

ADVISORY 2014-06-12
On Downtown Seymour Sidewalks
From the **Advisory Committee for Livable Communities**
To the Town of Seymour CT

The following is our CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATION.

We concur with:

- **The February 10, 2014 Report (Downtown Sidewalk Improvements/Wheelchair Access) prepared by Nafis & Young** (attached),
- **The Downtown Needs Assessment dated April 5, 2014 as prepared by Karen Baker & Betty Musto** (attached.)

The following seven recommendations were prepared by the Livable Communities Advisory Committee using the concept of Universal Design.

What is Universal Design?

Universal Design makes things safer, easier, and more convenient for everyone. Universal Design involves designing products and spaces so they can be used by the widest range of people possible. Universal Design evolved from Accessible Design, a design process that addresses the needs of people with disabilities. Universal Design goes further by recognizing that there is a wide spectrum of human abilities. Everyone, even the most able-bodied person, passes through childhood, periods of temporary illness, injury, and old age. By designing for this human diversity, we can create things that will be easier for **all people** to use. Universal Design takes into account the full range of human diversity, including physical, perceptual, and cognitive abilities, as well as different body shapes and sizes.

1. **Provide a curbcut at the beginning and end of all marked crosswalks.** A person with disabilities (PWD) with low vision may assume a curbcut exists to provide access to a marked crosswalk. Crosswalks at Bank and First Streets and along Main Street lack curbcuts. A curbcut has not been provided on the Broad Street Bridge walkway where it terminates at Pine Street (across from Seymour Congregational Church, and near Seymour Senior Center and Broad Street Park.)
2. **Do not paint curbcuts yellow.** Curbcuts painted yellow are confusing because both curbcuts and curbs without curbcuts are painted yellow. Such confusion can be eliminated by painting the curbs blue to show where not to walk or ride.

Advisory Committee for Livable Communities, Town of Seymour CT

Secretary: Saundra J. Gesek, Vice Chairman: Bonnie Wilkes, Chairman: Joe Luciano
Members: Lucy McConologue, Gerry Eckhardt, Karen Baker, Elizabeth Musto, Suzanne Reilly, Len Greene Jr.

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3. **Every sidewalk or accessible route** must have curbcuts at both ends—not just at the beginning.
4. **The committee recommends that vehicular parking be prohibited on sidewalks and ling established pedestrian paths-regardless of “ownership” of sidewalk.**

When vehicles are on long-established pedestrian paths (commonly known as sidewalks), persons using wheelchairs and/or pedestrians are forced to ride/walk across a slope (a dangerous action) or rode/walk in the street (also a dangerous action). Other options are impossible: there is insufficient clearance to pass between vehicles legally parked in marked parking spaces. We recommend an ADA-required 36 inch clearance.

5. **Make crosswalk signal controls ADA compliant.** SEE: [ADAAG “Reach Range Requirement.”](#) **For example:** A person in a wheelchair cannot reach the button controlling the crosswalk signal at Rte. 67 & Main. The button is attached to a post too far behind the guard rail.
6. **Amend ordinances** pertaining to repair and/or construction of sidewalks **so that the work conforms to ADA standards** The width, height, level, grade and material must be determined by ADA standards—not “. . . selectmen's supervision . . .”

Sec. 14-5. Same—Supervision by selectmen; assessments for.

Whenever any sidewalk or curb shall be ordered constructed or repaired by the selectmen the work shall be done under the selectmen's supervision in a thorough and workmanlike manner and as economically as possible. The width, height, level, grade and material shall be determined by the selectmen. The selectmen shall then assess not to exceed two-thirds of the expense thereof against the person or property adjoining. Such sums assessed shall be ordered paid into the town treasury and if not paid within 30 days after notice is given, a lien shall be placed upon the premises adjoining such walk and shall be recorded in the town clerk's office within 60 days after completion.

7. **Replace the noncompliant curbcut** at Broad Street Park with a fully ADA compliant curbcut. This is the curbcut directly in front of the gazebo.