

Accessibility and Advocacy Committee Minutes

February 11, 2022, 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Present at City Building Conference Room: Rob Delach, Lisa Simpson

Present by zoom: Davey McNelly (co-chair), Dianne Bouvier (co-chair), Anna Korpi

Meeting called to order 12:00 pm.

Present at City Building Conference Room: Rob Delach, Lisa Simpson, Tiffany Beals

Present by zoom: Davey McNelly (co-chair), Dianne Bouvier (co-chair), Anna Korpi, Micah McCarey, Joe Blumfield

Welcome to new members

- Committee members introduced themselves to each other and talked about what they find most annoying about snow. Curbs with snow, wet socks, makes homebound, difficulty biking/walking, school cancellations.

Planning and Project Goals for Upcoming Year

1. Continue collaborations with City of Athens on improving accessibility

- Pilot Project with Code Office
 - Jointly signed letters (David Riggs, Code Office and Davey McNelly, Accessibility Commission) went out in October to five businesses: CVS, Jackie O's, White's Mill, Pizza Cottage, Sol, indicating they have been identified as a location that people with disabilities were interested in making more accessible. The Commission would like to meet with them, assess their space and give ideas on how to become more accessible in the short and longterm. Link provided on US Department of Justice (DOJ) regs for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal. (Dianne will forward letter with link to Committee members)
 - Follow up, Davey contacted Jackie O's, who said they are too busy right now. He will follow up with them.
 - Anna helped us clarify what to present to the other businesses. The Commission would like to partner with them to make their business more accessible. Empower businesses to make changes – we can meet with them with checklist, review space, offer ideas on making more accessible in short and longterm, provide guidelines, and help find resources for solutions (i.e. identify products like simple ramps, signage; we do not have funds). Anna will do follow up, explain general purpose, and say we'd like to meet with them and find amenable times. She'll create a list and we'll sign up to go minimally in pairs to these meetings.
 - Joe asked about traditional ADA signage, which could show more active posturing to help change stereotype of person with disability as being passive. Dianne explained it is an ISO (International Organization for Standardization) symbol, which makes this symbol recognized internationally, and is required by law. Some cities like NYC, have developed a more "active" symbol. Davey showed the Accessibility Committee logo, which is what we've been using for our recommended accessibility signage.
 - Accessible Signage and brochure - Arian provided documents, which were done in InDesign. Joe volunteered to recreate documents in alternate program. Anna

- suggested using these docs as test for pilot with five businesses and tweaking for broader use. That we let businesses know they are part of a pilot. After this, we could provide to uptown chamber of commerce business association.
- Maintain collaborations with City Engineer on Future City Projects
 - Davey is inviting new public works director and Jessica Adine, formerly interim City engineer, to march meeting to discuss future City projects. The Committee has an ongoing relationship with the City to collaborate and incorporate accessibility planning in future City projects.
 - Maintain collaborations with City Planner on ADA Transition Plan. (Note: Dianne added into goals after meeting)

2. Conduct Walk and Rolls

- Discussion and interest to continue with Walk and Roll Audits. They generate interest in Commission, accessibility improvements and provide data to write up for City on issues that we find. We've done formal and informal walk and rolls, usually 1-2/year. Rob has organized trainings on how to use the City Source app to report issues, including accessibility, walk through section of city and point out issues in that area. Davey suggested that for the next location, we next do a hybrid, livestream with people on-site, including City Engineer, City Planner, etc.
- Link to last year's hybrid event: [Athens City Commission on Disabilities: Accessibility Committee "Walk and Roll" - April 8, 2021](#)
- Rob said that West Union is the next project – maybe new sidewalk committee will review. They will be making recommendations with City on ways to improve sidewalks, including accessibility.
- Anna asked if we could do a walk and roll inside of some businesses to show what works and doesn't work for accessibility and how adaptations may be put in place.

3. Initiate Accessible Technology Project

- Dianne said we are also interested in creating information to guide businesses on technology accessibility, since so much communication is done via the web. Goal to offer document comparable to physical accessibility with guidance on technology accessibility. Tiffany has volunteered to lead us with this project and is sending a draft to Dianne.

Meeting adjourned 1:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dianne Bouvier, Accessibility Committee co-chair
February 11, 2022