

**Council for Community Accessibility  
Meeting Notes for January 29, 2024, 4:00-5:30 p.m.**

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

Members: Lesley Davis, Chris Jackson, Karin Willison,, Marche Daughtery, Kristen King, Kathy Schultz, Eric Ford, Lauren Struval, John Brady, Penni Sims, Nick Philbeck, Iris Kiesling, Casey Guarino, Ginny Babbitt, and Linda Crawford

City Staff: Michael Shermis

**Minutes:** November minutes (there was no meeting in December) were accepted as printed and distributed.

**Financial Report:** There was no report given.

The remainder of the meeting was spent reviewing last year's priorities and goals. Discussion of those priorities and goals, as well as establishing goals for 2024 follows.

**Advocacy**

- 1. Priority: Raise the visibility of the need for accessible transportation and mobility.**  
**Goal: Support the adoption of the Accessible Transportation and Mobility Principles by the Bloomington City Council.**  
The Council has agreed to the Principles, but it has not yet made it official. People with disabilities were included in developing the Principles.
- 2. Priority: Improve the community experiences of deaf and hard of hearing people.**  
**Goal: Pass a city-wide ordinance for captioning use on TVs in Bloomington.**  
Upon the support of the CCA and the Bloomington/Monroe County Human Rights Commission, the ordinance was passed by the City Council with a vote of 7-0. It will take effect on January, 2025. Holly Elkins, member/representative of the Indiana Association of the Deaf, the Chamber of Commerce, the AARP, CCA, and the BMCHRC will be involved in its implementation.
- 3. Priority: Ensure city government is aware of the needs of disabled people and involve them and their advocates in the political process.**  
**Goal: Co-host a mayoral candidate forum with Stone Belt. (held 3/30/2023)**  
The hybrid forum was well attended. City departments are continuing to seek input from the CCA concerning accessibility concerns. Accessible doors are being added to four or five buildings at the request of Parks and Recreation and they will consult with the CCA when more information becomes available. The Engineering department has requested accessibility training (experiential and U.S. Access Board). The Council has been asked for input on the College/Walnut Corridor project and continues to work on digital accessibility. The Bloomington Transit and the CCA maintain efficient and effective communication.
- 4. Priority: Support those in the community who require personal care assistants.**

**Goal: Form a working group that includes city leaders to explore how the situation can be improved.**

There was limited work with Stone Belt and Area 10 on Aging. Ideas submitted today for obtaining these goals include Stone Belt's "Meet the Mayor" event to be held at the end of March or early April with Stone Belt and the CCA bringing questions to the forum. An open invitation to all City Council members to attend one of the CCA meetings and to see how the CCA can be used as a resource was suggested. Deborah Myerson, who is working with Shelter Force, suggested that builders consider making all new Bloomington homes accessible (Universal Design). At the very least, consider certain features to be included in all new homes.

If Stone Belt could provide apartments, there could be on-site caretakers which would address the need for additional staff. The use of Night Owl, a tool for electronic surveillance and available with a Medicaid waiver, would also eliminate some need for caretakers as well as providing more independence for the individual.

## **Inclusion**

- 1. Priority: Provide a robust and user-friendly community service by taking in and redistributing mobility equipment through the MALL (Mobility Aids Lending Library)**

**Goals: Increase awareness about and donations to the MALL; transition categories of items to MCPL checkout,**

MALL has had tremendous success and is now registered as a nonprofit as well as having a website which provides directions on how to pick up items. Circulation of many items (canes, crutches, walkers, rollators) is through the Library of Things at MCPL, or larger items, currently stored in Karin's garage.

- 2. Priority: Establish a disability-friendly "front door" for visitors and new residents to Bloomington.**

**Goal: Complete the disability brochure/website for Visit Bloomington.**

An intern had begun work on this goal but much remains to complete the brochure and website.

- 3. Priority: Make all places of public accommodation in Bloomington as accessible as legally possible.**

**Goal: Obtain permission to make and place Lego ramps at several City of Bloomington businesses and/or parklets; add new fields to accessibility surveys that specifically address the needs of deaf and blind patrons; offer staff trainings for targeted groups (e.g. wait staff); work to bring parking lots into compliance.**

In order to complete more surveying, more surveyors are needed. Concerning the Lego ramps, it was found that the ramps can't be made to fit and still be accessible for the businesses. Clients are needed in order to construct Lego ramps to be used in homes.

The discussion focused on locating space to rent to store the larger mobility equipment electrical outlets and be close to the bus line. Suggestions for space included First Christian Church on Kirkwood, the Endwright Center at the College Mall. Helping Hands (City Church) is making donations to MALL. Is it possible to place ads on BT Access about MALL? There will be an assistant to work with the intern on the brochure/website. The content to be included needs to be reviewed as well.

Concerning the striping in the parking lots, how can those who are responsible for striping parking lots be informed and follow regulations to be ADA compliant? Is there a non-threatening way to remind persons without disabilities who use accessible parking spaces that they are in the "wrong"?

Service deliveries to businesses present big problems for those with disabilities.

## **Alliances**

- 1. Priority: Work to expand the network of CCA partners to engage in projects that benefit the community, raise awareness, share resources, and extend our reach.**

**Goal: Increase participation with and efforts to serve the deaf community and other underserved communities; engage in joint efforts with MCPL, SICIL, MCCSC, VITAL, IU ASL Club, Area 10, IU Health, and member organizations represented at monthly DSP meetings, among others.**

Alliances include Bloomington Transit, VITAL, IU-SPEA, MALL, and SICIL.

The discussion of working with alliances included Lesley's commitment to talk to a person in the IU Accessibility Educational Services. Michael is currently a member of ADA Indiana. The Council will reach out to Habitat for Humanity to discuss the idea of their building an accessible new home that would be used as a model.

Can an inclusive checklist for events be provided for the university and other organizations? Lesley will look into this at IU while CCA will create a checklist and add it to the website. A CCA member will reach out to Becky Rose at MCCSC Student Services, to make a connection with the school system.

Other: Kathy distributed a flyer explaining the new app for tracking BT scheduled bus transportation. All buses are now equipped to provide information about major intersections and bus stops both internally and externally.

There were ~sixty in attendance at the Transit Summit which looked into topics such as what transportation looks like in this region, not just Bloomington.

Nick provided postcards for those wishing to send support for the Family Leave legislation.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:53.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Crawford, Secretary