



Columbus Advisory Committee on Disability Issues

Minutes of Meeting December 3, 2015

Members present: Mary Hiland – Chair, Karen Kostelac – Vice Chair, Tricia Kovacs, Tiffany McClain, Kay Grier, Paul Walker, Katie Frederick, Ann Gazelle
Members absent: Rajai Saleh, Ann Christopher, Marlene Stewart
Members Excused: James Favuzzi, Elizabeth Sammons
Staff: Rick Isbell, James Christian
Guests: David Cameron, Pamela Makowski, Geri Cooper, Frank Dean, Ronnell Tomlinson, Bill Stepp

Call to Order: Mary Hiland, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1 pm.

Guest Speaker:

Frank Dean, Housing indoor quality inspector

Frank Dean discussed his experiences as a housing quality inspector, in particular regarding toxic aspergillus mold. Frank shared his story about becoming disabled after a fall from a 28' ladder which caused a burst fracture in his vertebrae. One of his first cases was a mold issue in 1996 identified by Dr. Dearborn of Case Western Reserve Rainbow Babies Hospital. There were many cases of infants with pulmonary hemosiderosis and several children died. These children lived in low-income housing with little maintenance and mold issues. Frank also worked with JAHCO on hospital accreditation. He also works with corporate relocation companies.

Frank shared a few local stories such as a New Albany home which was valued at \$995K but after 3 years and a mold problem was only valued at \$144K, which was the value of the lot and demolition cost. He also inspected a \$1.2M Dublin home which appeared fine but behind cherry molding the framing had turned to mush. Another local case was a bathroom restore in Minerva Park which caused a total immune shutdown in the owner. He shared a story of Melinda Ballard of Texas, who won a \$32M lawsuit against Farmers Insurance after a mold problem caused cognitive disorders in her husband and son. A similar local case was a \$3.2M lawsuit against Maronda Homes.

Home sales require disclosure of mold. There are no rules in the Ohio health department which requires Frank to report mold. He is not required to report danger to children. Many of the mold problems are due to the new building materials such as drywall and fiberboard, which develop mold after getting wet due to flooding or plumbing problems. The Indoor Environment Standards

Organization is trying to make mold testing available to the public. Some inspection companies take advantage of clients by taking more samples than necessary; Frank said that typically you need only one sample per floor and one outside.

Frank told us he has problems inspecting because he uses a wheelchair but he is looking into technology to do inspections, such as remote cameras and drones.

General Discussion:

We discussed accessible restrooms and handicapped parking. Columbus police do not ticket on private property, but in Ohio, police may ticket on private property.

Pam Makowski told us that she just started using a wheelchair in July after a hip replacement. She said that people without disabilities are unaware of the problems faced by people with mobility disabilities. She said that Urgent Care would not serve her due to her service dog. Ronnell Tomlinsin said she needs to file a complaint.

We had a long conversation about ADA issues. How can we educate others on disabilities, such as first responders, bus drivers? Kay Grier said that Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities and SILC can provide this training. Pam will look into partnering with Kiwanis.

Approval of October minutes: Kay Grier moved, Ann Gazelle seconded, all approved.

Old Business:

Kay Grier is making progress on a presentation to city council. Her aide, Ryan Patrus, will help with this effort. She is drafting a letter introducing our group. Katie Frederick and Pam Makowski will assist.

Karen Kostelac said that Waterford Tower keeps a list of tenants who uses mobility devices. The fire department comes twice per year to check extinguishers and to be aware of tenants who need assistance.

Tricia Kovacs said that she will create 311s for the problems which have been encountered with the Columbus website.

Rick Isbell reported that the October Homeless Veterans' Standdown at the Convention Center was very successful, with 525 veterans, many with disabilities, participating.

Election of officers:

The officers nominated for 2016-2017 are Karen Kostelac for chair, Patricia Kovacs for vice chair, and Katie Frederick for secretary. The vote was taken and the candidates were elected unanimously.

New Business:

Karen Kostelac asked if the February 25 meeting can be moved to the board of elections at 1700 Morse Rd. She will be working there and has worked with the

board to provide lunch for our members/guests at the meeting. We voted and approved the move.

Jim Christian said that curb ramp flooding is a problem because it damages the infrastructure. He asked that we please report these problems to Jim or create 311 reports.

Kay Grier said she is working on a venue for the 2016 ADA event. They are considering the Ohio State fairgrounds or the zoo. Rick Isbell suggested we could partner with COTA at their evaluation center.

Karen Kostelac had a bad experience with strollers taking up space in the area for wheelchairs on the bus. Bill Estep said she should report this to the service center.

Paul Walker asked if the bus drivers on the Summit route where new protected bike lanes are installed (between the bus island and the curb) could announce to passengers that the bus islands are there. Katie Frederick asked that the new bus islands will be maintained.

Ronnell Tomlinson told us that new legislation will require new landlords to receive accommodation training and fair housing training.

2016 schedule of meetings:

January 28 Indoor Adventure Center

February 25 Early voting center 1700 Morse Rd. (lunch provided)

March 24 Indoor Adventure Center

April 28 Indoor Adventure Center

May 26 Indoor Adventure Center

June 23 State Library of Ohio

July 28 State Library of Ohio

August 25 Indoor Adventure Center

September 22 Indoor Adventure Center

October 27 Indoor Adventure Center

November - no meeting

December 1 (1st Thursday) Indoor Adventure Center

The meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.

Patricia Kovacs, scribe