



**City of
Evanston™
MINUTES**
ADA Advisory Committee
Thursday, April 24, 2025 @ 3:00 PM
Levy Senior Center/Zoom

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Members present: Murphy Monroe, Julia Pantoga, Matt Dinerstein, Lisa Noble, Donna Stevens, Litrea Hunter, Jack Kleisner, Aby Karottu, Ted Gram-Boarini

Guests: Fred Wittenberg, David Gayes, John Kapetan, Carlos Hranicka

Staff present: Trent Oatman (Accessibility Advisor), Alice Eakes (Accessibility Advisor), Lauren Ruiz (Inclusion & Accessibility Division Manager), Mark Turenne (Parking Operations Specialist), Mike Rivera (Interim Director of Administrative Services), Yazari Gutierrez (Senior Services Coordinator), Amy Kellogg (Senior Services Division Manager), Kimberly Kull (Division Chief, Emergency Management)

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The April 24 minutes were approved by Jack Kleisner and Lisa Noble.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A visitor noted the federal administration's plans to cut \$750 million from FEMA, expressed concern over potential emergencies needing FEMA assistance. City staff commented that funding is still in place, we are still waiting to determine exactly what this means, FEMA administrators are working to ensure that plans are not hindered for emergency response management.
- A visitor encouraged attendees to reach out to their local representatives to advocate for the value of the essential program Medicaid
- Additional public comments were included in topics noted below during guest speaker discussion

4. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Guest speakers

- Mike: Oversees 4 departments under Administrative Services: Parking Services, Facilities Management, Information Technology Team, Fleet Services Dept.

- Mark: Specialty is parking operations.
- Myth - parking services can provide immediate assistance for all requests. Projects/requests are based on scope of work and budget, working internally with many other departments
- As with all other City departments, inclusion & accessibility are important parts of this work
- Guest speakers discussed Committee questions
 - Curb cuts, parking decisions at new City amenities: plans go through Community Development and Design & Plan Review Committee who review all details.
 - Northlight Theatre will include a "bump in" with tapered sidewalks, passenger loading area, no parking on-site
 - Parking at 909 Davis: City added 15-minute parking spaces in circle drive, "cab stand" spaces in drive may be reallocated, accessible parking spaces on Church Street and in Maple Street/Sherman parking garages (parking ticket validation in city hall in Collector's Office and in Council Chambers area), potential additional accessible parking options on surrounding streets
 - W space program: "W permit" program for dedicated reserved parking space outside of residents' homes, application and vetting process, once approved resident gets a sticker matching number on signs in front of home
 - PROWAG audit process: parking team completed an audit last year to align with Pedestrian Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines to add accessible street parking throughout the City, next steps will be from Public Works dept.
 - What Committee can do to increase accessibility: contact your Councilmembers with concerns/feedback

Updates about previous inquiries and grievances:

- Flower pot/crosswalk guidelines: City guidelines have been provided re: plant height and planter placement to Public Works to ensure visibility for both pedestrians and drivers
- AMC curb cut: request was made, determined to be unwarranted due to proximity to marked crosswalk

New inquiries and grievances:

- Zen Leaf dispensary: All customers able to approach counter to check out if unable to use new kiosk system
- Dog beach entrance punch pad: grievance filed due to numbered key pad system, individual with low vision unable to use this
- City Hall Collector's Office door: inaccessible due to force needed to open
- Library: NVDA for computers: screen reader service requested
- City Hall Council Chambers: hearing loop and caption screen request: hearing loop coming soon, captioning available upon accommodation request (please submit request at least 7 days in advance)
- Prieto accessible restroom: toilet in accessible stall is too low
- No parking area at residence for accessible path: resolved by City adding a passenger loading zone spot in front of residence

Training/education updates:

- Neurodiversity Unmasked Training: 4/22
- Emergency Preparedness at Hill Arboretum: 5/6

- Advocacy Avenue at Prieto: focuses on a different disability-related topic each month, please contribute any resources or ideas

Committee membership: welcome Lisa, Ted, and Aby!

Other items:

- Welcome new Accessibility Advisors! Alice & Trent. These staff will start with evaluating sidewalk cafes, coordinating service dog training, contributing to Advocacy Avenue
- Sensory Toolkit Volunteering Event: 4/23: 50 toolkits were created for police dept and CARE team
- Emergency Preparedness Planning for the Disability Community Survey: please complete by May 9
- Northlight Theatre representatives to attend May meeting
- Next meeting: Thursday, May 22 at Evanston Public Library

5. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE

- A Committee member requested all future meetings to be held at 909 Davis
- A member shared info about an Evanston Symphony Orchestra grant proposal written to Evanston Arts Council to host a holiday "concert for all" where everyone can enjoy the performance without concerns related to their disabilities and needs. Commission on Aging and Disabilities wrote in supporting this grant.
- A member shared his outrage and related communication to officials about the current Health & Human Services Secretary's views about Autism
- A member expanded on these views sharing that the administration is attempting to create a database of Autistic individuals in the country and finding the "true cause" of Autism, they are committed to "entirely eliminating Autism," which he stated is the definition of eugenics
- A member inquired about charges/fees associated with hosting meetings at 909 Davis, staff confirmed this is the case for rooms available on the 6th floor only, which any building residents can use. 2nd and 3rd floors are included in leased space and can be utilized for City purposes at no charge.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 PM.