

**Acton Commission on Disability**  
**Town Hall, Acton, MA 01720**

To whom it may concern,

December 21, 2009

The Acton Commission on Disability feels that the MBTA should reconsider the current proposals for the South Acton Train Station Improvement Project for an alternate accessibility solution. Under the Disability Law, each station can be reviewed on an independent, case by case basis, to determine feasibility of that station's design. The Commission on Disability considers the current MBTA proposals infeasible and the proposed Town of Acton designs feasible for accommodating people with disabilities (PWD).

The disadvantages to current MBTA proposals that demonstrate infeasibility for PWD:

- Unreasonable length of 600-800 foot ramp system and overpass
- Long distance of travel from handicapped parking to ramp entrance
- Unsafe narrow enclosed structure of ramp and overpass
- Excessive time of travel from parking space to ramp entrance to platform
- Only one path of travel for all passengers
- Unreasonable expectation that the 600-800 foot ramp serve as the only means of egress for emergencies and connect to an accessible area of rescue assistance ramp

The advantages of the Town of Acton proposals that demonstrate feasibility for PWD:

- Several compliant egresses
- Closest accessible route of travel from adjacent handicapped parking to elevator entrance
- Minimizes distance from elevator to platform and loading trains
- Minimizes overcrowding of travel routes with multiple ramps, stairways and elevators
- Shorter ramps
- Shortest overpass to platform
- Minimizes time of travel from elevator to platform
- Allows a direct accessible route from accessible passenger loading zones at drop of areas for PWD using other connecting transportation services, such as livery, taxi and shuttle

With the addition of the elevators, the Dual Platform Alternative of the South Acton Train Station design provides a feasible accessibility solution. The new design also promotes additional advantages for PWD. This is the option of choice and is fully supported by the Commission on Disability.

Sincerely,

Lisa Franklin, Chairperson

Brenda Viola, Secretary

Acton Commission on Disability

*Lisa Franklin*  
*Brenda Viola*

Acton Commission on Disabilities Annual Report 2009

This past year the COD met its mission statement by

**“Ensuring that Acton meets the laws regulations, bylaws and guidelines set down by Federal, state, and regional bodies pertaining to the rights of persons with disabilities”**

- Arranging for and monitoring of proper observance of HP parking during the November election
- Speaking against the original, noncompliant plans for the new platform at the South Acton train station, and participating in the planning of a more accessible alternative
- Investigating complaints of barriers in public buildings
- Weighing in on variance exceptions requested of the Architectural Access Board
- Training another Commission member as a Community Access Monitor.(per the Mass. Office on Disability)

**“Acting as a resource for education around the needs of people with disabilities.”**

- Researching the laws regarding service animals and informing involved businesses and living places
- Running our educational “game” at the COD table during Oktoberfest