

Attendance of Meeting:

Sandi Omanovic
Ben Johnson
Ron Redmond
Damian Roy
Maggie Leuggers
Ned Holt
Sam Handy
Cleary Buckley
Nate Besio
Elaine Zimmerman
Max Webster
Norman Baldwin

Committee on Accessibility Tuesday March 17th

4:00pm Meeting Start

4:10pm Announcements

The committee opened with a discussion of how to give itself teeth. They discussed how it's power is in it's voice. Sam Handy and Sandi Omanovic reviewed some ideas they drafted, which included a sign to post in the window of businesses that are ADA compliant and the specialization of committee members to certain topic to form sub-committees.

4:30pm Linda Little and Chelsea Lafayette from Discover Jazz

Linda Little opened the discussion by asking for advice on how to make Discover Jazz more accessible. She mentioned ordering one handicap friendly porta-pottie for shows but the committee felt that number should be greater.

Chelsea Lafayette, who works for Discover Jazz, used to work at the Flynn for maintaining accessibility services such as; ASL, Audio description, etc. The Flynn is a historic building and is limited in certain ways but it provides ASL interpreters and audio devices for the hearing impaired. Audience can link the T-switch in their hearing device to the Flynn's system to hear the performance clearer.

Little assured there would be parking meters at the waterfront marked off for accessibility. There would also be a waterfront drop off and pick up area but admitted that it can be difficult to get to when it rains. Elaine Zimmerman, a committee member, asked about legible signs. Little assured there would be ASL interpreters if they request it in a certain amount of time and signs are in breal and large sized print.

In regards to the Church Street Marketplace, Discover Jazz pays extra for the accessible bathrooms in City Hall to remain open.

Zimmerman asked about special lighting for those that are visually impaired. Little assured that most outdoor performances are by 8:00/8:30 so it's not quite dark by then but if they run later they do have lights.

The committee suggested putting the venues that are accessible on their website and how accessible to make it easier for people with disabilities to plan ahead. The committee also suggested a feedback page on the website to survey reviews.

5:00pm Damian Roy- Public Works

Damian Roy introduced a new plan directed at three specific parking locations downtown to make them safer and more accessible. Roy referred to the Proposed Rights-Of-Way Accessibility Guidelines or the PROWAG, which is not an adopted federal standard or rule but is a point of reference for cities. Roy looks at the standards in these guidelines and refers to it through the meeting.

Roy spoke on how Public Works is trying to position these accessible spots more on the corners of streets to avoid the hassles of snow plowing.

Committee members express concerns of side-door ramps and if there is a tree in the way. Roy mentioned how rear-door ramps are blocked by cars parking behind the vans. This issue is avoided by having the parking on the corners but there is not much that can do done about side-door ramps. If there is a tree in the way then the committee would need to have a discussion with public works.

5:30 ADA/ Closing Statements

Nathan Besio mentioned that the celebrations usually pick a certain town that could use improvement but since it's the 25th anniversary there are going to be multiple smaller events in many towns in Vermont. Besio is also a peer advocate counselor at the Vermont Center for Independent Living.

Besio suggested that we hold the celebration at the burlington bike path to promote outdoor activities and athletics.

The committee suggested having Mayor Miro Weinberger making a statement for the 25th anniversary about Burlington's progress. The committee suggested putting together a press conference to highlight all the positive changes Burlington has made.

6:00 Meeting Adjourned