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# JONES LIBRARY

North Amherst Library • Munson Memorial Library



## Accessibility Plan Subcommittee Charge

*Approved by the Library Board of Trustees 10-23-19*

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## OVERVIEW

In June of 2016, members of Amherst's Disability Access Advisory Committee toured the Jones Library in order to help Library Trustees and staff better understand the physical limitations of the building. Committee members agreed that there are several issues related to accessibility in the Jones Library. Examples of noted problems include the following:

1. **Parking.** Accessible parking has always been and remains the primary obstacle to access. There are two handicap parking spaces available in the parking area along the east side of the Library. After that, handicapped patrons must use the closest downtown space available.
2. **Accessibility of the stacks.** Aisles must be at least 36" wide to allow wheelchair access. Some of the stack aisles are less than that. Even those right at 36" are not adequate because often, books stick out into the aisle.
3. **The front elevator.** During a visit to the Library last year, members of the DAAC attempted to use the elevator and were successful. However, it is not possible to turn a wheelchair around in the elevator, so if one wheels in forward on the first floor, they must wheel out backwards on the second floor and in doing so, come very close to the edge of the top of the stairway. We also noticed that the elevator is not long enough to accommodate a stretcher.
4. **Tables, desks and counters** are not at an accessible height.
5. **The faucet hardware** in the downstairs bathrooms need to be replaced with more easily usable ones. And the bathroom in the children's room is accessible, but is a very tight fit. <sup>1</sup>

In addition to addressing the physical limitations of the Library system's buildings, the Library Trustees want to explore the system's accessibility in its totality. The Board understands the importance of openly providing Library services to all members of the community, and have decided that forming an Accessibility Subcommittee is an important step in reaching that goal.

### Vision Statement

The Jones Library seeks to ensure the Library system's policies, services, and resources provide equitable access for all Library users.

### Goals

To align the Library's core values and resources with the revised Accessibility Plan through choices made in all areas of the Library's facilities, operations, policy, technology, programming, partnerships, and outreach, including any additional opportunities available through the renovation/expansion project.

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<sup>1</sup> Weiss, Gerry. *Report to Town Meeting*. May 5, 2017.

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## Objective

The subcommittee will create an updated Accessibility Plan applicable to the physical building of the Jones Library and the Library operations and services of the Jones, Munson and North Amherst libraries. The draft plan will include the solicitation of community feedback and be completed within one year from the date of the formation of the subcommittee.

## Accessibility Definition

The ability of all people to access the functionality and possible benefit of the Library regardless of age, ethnicity, language, socio-economic status, or education.<sup>2</sup> Issues include but are not limited to the following: 1) users with mental health issues 2) users with learning and/or attention issues 3) users with developmental disabilities 4) users with sensory disabilities 5) users with service animals 6) users who need assistive technology and 7) users with physical disabilities.<sup>3</sup>

## Subcommittee Working Group

A subcommittee of the Building & Facilities Committee will be formed for a limited duration to complete the objectives outlined. The subcommittee will consist of 5 community members with knowledge and expertise in accessibility and social equity and one member of the Building & Facilities Committee. A member of Town Disability Access Advisory Committee will be invited to participate as a liaison. Each member will be recommended by the Building Facilities Committee and appointed by the President of the Board of Trustees for the duration of this working subcommittee.

## Milestones

Milestones are to be identified and further developed by the subcommittee and may include the following:

- Identify categories of opportunity for accessibility (e.g., facilities, collections, technology, programming, employment, staff training)
- Identify short term opportunities and long term goals within each category
- Develop implementation timelines and reporting guidelines/metrics for success in each category
- Complete draft Accessibility Plan to present to Building & Facilities
- Final Accessibility Plan to present to Board of Trustees

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<sup>2</sup> <https://study.com/academy/lesson/equitable-open-access-for-library-services.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ala.org/news/member-news/2018/02/understanding-accessibility-challenges-patrons>

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