PB-43-19, section 3. Other Recommendations**

***Accessibility – Burlington currently requires more accessible parking spaces in larger parking lots and fewer accessible spaces in smaller parking lots than the Province stipulates. The Parking Standards Review recommends that Burlington’s accessible parking standards be amended to match the requirements outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Guidelines. In addition, accessible stalls should be the ones closest to the front entrance of a building or elevator and should be located on a portion of an underground garage that has a flat floor.***

This recommendation, to match the Ontario Standard, contains no distinction between the number or placing of accessible parking stalls and the size of the stalls or the access aisle. BSAC would like the language changed to be clearer and state specifically that the dimensions of accessible parking stall will comply with the larger standard defined in the Burlington Standard.

***EG ..... Burlington currently requires more accessible parking spaces in larger parking lots and fewer accessible spaces in smaller parking lots than the Province stipulates The Parking Standards Review recommends that Burlington’s accessible parking standards for rates be amended to match the requirements outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Guidelines and that the length, width and access aisle dimensions shall be required to comply with the City of Burlington Accessibility Design Standards (2016) . In addition, accessible stalls should be the ones closest to the front entrance of a building or elevator and should be located on a portion of an underground garage that has a flat floor.***

This amendment is important to seniors and other who need the extra space in accessible parking stalls because on:

***Page 2 of PB-43-19***

***PB-43-19 reports back on the community engagement undertaken as part of the parking review and recommends that Council direct staff to report back in Q2 of 2019 with Zoning By-law amendments to implement the recommended parking rates set out in the City-Wide Parking Standards Review. The implementing Zoning By-law amendments will be brought back to Committee at a future statutory public meeting under the Planning Act.***

This paragraph clearly states it is the intent of the report to have these recommendations implemented by council and become part of future parking bylaws.

If implemented without an amendment clarifying that it does not apply to stall sizes and aisle widths, and the review then forms a part of a future Zoning Bylaw, Committee and Council have to ask themselves, as Councillor Galbraith And Mayor Meed Ward have asked of the Official Plan Review: Will it be defensible to the concerns of our citizens? And equally importantly will it be defensible in law when developers and planning amendment applicants contest the parking bylaw on appeal?

Opposition to this review and requests for further consideration not only come from Burlington Seniors Advisory. But on ***Page 22 of Report PB-43-19***

***BAAC (Burlington Accessibility Advisory Committee.) Do not support reduction in the number of accessible parking spaces, or in the size of accessible parking spaces. Do not support reduction in size***

***of access aisles between accessible parking spaces. Do not support reduction of accessible parking at senior's homes or medical facilities. .... (They go on to say) .....Provincially mandated requirements for accessible parking should be met and exceeded.***

Despite this strong opposition by the accessibility advisory, the group most affected by this review, staff are asking Committee of the Whole and Council to move forward to implement the recommendations while continuing to work with BAAC.

As confirmed on:

***Page 24 of Report PB-43-19*** Recommends:

***That staff continue to meet with the Accessibility Advisory Committee to discuss appropriate ratios for accessible parking in Burlington.***

Is it appropriate for the review to be accepted by Committee of the Whole and recommended for adoption by Council for implementation before such discussions are complete?

Also: ***Page 22 of Report PB-43-19*** Recommends:

***That staff work with the Burlington Urban Design Advisory Panel as well as staff from the Urban Design Section to review and implement revised parking design standards.***

This recommendations clearly suggests that revisions to the Burlington Parking Design Standards will be reconsidered even after adoption by council.

Burlington Parking Design Standard refers to stall sizes and aisle widths. Accepting this review would commit council to a parking standard that is not yet finalized and where stall sizes might be subject to change in future.

Again, is it appropriate for Committee of the Whole to recommend the review for adoption by council before such further evaluation and implementation of the standard is completed?

There is ample time to complete this work with BAAC on appropriate ratios and appropriate stall sizes and to complete the Urban Design Section Review of Parking Standards before recommending implementation.

Let me close with another anecdote.

The first time I met Ron Baliko, I spotted an electrical fitting on his keyring. (A flat metal bracket that usually sits inside your ceiling to support a light fixture). I had to ask: "Ron, why do you have a lighting bracket on your keyring?" He explained that it allows him to extend his limited wrist action and his reach in certain situations that can arise daily.

At that point a flashbulb went off in my brain.

I have never needed an electrical fitting on my keyring to extend my everyday reach. I sincerely hope neither have members of council or most of our city staff.

But because most of us don't need to invent tools to extend our limited reach it is difficult for us to view the world, view accessibility issues, view accessible parking through the eyes of those who most need them. The elderly, the less abled, our citizens who use mobility devices.

Surely that is why we have citizen advisories, to help council and staff see the world through the eyes of others whose experiences we may never know and cannot imagine.

On behalf of Burlington's rapidly growing seniors' population, those relying on equal accommodation for barrier-free accessibility in order to "Live, Work and Play" in our city and all those who's daily lives are lived through the lens of infirmity or different levels of ability; We ask this Committee of the Whole to see accessible parking through the eyes of others and to redirect staff to take the time to clarify beyond any doubt that, Burlington will always seek the highest standards for Accessible Parking Stalls which not only accommodate the requirements of citizens who need them but are clearly seen to do so.

A Parking Plan and Bylaws that are defensible not only with the values of our citizens but defensible as a human right to accessibility and therefore legally more defensible at appeals to Planning Tribunals when such inevitably arise in the future.

BSAC thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Jim Young, Vice Chair, BSAC.