

**Council for Community Accessibility
Meeting Notes for August 26, 2024, 4:00-5:30 p.m.**

The hybrid meeting was opened at 4:00 p.m. by Lesley Davis.

CCA Members: Haley Spencer, Susan Seizer, Deborah Myerson, John Brady, Sam Dove, Nick Philbeck, Coleman Kavgian, Linda Crawford, Casey Guarino, Karin Willison, Lesley Davis, MarChe Daughtry, Chris Jackson

Guests: Bill Wasielewski, Samantha Walters-Lewis

City Staff: Annabelle Vosmeier, CCA Assistant, Hank Duncan, Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator, Planning and Transportation, Taylor Brown, Legislative Affairs Specialist, Office of the Mayor

Minutes: Chris moved and Karin seconded that the June minutes be accepted as printed and distributed.

Financial Report: Annabelle reported a balance of \$1,045.14; this reflects a donation of \$730 for the Gather 'round the Table event to be held later this fall. It is hoped that another \$1,000 will be collected to cover the expenses of catering and securing ASL interpreters for the event.

Consolidated Plan Update: Deborah said that HAND is leading the process of developing a consolidated plan for Fair Housing, which includes housing needs for the special needs population. Virtual workshops will be conducted through the week to obtain input, concluding on Friday of this week. She then introduced Bill Wasielewski and Samanta Walters-Lewis from M & L Consultants. Bill noted that an analysis of needs and changes with attention to discrimination is necessary to develop the Housing Action Plan. So far, feedback reflects concerns about affordability, as well as the combined concern of affordability and accessibility. Other information obtained includes extremely high rent and landlords that are not amenable to accepting vouchers. A census shows that accessible housing needs are not currently being met, as well as a need for more conveniently placed public transit stops. (BT has a completed census on accessible/non-accessible transit stops.)

It was noted that Ellettsville has more housing available, but transportation from these places is not available on a large enough scale. It was observed that landlords find handling section 8 rentals an arduous process, with lack of understanding of the process often the problem. Landlords perhaps need an incentive to participate in section 8 housing, as well as help in understanding the process. The City cannot require landlords to offer a certain percentage of their apartments as section 8 housing in an effort to alleviate the shortage. Social funding requirements apply only to people with disabilities if they are 65 or older.

It was agreed that there is a need for fair-housing education including an explanation or definition of accessible housing and what that includes.

Partner Organizations Awareness and Outreach: MarChe tested some technology within a focus group and noted some issues.

Report from the City:

--The ADA transition plan was presented at three public hearings; detailed comments resulting from feedback is now with the Mayor. From there it will go to the City Council for their approval.

--A drawing for the November 16th Blind Boys Concert at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater will be held after the September CCA meeting. Attendees at either or both the August and September CCA meetings are eligible for the drawing.

--The Closed Captioning Ordinance goes into effect on January 1, 2025, so distribution of brochures explaining this new ordinance need to be distributed. Volunteers will go to retail stores to distribute the brochures. A script will be provided and volunteers are asked to let Annabelle know where they have visited.

--Hank Duncan, from the Planning Department, brought CCA members up to date on the recent planning to make the Indiana Avenue Corridor safer for all—bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists. With visuals, Hank showed where two lanes will merge into one lane to improve pedestrian crossing and provide a protected bicycle lane. Improved curb ramps, a longer bus aisle, and raised crosswalks also provide greater safety.

Hank mentioned that there is a push from the Engineering Department to replace the removed stop signs on 7th Street.

Hank encouraged members to complete a survey by September 15th to provide feedback on the proposed project.

Committee Reports:

- A. Accessibility: Twelve new surveys were recently completed, but all had some impediments that kept them from being ADA compliant. Three or four could be remedied by signage.
- B. Transportation and Mobility: BT used to have an advisory council that made up of BTAccess riders. The CCA Transportation and Mobility Committee is making plans to revive that group by rolling it into the Committee, and to meet quarterly. BT is considering adding some routes, with the possibility of those routes being available on October 8th. BT held a week-long training session. Casey, MarChe, and Michael came for an hour each day to provide suggestions for BT Transit and BTAccess with disabilities. Casey and MarChe highlighted points of concern: what to do with bags, marking transit rings for wheelchairs, improving communication, etc.
- C. Activities and Events: The ADA anniversary, though an extremely hot day, brought over 300 participants. It was suggested that perhaps next year's anniversary celebration be held at Switchyard Park to take advantage of an indoor setting. If it were to be held on a Friday afternoon/evening, it could be combined with Food Truck Friday. Gather 'round the Table will be held on November 4th at The Mill. City staff will be invited to sit at different tables with attendees. This year's event will focus on transportation and housing. Deborah has agreed to chair this event.
- D. MALL: The committee has received a huge donation of scooters, rollators, and canes. Chris has asked that no more walkers or crutches be accepted as there are more of these items available than need for them. Also, there are a few power chairs that are not able to be repaired to be usable and the non-portable wheelchairs are not checked out very often.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Crawford, Secretary