

Athens City Commission on Disabilities
Accessibility and Advocacy Committee Meeting
September 8, 2023, City Bdg, first floor Conference Room, 12:00 – 1:00pm

Committee members may request accommodations due to a disability, including zoom access, by contacting Dianne or Ally in advance.

Welcome

Ally Hughes called the meeting to order at 12:11pm.

Present: Ally Hughes, Dan Schoonover, Lisa Simpson, Davey McNelly, Rob Delach, Sarah Doherty, Stephanie Hunter

Quorum was established.

I. Approval of Minutes

Dan moved to approve the August Accessibility meeting minutes. Stephanie seconded motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

II. Old Business

1. Some thank you letters have been given to those helping with the Walk, Talk and Roll. Davey and Ally need to finalize their thank yous.
2. Joint Letter with Historical Preservation was signed and presented. Davey has talked to the Mayor about some push back from someone at state level for using a more accessible stamped concrete substitute for the bricks.
3. Next steps on publicizing the Accessible Business Project. Anna has a plan and will work with the Outreach Committee to send letters to other groups.
4. Dianne sent out the letters to EPW on priorities for the curb ramp project and to City Council to support a 10 year plan for sidewalk remediation.
5. Accessible parking paving and signage at corner of Stimson and Palmer. Members hadn't seen the site and Lisa and Dan drove by after the meeting, and it is indeed completed with signage. Rob sent pictures of paving and signage.

III. New Business

1. The Committee noted areas that could be added to the spreadsheet with the City. The committee needs to decide how to include these items in the matrix:
 - Davey noted that heavier foot traffic is occurring as the Kershaw Greene project has opened.
 - It was also noted that accessibility on State Street on the East Side remains difficult starting at the rotary round-about.
 - There needs to be a better connection to get to the West Side Park. Perhaps a Herald Street thru-way to connect East State?

- Someone stated that the alleys between Carpenter and Kindred are in bad shape. A student assessed this route in a wheelchair and determined it to be very unsafe. He felt he was tilting and sliding.
 - The sidewalks from Stimson Avenue to the Library are unsafe.
 - Along East State Street from State Route 33 to Carpenter and Home Street needs sidewalks repaired.
 - Stephanie explained that the City EPW is looking for funding for a sidewalk down Madison St. To East State Street. They need to include the intersection at Madison. (It was mentioned that this Street is very steep and absolutely not accessible by wheelchair.
 - The Armory Park Project is slated to begin soon.
 - It was determined by the City that the Uptown Crosswalks Project is too expensive on its own so it is being rolled into the Streetscape Project next year.
 - The Richland/Shافر/South Green crosswalk timing is too short. Only 15 seconds to cross far too many lanes. A study shows that 30 pedestrians per hour cross it. The buttons are also backwards and up too high. The Union/Court St. Crosswalk is not designed well except for the signal being good. The timing is off and it's on the wrong side of the street.
 - The Campbell Street signal is ok. Needs a crosswalk to connect the sidewalks.
 - Davey reminded the committee that a letter was sent to start a 10 yr. Plan to address some of these issues.
2. Commission Website – Ally, Dianne and Michelle are reviewing and updating. Committee members are asked to us to review, give feedback if anything needs to be changed.

IV. Other Announcements

1. Rob mentioned that the City Council has approved a Pedestrian Accessibility and Bicycle Task Force. Committee will consist of someone from the Disabilities Commission Committee, two Residents, a Student and a City Council Member. Bylaws and full membership planned. Chris Knisely may reach out for a nomination from the Commission. There will be a lot of overlap with the Accessibility and Advocacy Committee.
2. Davey asked for Sara or Rob's help connecting him with the new OU ADA/Section 504 Coordinator. Sara said she would email the name to Davey.

V. Meeting Adjourned

Dan moved to adjourn the meeting and Rob seconded the motion. Approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:45.

Submitted by Lisa Simpson on 9/18/2023