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| **Meeting Re: ADA Complaints 🡪 Notes September 13, 2012** |

In Attendance

1. Caitlin Parton
2. Stacey Silliman
3. Lindsay Cowen
4. Keriann Pauls
5. Greg Harris
6. Kunal Sharma
7. Allie Robbins
8. Sheryl Howard
9. Steve Katz

INITIAL ADA APPROVAL

* In order for the building plans to receive their temporary certificate of occupancy [TCO] the plans must be inspected by the New York City Department of Buildings [NYCDOB]. This inspection involves an initial ADA compliance guideline, which this Citi building received in 2006. [It is unclear what the NYCDOB ADA compliance guidelines are]
* Ms. Howard made a few confusing statements about there being no case law pertaining to the NYCDOB being sued for its ADA compliance standards not matching to the Federal ADA standards. She said if it were to be challenged, the City would win.
* It was acknowledged by Ms. Howard that the building is not up to ADA standards, even though the TCO was received. However, she seems to think that there are no possible legal steps to take as the City has already approved of this building.
* Ms. Silliman contested Ms. Howard’s claim and stated that the building is not compliant. Ms. Howard interrupted Ms. Silliman and loudly expressed that the building is ADA compliant and that the solution to the problems of inadequacy cannot be legally challenged.
  + Ms. Silliman’s points were:
    - Bathroom doors and doors to classrooms require far more than 5 lbs. of pressure to open
    - Difficulty getting through the doors at the stairs
    - The push-button doors opening the main entrance frequently do not work
    - Swipe card entry is too far from the actual doors
* Mr. Katz claimed that the school is waiting on a bid to have the one contractor the school has, come and make adjustments, so that when you swipe your id, the door automatically open.
  + He stated that he would do the following:
    - Check to see if the doors can be loosened in order to require less pressure to open them
    - Be certain to request that the amount of time the doors in the stairway and elevators would stay open for a long enough amount of time.
* Mr. Katz stated that the reason things take longer in this building is because we don’t fully own the space, and that we have to go through the “condo-approved” procedure, which is to contact the management company [Kushman Wakefield] in order to get anything done. They have hired and will continue to use the Contractor, Merrick Industries for the door work
* While the door situation can be changed, it must be up to Class E fire code inspection [It is unclear how the doors can be both Class E approved, and also ADA approved 🡪 this point may need further clarification]

AUDIO SYSTEM – MICROPHONES

* Ms. Parton explained how the sounds system and microphones in the auditorium frequently do not work, and suggested that, for immediate purposes, there be a backup microphone system.
* She explained that the lighting in the auditorium is also too dim to see the professor who stands on a stage.
* She went further to express that this directly and personally was having negative effects on her education.
* Ms. Howard agreed that the microphone system was a “nightmare”. She gave the excuse that the building wiring under the floors is inadequate to furnish the microphone system, and that this should have been remedied when the building was purchased, but clearly has not been. She stated that the IT team is waiting for the “handoff” from the previous owner’s electronics “man”
  + Ms. Howard stated that she would:
    - Contact Dimitri to speak to him about the microphone problem
    - Work with Steve Katz to get a backup microphone system
  + Allie Robbins stated that she would:
    - Have the lights turned up in the auditorium

REMOTE CAPTIONING & NOTETAKING

* Ms. Parton stated that she has informed the school since last Spring, of the need for remote captioning accessibility and it has not been addressed. There is currently no remote captioning accessibility. She had spoken with Dean Valentine on several occasions last Spring regarding all her concerns with both the old and new building, and nothing has been addressed.
  + Ms. Howard stated that she would:
    - Speak to IT about this today
* Ms. Cowen stated that the note-taking assistance in the school is inadequate as the students who are “hired” to take notes are inconsistent, which is because they are not professional note-takers. She said there is little to no proper screening of these student note-takers, they were paid very little, and the notes were inconsistent. She said that when she talked with Dean Valentine about this last Spring, Dean Valentine suggested that the writing fellows could help out. Instead, Ms. Cowan suggested that professionals be hired
  + Ms. Cowen and Ms. Parton stated that they knew of professional note-taking companies and could inform Ms. Howard of them.
  + Ms. Howard said she would:
    - Talk to Pat Kennedy and Dean Valentine regarding the issue of professional notetakers.

ADA AWARENESS TRAINING FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

* Ms. Parton said there needs to be a training on ADA awareness for faculty and staff in the building. She said that she has to constantly advocate for herself and inform her professors of how to teach inclusively. Ms. Parton said that a training is needed so that she doesn’t have to constantly bear the burden of informing and educating the faculty and staff every time she is in a new class.
  + Ms. Howard stated that she would:
    - Look in to having Chris Rosa (a CUNY ADA compliance inspector) both inspect the building and provide the faculty and staff with ADA awareness training
    - Much emphasis was put on how important it was to have someone from within CUNY to conduct this inspection and give the talk because it would have more “weight” [it is unclear as to why].
    - It was explained that Pat Kennedy and Mary Nevins have been trying to get Mr. Rosa to come to the school during the summer, but because he is in such high demand, it takes a very long [this seems to be a strange problem as there are other people who the school could find for an ADA inspection]

NEXT STEPS

1. Ms. Howard and Mr. Katz will work on getting a backup microphone system
2. Ms. Robbins will have the lights turned up in the auditorium
3. Mr. Katz is contacting the management company to see about loosening the doors to alleviate the pressure and that when the company comes to adjust the swipe-card doors, that they will be adjusted to stay open for a long enough amount of time.
4. Mr. Katz is going to work on making sure the main entrance to the building has functioning push-button doors.
5. Ms. Parton and Ms. Cowen will find professional note-taking companies
6. Ms. Howard will check to see about Chris Rosa coming to the school for an ADA awareness training and an ADA inspection.
7. Ms. Howard will speak with Pat Kennedy and Dean Valentine regarding hiring professional note-takers.
8. Ms. Howard and Ms. Robins will contact this group via email about a follow-up meeting next week.