

Access to Facilities
Public Service and Trust Commission
July 28, 2010

In Attendance:

Ms. Virginia Apple
Attorney Robert Burke
Mr. Rich Byam
Ms. Karen Chorney
Ms. Alejandra Donath
Ms. Cristina Goncalves
Attorney Jeffrey Hammer

Ms. Precious Hyland
Mr. Robert Kilpatrick
Ms. Jill Levine
Attorney Stephen Ment
Ms. Debra Novaco
Attorney Steven Pelletier
Attorney Roy Smith, *Co-Chair*

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m.

The Committee reviewed and, with exception to a single correction, approved the minutes. Atty. Smith will issue a correction in relation to the matter.

The committee began the meeting by viewing digital photos and hearing an overview of those facilities that were visited by committee members.

Atty. Stephen Ment provided the overview for Bristol GA 17 Court and indicated the following:

- Basically had no signage.
- Available signage was small.
- Permanent marker had been used to create signage for a couple of doors.

Atty. Smith provided photos from Lauretano Group of the front entrance to the New Haven Judicial District Court and indicated the following:

- Paper signage is being used.
- Building exit is not clear.
- No signs available to individuals driving to the facility.

Mr. Rich Byam provided the overview for 1 Lafayette Circle, Bridgeport (Support Enforcement Office) and indicated the following:

- Front signage is only viewable upon walking up to the building otherwise a person would assume by the large sign on top of the building that it is the GE Credit Union.
- (It was noted that there is no public parking in the front parking lot for the building. The public must park on the street or find alternative parking.) Accessibility to the building is only available by walking up as the parking in the front is accessible to employees only.

- It is not clear that the second floor is Support Enforcement Services.

Bridgeport Juvenile Court

- The Juvenile Building has no signage indicating that the building is such.
- No signage indicating which building is juvenile detention and which is court.
- While there are two doors to enter through, the right side is kept locked. There isn't a sign indicating such so visitors try to enter on the right, only to view the marshal through the glass directing them to enter through the left door.
- The Juvenile detention sign is very small and is not visible from a car, you must be up close.
- No Directory/Building Name/Signage – the committee has a brief discussion surrounding the directory. That until very recently courthouses weren't not actually given their own name; they were all in essence, "State of Connecticut Superior Court". That at times, directories were not part of the design of the building, and economics were a key factor in whether a directory would be installed.

Atty. Jeffrey Hammer provided the overview for 300 & 400 Grand in Waterbury, Connecticut

300 Grand Street

- Directions to the court on the DOT signs are small, making it difficult to see from a distance. The west bound directions are not good.
- Directory was not good
- Entrance to building has a stop sign in place being propped up by a metal chair.
- A positive observation was that the court service center is accessible to individuals as soon as they walk through the metal detector.
- No signage for the housing session. The location of the "housing session" sign isn't actually the location for the housing session.
- Paper signs throughout
- No sign for the telephone booth
- Docket posting and text size not good for visually impaired individuals
- There is a curb cut outside the building that can make it difficult for individuals.

400 Grand Street

- Positive observation: Stairwells have very good diagrams posted on every floor.
- The restroom signage appears to be a bit high.
- There is a paper cell phone sign indicating that phones can be confiscated and held for 24 hours.
- Community court signs are paper and plastic.
- Signage for public parking is not good.

Non State of Connecticut Judicial Facilities

Federal Court House – Boston Mass

Atty. Smith provided the committee with an overview of the newer federal courthouse in Boston, that he and Ms. Lugo Ginés recently visited.

- Beautiful building
- The interior back section of the building has an inward oval shaped designed floor plan which encompasses a glass atrium that overlooks Boston harbor. Courtrooms and some office wall signs are flat mounted signs which are difficult to see due to the contour of the walls
- Positive observation that there are absolutely no paper signs allowed in or outside any of the courtrooms, this was done by agreement of the judges. There are boards located at the entrances to the building that paper signs are permitted to be posed in a neat manner.
- Most signage in the building is very non-descript and small with the exception of historical and ceremonial displays through out the building.

Yale New Haven

- Great example of signage

Hartford Hospital

- Initial entrance signage is not good
- Signage in Radiology is great example of signage (plastic with knobs)
- Multi-language signage

Miscellaneous Facility Information

- The Federal Court in Springfield, Mass is using digital signs for its daily dockets. Atty. Smith suggested that the courthouse be visited to view the digital dockets.

Atty. Smith briefed the committee on the following:

- Atty. Smith and Ms. Lugo Ginés met with Atty. Joseph D'Alesio, Executive Director of Court Operations. The meeting went well as they reviewed all the access to facilities materials collected, created and reviewed to date. They outlined to Atty. D'Alesio the progress of the committee and consulted with him concerning the committee's direction.
- Atty. Smith and Ms. Lugo Ginés will be meeting with Judge Quinn and Judge Carroll on August 11, 2010. Atty. Smith informed the committee to feel free to forward any information they thought should be included in the presentation to Judge Quinn to either Ms. Lugo Ginés or himself.
- Atty. Smith informed the committee that the goal of the full committee is to wrap up all visits/assessments by the end of the fall.
- Atty. Smith received some feedback regarding the usage of the template/checklist verses the narrative style report. Atty. Smith received pro's and con's in regards to both, but indicated that the consultants and

architectural firms he and Ms. Lugo Ginés have been speaking to actually like the idea of a template/checklist. Atty. Smith indicated that a sub-committee should be formed to create and review which assessment tool should be used during the process by the local committees, either a standard template/checklist, or written narrative. The subcommittee will meet in August and will present their findings to the full committee for its approval on its recommendations at the next full committee meeting.

- Volunteers are needed for the sub-committee on assessment tools.
- Atty. Smith informed the committee that he and Ms. Lugo Ginés are currently compiling all information into individual binders. Several committee members submitted ideas for data tracking tools including, utilizing Share Point, Scanning the documentation, and utilizing the Judicial Branch Intranet as a way to store all the data. Information Technology needs to be contacted as they will be an integral part of this process.
- Atty. Smith informed the committee that Lauretano Group has made an offer to assess a building of our choosing for a signage proposal package. Legal Services has indicated that there may be legal and or ethical issues with the offer. It is possible that Lauretano may put themselves in a position of being excluded from future bidding if the Judicial Branch solicits RFP's for the project. Atty. Steve Pelletier is looking into the matter and will report his findings to Ms. Lugo Ginés and Atty. Smith shortly.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Addendum to the minutes of June 29, 2010

- * Atty. Smith and Ms. Lugo Ginés are in receipt of statistics provided by the Interpreter's Office which identify the second and third most commonly spoken languages in each District. This information may be used to determine the language(s) of signage used in the court facilities. It was also suggested that due to the fact that oftentimes people who speak Spanish have difficulty *reading* the language, signs be posted at the Marshal's station directing them to the Interpreter's Office and/or the Language Line.

**** The minutes should not have reflected that Spanish speaking individuals should be directed to the Interpreter's office.**

The next meeting will be held on:

**Tuesday, September 14, 2010
2:00 p.m.
99 East River Drive, 7th Floor -707
East Hartford, Connecticut 06118**