



Advisory Committee on Accessibility

**Monday, September 21, 2026, 3:00 PM, 3:00 pm, Sharon Bushor Conference Room,
149 Church Street, OR Remotely via ZOOM**

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://zoom.us/j/96458163787?pwd=cy0Oo4cojIRpMP3XzAx4UkLjx6FiMg.1>

Meeting ID: 964 5816 3787

Passcode: 240456

In Attendance:

Nate Besio, Chair (NB)
Lisa Black (LB)
Meaghan Diffenderfer (MD)
Karen Downey (KD)
Sharon Henault (SH)
Jacquie Kelley (JK)
Ashley Parker (AP)

Others in Attendance:

Dan Norris, VABVI (DN)
Scott Phillips, DPW (SP)
Jackie Esperti, DPW (JE)
Sophie Sauve, BPRW (SS)
Bruce Wilson, Ward 8 Resident (BW)
Hannah, Burlington Resident (H)

Meeting called to order, 3:01 pm

1. Adopt the Agenda

SH moves to adopt the agenda
MD seconds

All in favor, so moved and adopted

2. Adopt Minutes

KB Moves to adopt the minutes from the July meeting

SH Seconds

All in favor, so moved and approved

3. Introductions

Committee members introduce themselves.

4. Public Forum

Visitors DN, SP, JE, and SS introduce themselves.

5. Committee News & Updates

KD shares that there's an event coming up with the Occupational Therapy department at UVM to take a tour of their [Smart Apartment](#). Information will be shared with Nate so that the committee can join if available. This apartment is designed to showcase existing tools to help those with mobility & sensory challenges. The tour will be before Thanksgiving this year.

6. DPW Funding Request

JE and SP, on behalf of DPW, requests the use of the BACA Appropriated Funds of up to \$2,740 for the instillation of new, updated pedestrian buttons at the intersection of Riverside Ave. and Hillside Terr.

The committee provided feedback, including SH sharing challenges around use many existing pedestrian buttons in town.

The DPW Team provided information on where the new wave pedestrian buttons have been installed, and potential solutions for current buttons that are not currently accessible for all users.

DN proposes creating an informational video with DPW/VABVI around the new buttons, how to use them, and where they exist in the city.

KD moves to allocate \$2,740 from the BACA Allocated Funding to DPW for pedestrian buttons for the Riverside and Hillside intersection.

SH second the motion.

All in favor, so moved and accepted.

7. BPRW Playground Renovation

SS provided a brief update from BPRW around several planned playground replacements in the coming years. The meetings will be: September 24 from 3-4 pm at Baird Park; October 1 from 3-4 pm at Ethan Alley Park; October 8 from 3-6 pm at Smalley Park. The BPRW team will get feedback from playground users, and notes that there will be a future invitation for a playground committee that will be assembled.

Committee members ask clarifying questions and provide feedback on other parks to consider.

8. White Cane Awareness Day

DN explains the history of White Cane Awareness Day, and invites the committee to join on Oct. 16 at 10 am at 200 Pearl St. for the 62nd White Cane Awareness Day. The event will directly mirror the commute of Anne Connelly, the first Vermonter to have a white cane and guide dog, who travelled independently from Pearl St. to her office in City Hall. At the culmination of the event, a plaque will be dedicated and a proclamation read by the Mayor's Office. DN asks the committee to approve the plaque language, which will then be purchased by VABVI. The plaque will read in print and braille:

A professional blind woman who pioneered Services for the blind

Here in 1928, Anne Connelly, Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired's first teacher, taught students, and volunteers, to read, write and transcribe Braille. In 1929, she established a classroom to teach transformative life-changing independent living skills to blind Vermonters. Anne positively impacted public views on blindness as a professional, and by example, being the first blind Vermonter to travel with a white cane and with the first guide dog in Vermont, Betty.

Committee members provide feedback and reflection. SH suggests rewording “transformative”; committee elects “life-changing” in place.

MD moves to approve the plaque with the edit
LB seconds
All in favor, so moved and approved.

9. PlanBTV 2050 Wishlist Discussion

Since the wishlist has been distributed via email for committee review previously, MD will send to PlanBTV team, and the committee will table any larger discussions for the next meeting.

SH would like to see a “Compliance and Review” Committee of sorts to ensure projects, especially with accessibility components, are being looked at with an accessibility lens and evaluated after completion to be sure the project is completed in full as contracted. This idea will be added to the list before a final copy is sent to the planBTV team.

10. Other Committee Business

MD reminds committee members that there is an available stipend. Details will be sent via email as well.

SH shares that the City negotiated with Farrell on the Cambrian Way project, and part of that was to have an accessible path to the bike path. SH is looking to find who at the City should be contacted about to see the contract is adhered to.

LB notes DRB would have approved this contract, and recommends reaching out to Permitting & Inspections.

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned: 4:05 pm.

12. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements

Subject 12.1. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. For more information on access, call Lori Olberg, Licensing, Voting and Records Coordinator (802-865-7136)(TTY 802-865-7142). Persons with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate are encouraged to contact 802-865-7000 (voice) or 802-865-7142 (TTY) at least 72 hours in advance so that proper arrangements can be made. This meeting will also air on Town Meeting TV the Wednesday after the meeting, starting at 8:00 pm and repeating at 1:00 am and 7:00 am the following day. The City of Burlington will not tolerate unlawful harassment or discrimination on the basis of political or religious affiliation, race, color, national origin, place of birth, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, veteran status, disability, HIV positive status, crime victim status or genetic information.

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Category 12. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements

Department Council and Board

Type