

Metra ADA Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

May 1, 2018, 2:00 PM

547 W Jackson Blvd
2nd Floor Training Room
Chicago, IL 60661

Attendance: Committee Members

J. Forte (Chairman)	D. A. Rubino, Metra
J. Panko Reis	J. Ferneborg, Metra
S. Dalton	G. Peters, Metra
L. Gerlach	G. Armstrong
S. Figved	H. Armstrong
D. Bogus	J. Powell
S. Hastalis	D. Shaw
S. E. Rangle	K. Hall – Sign Language Interpreter
P. Byrne (via telephone)	R. Payne – Sign Language Interpreter
K. Erickson (via telephone)	McCorkle Legal Services – CART Services
J. Mueller (via telephone)	

The meeting began at 2:05 pm. Chairman Forte called the meeting to order and welcomed all. He then invited the assembled to identify themselves and who they represented.

The first order of business was the approval of the February 20, 2018 minutes. Mr. Ferneborg told the assembled that he had mailed out electronic copies of the minutes. He also brought hard copies for further perusal. Chairman Forte called for a motion to approve the minutes. S. Hastalis brought the motion and S. Figved seconded. The February 20, 2018 minutes were approved.

The next item on the agenda was a report from David Rubino, Metra's Director of Station Services. He brought the Committee up to date on the following items. First, he told the Committee that the temporary structures related to the skylight replacement project at Chicago Union Station would be coming out of the breezeway by the end of May. The skylight project itself was scheduled for completion by the end of November. The second update had to do with the new elevator that would run from the street level on the west side of Canal Street down to the concourse level facing the Metra ticket windows. This elevator was due to be completed by the end of September. The third update had to do with the trafficking of rideshare (Uber and Lift) vehicles at both the Ogilvie Transportation Center (OTC) and Chicago Union Station (CUS). At OTC, the building management was doing its best to move such vehicles along, so as not to allow unnecessary congestion on Clinton or Canal Streets. At CUS, these vehicles were being staged north on the west side of Canal Street and moved along with the cab traffic. Concerns had come up in previous meetings about the difficulty of meeting these rides for customers with disabilities. Both facilities are doing their best to accommodate this traffic but to keep congestion down to a minimum. S. Figved brought up a concern about rideshare services in the region. He told the Committee that it is nearly impossible to get an accessible rideshare ride outside the Chicago city limits. This causes an acute problem for Metra passengers with disabilities who get to suburban locations and cannot find accessible transport. J. Panko Reis wanted to know what kind of relationship Metra had with rideshare companies. Mr. Rubino explained the

purely marketing relationship that Metra had with Uber with regard to the First Mile and Last Mile initiatives. Ms. Panko Reis expressed a concern that Metra, who was concerned with passengers with disabilities, should enter into such an agreement with an entity that could not provide accessible service. Both Mr. Rubino and Mr. Ferneborg told the Committee that they would look into this and get back to the Committee.

At this time, Mr. Ferneborg told the Committee that Francis Mascarenhas of Metra's Mechanical Department was attending a conference and could not be present. However, he had given Mr. Ferneborg the quarterly Mechanical report for the Committee.

At our 47th Street RID yard, there is a project to renovate the 302 Nippon Sharyo railcars that Metra received between 2003 and 2007. These cars will undergo the same complete renovation as the 176 Amerail cars. These cars would receive new trucks, floors, windows, lifts and electrical systems. In addition, they would be fitted with:

- Sensitive edges on side loading doors.
- LED scrolling signs.
- Twenty-one (21) electrical outlets on the main floor of the car.
- Passenger Emergency Intercom (PEI) systems. (Exterior speakers would be added to augment these systems.)

To date, 48 of these cars have been completed and the plan is to complete four a month until the project is completed.

Due to liquidated damages from a previous contract, Nippon Sharyo Sumitomo has agreed to provide seven accessible cars to Metra at no cost to us. We are scheduled to receive three of these cars in 2019. We are also working through an RFP to purchase 25 new accessible cars. Mr. Ferneborg told the Committee that Mr. Mascarenhas had given him the following message to be read at the May meeting. "I would like to express my appreciation to Susan Dalton for her help on Braille signage. We could not have accomplished this without her".

The next order of business was the report from Ken Schultz of Metra's Engineering Department. As always this report covers station construction projects and how they relate to access:

- At the LaSalle Street Station on the RID, there is a large project to remove and replace existing pavers through the entire plaza with granite pavers. For the duration of this project, the station will remain accessible and access to the elevator at 440 S. Financial will be maintained.
- At the Hazel Crest Station on the MED, there is an on-going project to renovate platforms and to add an elevator at the north end. This project is 30% complete. When finished, it will be fully accessible. During construction, this station will remain non accessible.
- At the Healy Station on the MDN, there is a project to rebuild the station with new platforms, warming shelter and accessible ramps on either side. This project is 65% complete. When finished, it will be fully accessible. Throughout the construction, this station will remain non accessible.
- On the UPW, both the Maywood and the Melrose Park stations will be affected by the installation of a third main. At Maywood, there is a new warming shelter and access from the parking lot to the platform. There is a new VIS sign. The platforms are in a temporary state and will be replaced with new tactile. At Melrose Park, platforms will be replaced, along with a new station and a new VIS sign. When complete, both stations will be upgraded from partially to fully accessible.

- At the Western Spring Station on the BNSF, there is an on-going project to replace deteriorating platforms east of Long Avenue. During construction, this station will remain accessible.
- At Winfield on the UPW, platforms have been replaced along with a new warming shelter. The project is 90% complete, awaiting new accessible handrails and guardrails. Throughout construction, this station will remain accessible.
- At Grayland on the MDN, we are replacing platforms, stairs and handrails. When complete, this station will remain accessible.
- This summer the Metra B & B forces have a schedule of platform replacements and renovations. The stations included are as follows:
 - Hickory Creek, RID.
 - Vernon Hills, NCS.
 - North Glenview, MDN.
 - Washington Street/Grayslake, NCS.
 - 111th Street, RID.
 - Route 59, BNSF.

With all of these projects, the platform work will be done in such a way that these stations will all remain accessible.

At Joliet, a new central station is now complete and there are new platforms for both the RID and HC sides (along with elevators).

- The project to rebuild the Ravenswood Station on the UPN has been going on for quite a while. The work has shifted to the east side of the station. This project will be completed sometime in 2020 and the station will be fully accessible. At present, the station remains non accessible.
- This summer, work will begin on the Cary Station on the UPNW. There will be a new platform at the station on the north side along with new access to parking on the south. This project should take one year to complete and the station will remain accessible during construction.
- At the Cumberland Station on the UPNW, we are replacing platforms and building access from the parking lot to the platform level. When completed, this station will go from being non accessible to fully accessible. During construction, this station will remain non accessible.
- There are a group of stations that can be upgraded from partially accessible to fully accessible by making relatively minor changes. These would include the following.
 - RID: 91st Street, 95th Street, 107th Street, 111th Street, 115th Street.
 - BNSF: Downers Grove Fairview, Brookfield, Riverside.
 - UPN: Braeside.

At this point in the proceedings, Mr. Ferneborg told the Committee that it was time to revisit the Braille Rider's Guide and Stations Guide for Customers with Disabilities. He told the assembled that, since there were some outstanding blind travellers who were also Braille users that it might be well if they could assist in reviewing the current document and working on a revision. What he proposed was a sub-committee to address this need. He then asked for volunteers. P. Byrne, K. Erickson and S. Hastalis said that they would be willing to assist. Mr. Ferneborg said that he would be contacting these volunteers in the near future and would also be keeping the Committee up to date as to the progress of the project.

Susan Elizabeth Rangle brought up the issue that deaf/hard of hearing customers have with the lag time between the audible live announcements at extant stations and the display of those messages on the

Visual Information Signs (VIS). Both Mr. Rubino and Mr. Ferneborg indicated that they would look into this.

S. Dalton wanted to know the means by which people with disabilities seek employment at Metra. Mr. Ferneborg indicated that he would try to get some kind of answer for the next meeting

The next item on the agenda was a presentation by Glen Peters, Metra's Senior Director of Capital Projects. Mr. Peters wanted to focus on stations and accessibility. He wanted to take the Committee through the process of how Engineering determines how stations are deemed as fully accessible, partially accessible or not accessible. To illustrate this, he presented a slide of thirteen items that are considered when planning and building a station. He then isolated the three items that are key in deeming a station as basically accessible.

- Access from parking or street level to the platforms.
- Elevators or ramps that go from one level of a station to the platform level.
- The platforms themselves (whether they are accessible or not).

It can be determined that a station can be deemed as accessible if an individual can make their way from street level to the platform level so as to be able to board a train. In looking at these key components against the complete list of punch items, the determination can be made as to whether a station can be called either fully, partially or non accessible. Through his presentation, Mr. Peters took a considerable number of questions from the Committee, touching on a variety of topics such as: elevators, pedwalks, station telephones and TTYs, platforms, VIS systems and safety.

The next item on the agenda was devoted to Public Comments.

- J. Powell had some comments about the changes to the MED schedule. For certain train times, he has an easier time connecting with his bus.
- H. Armstrong wanted to point out that there were certain stations where it was very difficult to change tracks. These stations would be Evanston Davis Street and Oak Park.
- S. Figved wanted to let everyone know that Pace was changing some of their routes in the Evanston area and all should pay attention because this could cause problems with Metra/Pace connections.

The final item on the agenda was the adjournment of the meeting. Chairman Forte asked for a motion to adjourn. S. Hastalis brought the motion and L. Gerlach seconded. The motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.