

City of Pittsburgh/Allegheny County
Task Force on Disability
Monday May 20, 2013
1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

Task Force Members in Attendance: Dr. Katherine Seelman, Paul O'Hanlan, James C. Nochese, John Tague, Janet Evans, Aurelia Carter-Scott, Joe Wasserman, Milton Henderson

Task Force Members Absent: Jeff Parker, Sarah Goldstein, Rich McGann, Liz Healy, Linda Dickerson

Also in Attendance: Lester Bennett, Shirley Ebriola, Charles Morrison, Randy Whitehair, Mary Esther Van Shaura, Elizabeth Daniels-Totten, Ali Abdullah, Stephanie Boczar, Donald Kovacic, Richard Meritzer, Steve Fowler, Sara Fernandez, Lisa Schoon

Welcome and Introduction:

Paul O'Hanlan

Mr. O'Hanlan began the meeting by introductions of Task Force members and other individuals in attendance.

1. **Review and Approval of the Financial Report**

John Tague

There was no financial report for this meeting, There will be a financial report at the June Task Force meeting.

2. **Presentation: Three Rivers Center for Independent Living Study**
Stephanie Boczar

Ms. Boczar introduced a research study that focuses on access to housing markets in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan area. She stated that travel and access to reliable transportation via a personal vehicle or ACCESS is required. All individuals with or without a disability may apply for participation in the study. To be selected for participation, an interested individual must first contact Ms. Boczar to schedule a preliminary interview.

If you are selected as a participant, you will be expected to perform site visits and conduct interviews. Additionally, a participant will be required to record and enter notes, data, and other observations regarding their experiences into an online database. Personal care attendants may provide assistance to individuals with disabilities who require certain accommodations such as assistance with transportation or assistance with entering data. For each project assignment that a participant is given, participants may earn up to a \$100 stipend in addition to reimbursement for travel-related expenses.

Any questions should be directed to Stephanie Boczar at (412)371-7700 x181 or sboczar@trcil.org.

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Questions from Taskforce Members:

Mr. Nochese expressed concern over the accessibility of the project to persons who do not possess high functioning level of computer skills. Ms. Bozcar responded saying that due to the nature of the study, a caretaker or aid may assist in the manual or entry portion of the data collection.

Mr. Tague asked for clarification on the selection criteria. Ms. Bozcar said that reliability and dependability would be paramount in the ideal candidate. Flexibility, time-management, and interpersonal skills are all needed in order to properly facilitate data collection

Dr. Seelman asked for clarification on the purpose of the study. Ms. Bozcar indicated that the data collected will be used to assess the accessibility of persons with disabilities to certain housing markets.

Ms. Carter-Scott asked for additional details that would be helpful in recruiting and referring candidates to TRCIL Ms. Bozcar mentioned that all information will be provided to interested candidates at an interview, and that those who are interested should apply.

3. Discussion: Best Practices in Public Art

Lisa Schoon

ADA Intern Lisa Schoon presented her research about “Accessible Public Art in Pittsburgh.” The research focused on the current state of accessible public art within Pittsburgh as well as a discussion of best practices for accessible public art.

ADA Requirements

Public art is governed by Title II of the ADA. Since the City of Pittsburgh is a public entity and the installation and management of public art is a service which the City provides, it must adhere to ADA Regulations. However, the ADA Regulations do not specifically address public art.

In order for public art to be ADA compliant, the City must make appropriate reasonable accommodations to ensure that people with disabilities have the same ability to access and receive the benefits of public art. The only exception that exists in the requirement of reasonable accommodation is when there is a definitive safety risk with the accommodation.

Best Practices

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Ms. Schoon next discussed the best practices for accessibility of public art based on the type of disability:

Mobility Impairments

She first discussed accommodations for individuals with mobility impairments. One issue for individuals with mobility impairments involves un-level terrain. To improve un-level terrain, the location should either level the site or provide a level and navigable path to and around the site. Additionally, ramps can be integrated into the design of the artwork itself or the surrounding scenery.

Next, accessible seating should be integrated into the design of the exhibit to benefit the entire population. Handrails, preferably Raynes Rail Braille and Audio Rails for the benefit of the visually impaired population, can be placed in the vicinity of the exhibit to benefit the entire populations.

Lastly, to make public water sites accessible for the enjoyment of all individuals, raised fountain edges should not be used when possible. Raised fountain edges prevent individuals with mobility constraints from full enjoyment of the water.

Visual Impairments

Ms. Schoon next discussed accommodations for individuals with visual impairments. The first issue discussed is the improvement of signage surrounding a public art exhibit. Print signage should exist and should be printed in an easily readable font and in at least size 16-18 font so individuals with low vision can read the sign easily.

Next, Braille signage should be created or improved. The Braille signage can be located within a non-intrusive to the art exhibit, but still equally accessible area near the exhibit. Additionally, the Raynes Rail Braille and Audio Brail should be used to give directions and warn of physical changes such as ramps, stairs, or turns. It can also be used to give a description of the art exhibit and a button for an optional audio description.

4. Staff Reports

a. **Review of City Code:**

Sara Fernandez

Ms. Fernandez provided an update on the City Code Review Project. Over the last month Ms. Fernandez has been reviewing the Code. She began with

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Title IX (zoning) Articles 1-5. This portion of the code regulates development within the City of Pittsburgh. Additionally, Ms. Fernandez has established a timeline for completion of the code review process; Title IX will be completed over the month of June (articles 6-9), and the Building, Historic Preservation, and the Lighting code in the month of July. Ms. Fernandez anticipates moving completing the Zoning Code by end of August. At that time, a re-evaluation of priorities will determine the next stage of reviewing Titles I-VIII.

Mr. Fernandez provided the Task Force with a summary of proposed changes for the Task Force to review.

The Task Force suggested the formation of a focus group to field and review recommendations for revisions to the City Code and welcomes participation from members of the disability community.

b. **Pedestrian Safety Issues:**

Steve Fowler

Mr. Fowler provided an update on issues and projects related to pedestrian safety in the City of Pittsburgh. In a cooperative effort with Neighbors in the Strip, has lead to a metrics spreadsheet for evaluating the safety and status of an intersection. Criteria includes: presence/absence/status of curb ramps, paint, signals, sidewalks, etc. Summer High School Interns will conduct field work this summer to evaluate and identify intersections with outdated or incomplete crosswalks, curb ramps, and signals. Additionally, a new traffic signal is being installed at 13th and Smallman Streets; this intersection was identified (according to the survey) as one of the more dangerous intersections in the Strip. Installation of the new signal is expected to be completed in 1-2 months. Additionally, Neighbors in the Strip is collecting the final \$5,200 in funding for a flashing beacon traffic calming device at 14th street. Any new signals will be audible and accessible.

5. **Vox Pop**

- a. Janet Evans announced that she will be the recipient of the UCP Service Award, which will be presented on June 23 at the UCP Annual Meeting.
- b. Joe Wasserman called attention to the accessibility of bus stops and the status of Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership. An invitation to attend the next Task Force meeting will be extended to the Allegheny County port Authority. Additionally, Mr. Wasserman again called attention to vacancies in the Task Force membership—which should be placed as an agenda item for the June meeting.

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A motion to adjourn the Task Force Meeting was made by Janet Evans, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote.

The next meeting will be June 17, 2013.