



DISABILITY ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes of November 9, 2021

This meeting was recorded on Zoom and may be viewed on the Town of Amherst YouTube Channel. Click on the following link to access this meeting recording: <https://youtu.be/L--K-aYVW3Y>

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means. Members of the public who wish to access the meeting may do so via Zoom or by telephone, see instructions below. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means.

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.m. with the following members:

PRESENT: Chair Myra Ross, Elyse Link, Seren Derin, Tory Dixon, Marty Smith, and Ruth Smith (6).

ALSO PRESENT: Maureen Pollock, Planner and staff liaison to the DAAC; and representatives from Downtown Amherst Foundation, Gabrielle Gould (Amherst BID Executive Director), and their designers, Naomi Darling and Ray Mann; and members of the public

ANNOUNCEMENTS: none

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: none

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Downtown Amherst Foundation**– For the Town Council’s consideration, review and provide comments regarding the proposed performance shell, located on the South portion of the Town Common, General Residence (R-G) Zoning District..

The applicant and designers provided a [presentation](#) to the DAAC.

Board Discussion:

Marty Smith suggested that the designers consider a different surface material for the stage ramp other than Goshen or Ashfield stone. Stated that with changes of precipitation throughout the year (i.e. a light drizzle, snow, ice, rain), heaving of the stones could occur, causing tripping hazards for all pedestrians, particularly for persons using a wheelchair or cane.

Myra Ross asked where will performers place their equipment and personal belongings during the scheduled performance and will that location be ADA accessible. Gabrielle Gould responded, performers may place their equipment and personal belongings behind

or on either side of the performance shell, along the proposed walkways. Stated the proposed walkways will be ADA compliant.

The Board discussed the need for ADA compliant sidewalks to be provided from the performance shell connecting to the closest ADA compliant parking spaces located at the Spring Street parking lot. The Board mentioned that on-street parking spaces are provided on both the east and west sides of Boltwood Avenue. A sidewalk is provided on the east side of the Boltwood Avenue but not the west side of Boltwood Avenue. Stated if a person with a disability, a senior, or a child who is a passenger parked in a vehicle on the west side of Boltwood Avenue, will not have a safe way to exit in/out of the vehicle, as there is no sidewalk. The Board suggested that an ADA-compliant sidewalk be provided along the west Boltwood Avenue that connects to the proposed sidewalks associated with the performance shell and connect to the existing sidewalks located at the north-west and south-west corners on the south portion of the Town Common.

Tory Dixon suggested that if portable toilets are required for an event, then at least one ADA compliant portable toilets be provided.

Elysse Link suggested that a color and tactile contrast be provided along the edge of the stage platform.

Tory Dixon asked about the stage surface provided for dancers. Gabrielle Gould responded that a marley stage will be provided, which get lifted up off of the flooring, and padding is provided.

After the Board discussed the proposal, the following motion and vote was made.

MOTION: Moved by Marty Smith, seconded by Elysse Link, and voted (6-0) to give a positive recommendation to the Town Council and Town Services & Outreach Committee for Downtown Amherst Foundation's proposed performance shell, with the following suggestions:

1. Provide a sidewalk along the west side of Boltwood Avenue, connecting to the proposed sidewalks associated with the performance shell and to the existing sidewalks located at the north-west and south-west corners on the south portion of the Town Common. The sidewalk should be wide enough so that a van lift can be accommodated;
2. If a portable toilet is required for an event associated with the performance shell, at least one (1) portable toilet should be accessible. The said accessible toilet(s) should be identified by the International Symbol of Accessibility.
3. All pedestrian walkways should have a hard, smooth surface and should meet all ADA and MAAB regulations.
4. A color and tactile contrast should be provided along the edge of the stage platform.
5. The DAAC should been given an opportunity to review and provide comments on the performance shell design at 50% and at 90% review.
6. Consider converting some to all of the Spring Street regular parking spaces to become temporary ADA parking spaces during events associated with the performance shell.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Status on Pomeroy Village Intersection Project** – The Town Council reviewed the Pomeroy Village Intersection Project at its November 8, 2021 meeting. The project will be reviewed by DAAC at a future meeting.
2. **Status of North Common plan (handicapped parking and other considerations)** – Ms. Ross provided the Committee a draft letter addressed to Assistant Town Manager Dave Ziomek regarding the DAAC’s concerns about the loss of accessible parking spaces in close proximity of Town Hall and the Town Common

The DAAC reviewed the draft letter and made provided edits.

MOTION: Moved by Ms. Derin, seconded by Ms. Dixon, and voted (6-0) to approve the letter, as amended, to be sent to Assistant Town Manager Dave Ziomek regarding the DAAC’s concerns about the loss of accessible parking spaces in close proximity of Town Hall and the Town Common

3. **Status on the repairs/replacement of pedestrian signals** – The DAAC would like to send another letter to Town Manager Paul Bockelman regarding the DAAC’s concerns about broken pedestrian signals and asking if/when they will be repaired/replaced.

OTHER BUSINESS NOT ANTICIPATED WITHIN 48 HOURS:

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Moved by Ms. Dixon, seconded by Ms. Derin, and voted 6-0, to adjourn at 1:08PM