

PLAINFIELD ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DRAFT MINUTES
APRIL 16, 2026 (Meeting rescheduled from April 1)

Present: Alicia Weiss, Mary Lane, Dawn Fancher, Mitch Pauley,
Allison Joyall, Andy Robinson SB Liaison

Call meeting to order: Meeting called to order at 5:34pm. Andy Robinson joined the meeting as a liaison to the Select Board; Introductions were made.

Review, propose changes, adopt agenda: Agenda approved unanimously.

Review/edit/approve draft minutes of February 4: Minutes approved as edited. Mary asked if the draft minutes taken on April 1 when there was no quorum, but an informal meeting was held to listen to guest Michael Billingsley talk about the Town Hall Accessibility Project, should be entered and approved. Andy will contact Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) to clarify.

Public Comment: No guests attended this meeting.

Status Update of Accessible Parking Space at Town Hall/Opera House: Alicia and Mary provided a recap of Michael Billingsley's update on 4/1/26 re: the accessible parking space at the Town Hall/Opera Space. The parking space and access lane were made too narrow by the contractor; therefore, the space is not ADA compliant. The architect's plan, approved by the grantor, also requires proper regrading of the lawn from the parking space to the building, as it is not safe. The contractor failed to address the latter. Karl Bissex (Road Commissioner) has indicated the Town will need to procure a backhoe for that aspect of the plan. It was proposed to write a letter to the Select Board and Karl Bissex, supporting proper completion of the project to ADA standards, with a reminder to keep Michael, as the project manager of the grant

informed, as he will need to submit the final report to the grantor. The Committee supported sending the letter, which Alicia will draft.

S.298 Update: Alicia reported the “voting rights” bill, stripped of all language about accessibility in the Senate, upon instructions of the Secretary of State’s (SoS) office, has continued to be driven by SoS and town administrative interests in the House. Despite recent written comments from the disability community and written assurances that RevUp would have the opportunity to testify before House Government Operations and Military Affairs, disability concerns were never discussed.

RevUp VT Leadership Meeting Report

The group has contracted work with consultant, Laura Hale, to address issues related to disabled voters. A short-term goal is to identify advocates to contact their legislators with a push to at a minimum, include “disability” as a protected class during the reconciliation process. Longer-term planning is focused on candidate and elected official education, with an emphasis upon the upcoming election cycle.

RevUp VT 1st & 2nd Coalition Meetings Report:

Dawn noted Coalition Meetings provide the important opportunity to network with other disability advocates and mentioned the utility of creating a roadmap packet with resources for towns. The Coalition raised concerns about gubernatorial candidate Amanda Janoo who has advocated for expanding town meetings to include hybrid voting options, but restricting voting to “floor votes” for all, without articulating a logistical plan to accomplish this. Alicia remarked upon current technical, economic and statutory hurdles to affect that outcome. Dawn noted that while hybrid voting might seem accessible, it could actually limit participation for some. Alicia noted that current Vermont voting law prohibits hybrid voting, and previous efforts to explore this option were unsuccessful due to concerns about security and voter fraud, although secure and accessible technologies were not meaningfully explored.

The RevUp Coalition has agreed that broad education is needed to inform candidates and Vermonters in general about the current status of disability voter suppression and the impact of current statute and town practices upon accessible voting.

Andy queried about a solution. Dawn and Allison brought up accessibility requirements for Town Meetings and ballot access. Allison advocated for ASL interpreters and captioners as standard practices, sharing an example of how a hearing-impaired resident was unable to attend due to lack of accommodations. The discussion included venue factors, raised by Mitch, e.g., limited accessible parking and physical navigation of small spaces for people using mobility devices.

RevUp VT Leadership Meeting Report

Continued Discussion of timeline for public outreach and education about accessible voting for coming year:

Alicia presented research on state requirements for modifications to Plainfield's Town Meeting Day voting processes. Because Town charter changes would not be required, Plainfield residents could make such decisions through Town vote, without legislative involvement.

Alicia reported on the public outreach process and timeline employed by the Jericho DEI Committee, including data collection about voter participation over time and across voting methods, resident surveys, use of ongoing use of social media, brochures, and informational meetings. The town ultimately voted to adopt a process that combines hybrid meetings where residents can discuss, debate and propose amendments before a final vote by Australian ballot.

The committee discussed how it might adopt survey and outreach activity to Plainfield. It was agreed that including written proposal options and sending informational mailers to residents well in advance of Town Meeting, will be important as will the need to provide ongoing outreach to residents who cannot or choose not to engage online. The discussion highlighted the challenge of balancing inclusivity and equitable voting rights, with preserving the community's

traditional Town Meeting culture, as illustrated by a resident's concern about losing the town's gathering aspect.

Strategies for advocating for accessible town meetings were discussed, with Andy offering to serve as a devil's advocate to help anticipate and respond to potential questions.

Dawn will research voter turnout in Plainfield during April, while Allison volunteered to draft a letter to the Select Board about the Accessibility Committee's plan to bring the accessibility issue to Town Meeting as a formal article.

Other business: No other business discussed

Set date/time for next meeting: Meeting set for March 6, at 5:30pm as a Zoom meeting.

Adjourn meeting: Adjourned at 7:36pm

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Lane
April 20, 2026