



## **Advisory Committee on Accessibility**

**Monday, March 16, 2026, 3:00 PM, Sharon Bushor Conference Room, 149 Church St., Burlington, VT or remotely via ZOOM.**

**3:00 pm, Sharon Bushor Conference Room, 149 Church St., Burlington, VT OR Remotely via ZOOM: Please click the link below to join the webinar:**

**Zoom Link:**

**<https://zoom.us/j/96458163787?pwd=cy0Oo4cojIRpMP3XzAx4UkLjx6FjMg.1>**

**Meeting ID: 964 5816 3787**

**Passcode: 240456**

### **In Attendance:**

Nate Besio, Chair (NB)

Jon Adams-Kollitz (JAK)

Lisa Black (LB)

Meaghan Diffenderfer (MD)

Sharon Henault (SH)

John Thomas (JT)

Scottie Taylor (ST)

Ashley Parker (AP)

Karen Downey (KD)

### **Others in attendance:**

Sophie Sauve (SS)

Charlie Messing (CM)

Meeting called to order 3:05 pm

## **1. Adopt the Agenda**

- JT moves to adopt the agenda as written; SH seconds; all in favor, so moved and approved

## **2. Approve Minutes**

- SH moves to approve the minutes as written, LB seconds; all in favor, so moved and approved

## **3. Public Forum**

- CM introduced themselves; they used to sit on Council of Aging, which has dissolved. He noted that for aging populations, sidewalks are a big pressure point, as well as access to the hospital, since new parts of the hospital are on Tilley Dr. which isn't accessible via bus route.

## **4. News and Announcements**

- JAK shares that the City is working on PlanBTV 2050 – a vision of Burlington for the next 25 years – the last time a plan of this scale was completed was in 2015. In 2015, there wasn't a deep focus on Accessibility – language was used 12 times in very specific targets/goals. Five of those instances were specific to accessibility in the physical environment as opposed to language/culture. The 2050 plan will be very ambitious in that it will not only function as the mandated municipal development plan, but also will include sub-plans for three different elements: Transportation, Economic Development, and Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront. Additionally, BPRW will be updating their departmental comprehensive plan which was last completed in 2015 as well. There will be an open house on April 30, likely at BCA (but still TBD) for those who would like to provide input. Over the next year there will be further opportunities to engage, and BACA will likely be a stakeholder group for this process.
  - i. A request was made to share the 2015 plan with the committee for reference.
- NB reminded everyone that he shared a Strategic Directions Survey that was sent out by GMT for members to complete.
  - i. Sharon Henault adds that Burlington gave GMT a million dollars for the Older Adults & Disabilities (O&D) transportation, but unsure if there are any stipulations in place with that funding. She would like to see further discussion so people aren't placed in situations where they can't get to their jobs/grocery shopping/what they need.

- ii. The committee will invite GMT to a future meeting.
  - 1. Ashley Parker flags that the original survey came from DPW Director Chapin Spencer who also sits on the GMT Commission, so connecting with him & co-chair Andrea Suozzo would be a good first step.
- NB plugs that there is a Power Soccer Tournament taking place on April 11 at UVM hosted by UVM and the NE Disabled Athletic Association. 8 teams this year from Canada, Boston, NH, Syracuse – more announcements forthcoming!

#### **5. Sign & Adopt Best Practices Letter**

- Draft Letter to review/adopt/sign
  - i. Committee reviewed the letter, including a few minor edits MD made.
- Draft Best Practices Checklist
  - i. Nate provided a draft checklist, which the committee reviewed.
- SH moves to send the letter to the Mayor's office et al., AP seconds
  - i. All in favor, so moved and approved.
  - ii. MD will send the letter.

#### **6. Committee Membership**

- We have 10 of the 12 seats filled. We have two more that can be filled if anyone comes to mind. Would be good to have deaf/HoH/blind individual representation.

#### **7. Committee Priorities Discussions**

- Looking to find the issues/topics we would like to focus on during the coming year, and how we want to go about addressing them:
  - i. Accessible voting – in particular for the coming November elections
    - 1. KD had talked with individuals in Ward 6 about the relocation of the polling place, and got positive feedback. One person was confused because they went to an old door and didn't see a sign directing them to the correct side of the building.
    - 2. Ward 7 polling location (Miller Center) isn't on the bus route and is far off of North Ave where the bus stop is.
      - a. What we need for accessible spaces: busses that can get to the voting center on election day, and space must be physically accessible.

3. We will invite Sarah Montgomery (Assistant City Clerk) to attend our next meeting
- ii. City Department ADA Title II Assessments
  1. Departments were supposed to report back on what they were doing, but fizzled out.
  2. Committee will confirm department contacts and invite them to join meetings.
- iii. Parking
  1. There is currently a Transportation Demand Management Agreement with multi-use buildings to reduce parking spaces in exchange for very specific regulations, but handicap/accessible spaces are still supposed to have priority even when parking is reduced. That does not seem to be enforced rigidly. To connect with P&I/DRB on this topic.
  2. Privately owned garages to not have signage when there is no accessible parking in their lot; this issue got brought to City Council, and then the Attorney's Office. Committee is interested in a follow up on where that issue stands, and will make recommendations accordingly.
  3. Are the inspectors the same for municipal and private projects, and what is their checklist/role in ensuring adherence?
- iv. Transportation – ensuring access to hospital, etc.

#### **8. Other Committee Business**

- Next meeting on April 20.

#### **9. Adjournment**

- JT motions to adjourn, JAK seconds; All in favor, so moved and approved.

Meeting adjourned, 4:00 pm.

#### **10. Information and Non-Discrimination Statements**

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