

Brattleboro ADA Advisory Committee

Minutes - 7/12/13

10 a.m.

In attendance: Whitney Nichols (Chair) Julie Tamler (Brattleboro Center for People with Disabilities), Missy Boothroyd (VCIL), Kathleen Achilles (Access), Gary Snyder (Vice Chair of Committee and on Board of Directors), Peter and Brenda Gilbert (citizens), Candace Stoumen (VCIL), Bob Sisler (VCIL), Deb Baker (translator), Patrick Harris (Accessibility Coordinator)

Scribe: Melinda Underwood (VABVI)

Mission Statement:

The Brattleboro ADA Advisory Committee is dedicated to creating awareness of ADA concerns while providing information about, advocacy for, and solutions to the Town's ADA-related needs and issues.

Resources:

ADA Official Website: www.ada.gov

Job Accommodation Network: <http://askjan.org>

Review of Meeting Guidelines

Old Business

Minutes for June 14, 2013 reviewed and approved without changes.

Vermont Transportation Task Force

Next meeting on July 31, teleconference, to talk about how to initiate the plan for providing transportation for all kinds of meetings rather than just UVM will be involved with developing the plan, helping with assessment and measurement of the program. It will start in Chittenden County. Sponsored by the state Independent Living Council. There are some representatives from VTRANS involved.

Update on Olmstead and State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) 2014-16. This is still in the formative stages, although it's been 10 years since the court decision was made. Info available from the Bazalon Center for People with Disabilities website.

Select Board News

Gary did not have anything to report, but said that he feels that this committee has not been helpful. He feels that he's doing too much on his own. He reviewed the Retreat sidewalks yesterday and found the conditions deplorable. He's very concerned about the potential for injury. He would like others from the committee to join him in this effort. Whitney said that he would be willing to give some time to this.

Missy expressed concern about the traffic moving forward suddenly after having been backed up when pedestrians are crossing from the Phoenix House across from the Retreat.

Gary would like to know if anyone else sees safety concerns as they travel about town. He said that there are four handicapped parking spaces, one of which has a trash dumpster in it. He has contacted the parking enforcement people (Carol). While there, he had trouble getting in to the Transportation Center due to the threshold on the door. She told him she would have maintenance take care of it. Gary has also been working with Peoples Bank on Main St. (looks like this will happen) and Brown and Roberts to have automatic door openers put in. Gary needs to have people contact the new owners to complain.

Karen Sinclair is the new representative from Connecticut River Transit and she's been invited to attend this meeting.

Barbara Sondag is resigning from the position of Town Manager. In a formal motion this committee formally thanks her for her involvement and support in the ADA Committee.

New Business

Julie Tamler spoke about the Brattleboro Center for People with Disabilities which is in the process of being created to serve adults with disabilities.

She has spoken to representatives (one is Carol Lalette – sp?) of the Gibson Aiken Center, which is wheelchair accessible, there is a kitchen, lounge, etc. They were not interested in sharing the space because they felt their mission is to work with seniors, not those with disabilities. Julie reports that while they are meeting the basic ADA standards, the programs are not truly accessible. It was hard to help them understand the ways in which the classes aren't accessible beyond a lift and elevator. She said they seem to be open, but just don't have the information or awareness they need. It sounded like there might be a possibility of sharing space, though the center would be responsible for paying a minimal amount for use of space as well as insurance.

They've also spoken with Austine about possibly using the Kroker Building. There is a gym, kitchen, lounge. It's a great space but there is no bus transportation. Kathleen said she's planning to go to the transportation meeting next week to see if that stop could be added. Bill Gurney is an effective advocate, who is the new president of VCDHH, and he'll be attending.

Julie said that the organizing committee is made up of anyone who is interested. There are two meetings a month (covering the same agenda):

- 1st Wednesday 4-5:30 (Brooks Library)
- 2nd Monday 10:30-12 (Austine, Holton Hall Building, 3rd floor north side).

They want to include people who cannot get to meetings. There is a big fundraiser coming up, the Buddy Walk. The center is expected to serve the region, rather than just Brattleboro. There are numerous agencies involved.

Whitney recommended that Julie contact Kelly Fletcher about possibly using the Marlboro Graduate Center.

Other Business

1. Bob reports that Brattleboro Savings and Loan has not been responsive to requests for an automatic door opener. He's been requesting it for several years. He has gotten permission to use the drive up window.
2. Bob expressed concerns about jay walking.
3. Gary expressed concerns about stores using the sidewalks for sandwich board signs, tables and chairs, and things they're selling. Whitney will check online to find out what the guidelines are
4. Candace reminds the committee of its mission to provide information and advocacy and bring concerns to the appropriate town staff. She advises against going to businesses as representatives of the group rather than as private citizens. She's concerned that the committee be perceived as "policing" the town for ADA. She suggests that the agenda have an item called "Areas of Concern."

Adjourned at 11:05.

Next Meeting:

August 9, 2013 at 10 a.m. on the 3rd floor north.