

Minutes
Access to Facilities Implementation Committee
Tuesday, March 11, 2014
2:00 P.M.
80 Washington Street
Hartford, CT

The Connecticut Judicial Branch Access to Facilities Implementation Committee met on Tuesday, March 11, 2014, at 2 p.m. in Community Court in Hartford, Ct.

Committee members in attendance: Attorney Stephen Ment, Chair; Ms. Isabel Alvarez, Ms. Virginia Apple, Mr. Richard Byam, Ms. Jamey L. Harris, Mr. Daniel Irace, Attorney Richard Loffredo, Mr. James Morgan, Ms. Debra Novaco, Attorney Brandon E. Pelegano, Mr. Robert Burke, Mr. Gary Salisbury, Attorney Roy Smith Jr., Chief Judicial Marshal Relford Ward, Ms. Janet Zigadto.

Committee members absent: Ms. Denise Beaulieu, Chief Judicial Marshal Russell Downer Jr., Ms. M. Jill Hoskins, Mr. Robert Kilpatrick, Ms. Jeanne Roberge.

Others in attendance: Attorney Maureen Finn, Legal Services advisor; Ms. Heather Nann Collins, support staff.

- I. **Welcome:** Attorney Ment called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.
- II. **Approval of January 11, 2014 meeting Minutes:** There were three minor corrections to the minutes. Attorney Loffredo made a motion to adopt the revised minutes, it was seconded and approved by the members. There were no Nay votes.
- III. **Report on the Litchfield and New Britain judicial districts:**
 - **Litchfield: Attorney Ment** reported that he and Attorney Pelegano attended the Feb. 6, 2014 meeting of the Litchfield Historic District Commission. The purpose was to discuss the need for a sign in front of the historic building, directing court users to the wheelchair accessible entrance. The Commission members were very receptive, Attorney Ment reported, and they worked with him and Attorney Pelegano to select a sign. The sign has been ordered and will be installed when the ground thaws.
 - **New Britain: Attorney Loffredo** reported that he, Attorney Pelegano, Ms. Novaco and others met with a number of Judicial Branch staff at the Judicial District courthouse to conduct an assessment. There were no major issues in this relatively new building, Attorney Loffredo said, but some things could be accomplished to improve wayfinding for court users. In particular, the group noted that there are no directories outside of elevators that point individuals in the right direction of the particular office that one may be visiting. The team is going to be assessing the Bristol GA the week of March 17th.
- IV. **Report on the 90 Washington Street Project:**

- **Attorney Loffredo** reported that the assessment team continues to assess and make recommendations, particularly with respect to the signage on the building's bottom floor, which is often used for family support magistrate court, and where room usage can change depending on the day of the week. Attorney Loffredo met with representatives of Support Enforcement Services, and he has been in contact with the Department of Correction on the feasibility and cost of having hanging signage made to make locations easier to see. **Attorney Ment** noted that there are some challenges at 90 Washington, such as soundproofing squares that are an impediment to installing temporary signage and phone bank areas that take up ideal wall space but that do not have phones. The assessment continues.

V. **Report on the Subcommittee on Online Directions and General Information:**

- **Ms. Apple** reported that staff at the Information Technology Division have been working diligently to continue to update and revise when necessary the online directions to Branch facilities. Road markers change over time, signs are added or removed, as are traffic lights, so the process is one of constant assessment and implementation of changes. **Attorney Ment** offered his sincere thanks to the IT staff for their dedication in getting the work done in a timely fashion. Ms. Apple also noted that IT is also looking at ways to make the online maps more accurate; an issue arose where the map indicated "Parking", but in fact those lots were not open to the public, leading to confusion for some people. They are also considering adding local offices to the existing maps, such as SES or Probation office locations (as opposed to courthouses only). Ms. Apple asked the Committee members to use the Branch's online directions, and to email her directly with any corrections or proposed changes.

- VI. Update on the signage application: Mr. Salisbury said that the internal, online signage database has been very well received by staff, with dozens of requests processed. There have been no complaints about the design, ordering process, or delivery.
- VII. Working Group Report on Wayfinding: Attorney Smith reported that he attended a meeting with New Haven planners, who are in the early stages of developing signage for the Elm City. He provided the members with a draft book of signage as developed by a company, for the city. It is hoped that the Judicial Branch can convince other towns and cities with court locations to include wayfinding signage indicating those locations.
- VIII. Other business: There was some general discussion about the need to expand the signage offered in the internal database, possibly to include other languages, and developing specific signage regarding the availability of on-site Americans with Disabilities Act contact people. Attorney Ment said the committee should consider this for its next meeting.
- IX. Adjournment: Attorney Ment suggested the group meet next in Litchfield so that the Committee can see the results of the changes made after the JD's assessment. Attorney Pelegano will find a room for the Committee to meet in, in June. An exact date will be noticed on the Branch website. The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.