

Athens City Commission on Disabilities
Accessibility and Advocacy Committee Meeting
January 9, 2026, 12:00-1:00 pm
Athens City Conference Room **(or via Zoom with ADA request)**
Minutes

Call to Order

Annah Korpi offered to lead the meeting which started at approximately 1:05.

In Attendance

Dan Schoonver, Lisa Simpson, Stephanie Hunter, Rob Delach, Ben Ziff, Joel Nadler, Gillian Garland, Annah Korpi

Approval of the Minutes

- It was said that we do not have minutes for our last meeting and would review them at the next meeting.

New Business

Gillian Garland, Assistant City Engineer for the City of Athens attended the meeting and we covered different topics/questions

- PROCESS
 - o She gave us an overview of how capital improvement projects work (e.g. water, sewage, street projects). If it's over \$75,000, they have to go to the bidding process. Also, some projects are housed in her department, others are housed in the Mayor's office (e.g. the armory) and a handful are under the city planner.
 - o For most projects, her office is involved in the planning, implementation, and inspection. If it's a small project, the brainstorming/cradle phase might start in the Mayor's office but if it's a major project with grants involved, she is usually involved "cradle to grave": scoping, concept, design, final plan, bidding, construction, punch list, and closing are some of the stages in that whole process.
 - o Garland mentioned that the most successful projects have clear intent and honor that intent throughout the end of the project (so no "scope creep" or "funding creep" as she called it)
 - o Large ODOT projects have required "phased reviews"
 - 1) Accessibility and design
 - 2) Environmental compliance
 - 3) Right of way issues (?)
- INSPECTION AND ADA COMPLIANCE
 - o Only in the past 1.5 years has the city had a hired and trained inspector to ensure compliance at the end of the project (AJ). That inspector has training.

- o Some of the problem is that the contractor is gone by the time inspection is done and problems are found. It was asked whether the inspector could come while the contractors will still present and then again during the punch list process, especially as it pertains to ADA compliance but also usability
- CURRENT PROJECTS
 - o The underground utility project at the end of Court must be complete by October due to funding parameters
 - o The Court and Union crosswalks/curb cuts project could be tied into that or instead, could be approached in short bursts of improvements
 - o Rob shared a map he made of additional curb cuts that could be addressed were the city to have time and funds
 - o Future projects could involve improving the sidewalks, curbs, bumpouts, lights, etc. on circulatory routes in the city
- RELATIONSHIP WITH DISABILITIES COMMISSION
 - o The Commission's existence and input is helpful for grant applications
 - o Having the Commission available to review projects to look for ADA features is also helpful
 - o Garland suggested that after the initial "draft" of a project, our input could be helpful so that there is a concept to work with but it's not too late in the design plans that the process has to move backward
 - o Rob asked if there would be a new sidewalk assessment that provides GIS data and clear categories of need; the EPW or the Planning office could do that but there are advantages to the EPW doing it
 - o The ADA transition plan was briefly discussed and how the EPW would have a role in that. To be determined.
 - o It was noted that it would be beneficial for Garland to continue to come quarterly to the meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Annah Korpi
 January 13, 2026