

Approved minutes – Regular Meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Approved minutes – Special Meeting 7/29/2025

Approved minutes – Special/Workshop Meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Special Meeting  
July 29, 2025  
6:00 PM

A Special Meeting of the Meyersdale Borough Council was called to order by President Irwin, July 29, 2025 at 6:00 PM.

Mr. Ackerman, Mr. Baer, Mr. Baker, Mrs. Gnagey, Mr. Irwin, Mrs. Knieriem, Mr. Smith, and Solicitor Valentine were present. Mayor Smith was absent. Mr. Brion Reiber was also present.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the community center handicap accessibility and applying for grants.

**GUESTS:**

No guests were present.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mrs. Wendy Kelly presented the following information as to why a family style bathroom is important:

- Encourage use of the building for community functions and involvement.
- Give parents and caregivers the ability to care for their children and others without gender restriction.
- Completely ideal for families with small children who need extra help, especially Dads with daughters, Mothers with sons, husbands and wives. She asked for a show of hands who all has had to physically help their significant other and children of the opposite sex to go to the bathroom in a public setting. As a mother who does do that on a daily basis and as a mother of a son who has a caregiver who is of the opposite sex, she knows how important that is to have that feature in a building or anyplace that they go to.
- It would support inclusivity with those who have a disability and require assistance from a caregiver of a different gender to provide a safe and private option for everyone.
- Family bathrooms provide privacy for those who experience discomfort and would prefer a more personal space.
- It also promotes safety that a parent can directly supervise their children without leaving them unattended, which minimizes risk.
- It is ideal for any type of mobility device, stroller, etc.
- She would like to think that the town is moving forward in a progressive manner, however she thinks that if we were to incorporate a non-gender specific restroom that we would be pushing the envelope and that the majority of the community is not going to support that. She would think that a non-gender specific bathroom cost would far out way the cost of a family style bathroom considering that you would need to have a floor to ceiling enclosure in each space. She would not feel comfortable going into a restroom with someone sitting right next to her that could reach under the door and do whatever.

- The square footage of the building that it does contain has more than enough potential to house a family style bathroom and she would hope that the members of this Council are not putting forth personal agendas to decrease progressiveness. This Council should align itself with an all-inclusive mindset and work toward the common goal of inclusivity.
- There are multiple ways to fund a project, not just through grants, but also fundraising and donations if necessary, so she doesn't believe that a common it's too expensive approach is going to make sense here.

Mr. Tony Deluca asked that Council put themselves in his shoes. How would you like if he came into the ladies room with his disabled daughter while the women were going to the bathroom or Wendy coming into the men's room with her son while the urinals are being used by a man. All you need is a small room with a sink, toilet, couple bars without spending a lot of money. He suggested getting the Borough maintenance crew to build a bathroom. A family bathroom will help anyone who comes into the community, especially during the Maple Festival.

Ms. Deb Fisher explained that not everyone's disability is visual. Her son is autistic and there were many times when she had to send him into frightening places to go to the bathroom. A family bathroom would have given her so much more peach of mind.

Mrs. Gnagey read a letter from Mrs. Chloe Thomas in her absence. Mrs. Thomas was writing to respectfully advocate for the additional family bathroom. She is the mother of a disabled daughter and can speak personally to the significant need for this type of facility, not just for her own family, but for others who would benefit from it by having a safe and private restroom space. Her child suffers with a sensory disability and a private restroom would help with issues she has with loud noises in crowds and from toilets flushing and hand dryers. Mrs. Thomas also has another daughter and taking both of them into a regular bathroom stall is incredibly difficult. Including a family restroom would bring the building in line with the needs of modern families and individuals with disabilities. It would reflect our community's value of inclusion, accessibility and support for all of our residents. As we continue to grow and host events that bring people together, we must ensure that everyone feels welcome and accommodated.

**BUSINESS:**

President Irwin reported that the Engineer findings revealed that the side handicap accessible ramp is in compliance. There was one recommendation to add an extension of a handrail. Because the side handicap ramp is in compliance, the back ramp that the Lions Club uses is not an issue. The Lions Club and the Borough has committed to maintaining and monitoring the ramp to keep it in good condition.

There will need to be a dual level water fountain installed. This is an item that would not be that expensive and could be completed by a local plumber.

The doorway to the gymnasium would need to be replaced with a 3ft. door with a side panel in order to be in compliance. This is a project that the Borough could finance on their own.

The men's restroom is not in compliance and the ladies' restroom could be in compliance with a few minor updates. Gender neutral restrooms would be more expensive, but would solve the problem. The door to the Borough Office is in compliance. The door to the former MMA Office is not in compliance and would require renovation. The sidewalks around the building are in compliance.

Council gave their opinions regarding a family restroom to be installed in part of the former MMA Office.

Mr. Baer liked the idea of individual stalls and he didn't think that it would be that expensive.

Mrs. Knieriem is in favor of a family restroom. The area has easy access to the plumbing. She suggested blocking off the stairway to the basement to eliminate any concerns with falling down the stairs and she would suggest installing a diaper changing station.

Mr. Smith doesn't like the location in that it is too close to the steps, the historical doors would need to be removed and there wouldn't be enough use to justify.

Mr. Ackerman would be in favor of remodeling the existing facilities and bring them in to compliance.

Mr. Irwin's thoughts were that the space was already allotted for the business office to expand, this is too close to the steps. He is not in favor of encroaching into the former MMA Office space.

Mrs. Gnagey indicated that the public outcry is great for a family restroom. The building needs to be brought up to the times for children's safety. A huge area will remain for expansion. She reported that she already has the donation of a sink, toilet, and paint for the walls. She felt that it would be very close minded not to do it in this space.

Mr. Baker is in favor of a family restroom, but utilize another space within the building.

Mr. Steve Spochart from the Somerset County Redevelopment Authority was present. The attached detail sheet was provided to everyone. (See attached)

Mr. Spochart indicated that the Council would need to determine what Architectural Barriers they want to remove in order to be in compliance with ADA standards. He is certain that he could come up with a project that would work for presentation to the Somerset County Commissioners to be funded under the CDBG Grant funding guidelines. There is zero dollar match for the CDBG grant funds. The deadline to apply is the end of October 2025. Any projects over \$2,000.00 will require Davis Bacon pay scale rates. He suggested that Council consider completing the smaller projects and focus on a larger project for the grant. With the grant funds, there can only be one project. The grant will not fund renovating both of the existing restrooms and installing a family restroom. The grant award would most likely take

place in March or April 2026. The cost of engineering is not included in the grant, unless the Borough chooses to utilize one of the following approved engineering vendors: The EADS Group, Keller Engineering or Appalachian Engineering. There is no cost for the Somerset County Redevelopment Authority to put together a proposal.

After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Smith suggested utilizing space in the janitorial closet and ladies restroom to install a family restroom. Mrs. Gnagey asked if the engineer was contacted to work up a drawing for this area. She was frustrated that no one did the leg work to see if the space would work and the last minute change of location. Mrs. Gnagey also had a concern regarding the maximum load calculation (how many stalls are required) if part of this area was used for a family restroom.

Council took a short recess to tour the area in question.

Mrs. Gnagey introduced a gentleman (Lincoln) from Westmoreland County that she met through the Boroughs Association. He works throughout the state to assist communities with their ADA requirements. He looked at the area to enter at the MMA office in his wheel chair and found that the risk of the stairways is the same and had no concerns. He thinks that the family restroom is the best option and also thought that it would be beneficial in the long term to have both the current restrooms renovated and made handicap accessible.

Mrs. Gnagey made the motion to move forward with the family accessible restroom with the drawings that we have. (See attached drawings) Mrs. Knieriem seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Ackerman – No; Mr. Baer – No; Mr. Baker – No; Mrs. Gnagey – Yes; Mr. Irwin – No; Mrs. Knieriem – Yes; Mr. Smith – No. Motion did not pass.

Note: Those casting a no vote were in favor of a family restroom, just not in the former MMA office space.

Mrs. Gnagey left the meeting at 7:10 P.M.

Mr. Smith made the motion to put a family restroom in the ladies restroom area. Mr. Ackerman seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

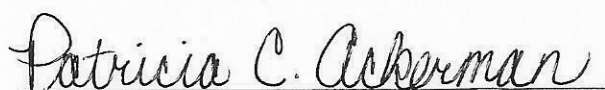
Mr. Ackerman – Yes; Mr. Baer – Yes; Mr. Baker – Yes; Mrs. Gnagey – Absent; Mr. Irwin – Yes; Mrs. Knieriem – No, Mr. Smith – Yes. Motion passed.

President Irwin will be in contact with Somerset Engineering to prepare the drawings.

This items will be listed on the agenda for the August regular meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mrs. Knieriem made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 P.M. Mr. Ackerman seconded. Motion passed.



Patricia C. Ackerman  
Borough Secretary

**MEYERSDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
 Regular Meeting \_\_\_\_\_ Special Meeting 7/29/2025

**GUEST SIGN IN**

PLEASE PRINT

	NAME	ADDRESS	TOPIC
1	Teri Chasman	Meyersdale, PA	
2	Bob Spochart	MEYERSDALE BORO	NONE
3	STEVE SPOCHART, REDEV. AUTHORITY	300 N. CENTER AVE STE 520	RESTROOM DISCUSSION
4	Deborah Fisher	Meyers Ave	
5	Wendy Kelly		
6	Deb Moore	Broadway St	None
7	Sandy Miller	Salsbury St	None
8	Tanya Antares	Broadway St	None
9	ANTHONY DeLUCA	Essexville	ADA
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			

**GUESTS MUST STAND WHILE SPEAKING**

## Architectural Barriers - Guidance

### CDBG-01-2016

#### CDBG Programs

#### HISTORY

Utilization of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for the removal of an architectural barrier is expressly eligible within the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (HCDA).

The removal of accessibility barriers may be presumed to meet the Low and Moderate Income national objective by meeting the Limited Clientele criteria if the costs of removal are restricted, to the extent practicable, to the removal of such barriers. The presumption is for severely disabled adults meeting the Census Bureau's definition and/or elderly persons.

#### ELIGIBILITY

HCDA Section 5301 (Section 105 of the Act) (a) (5) Special projects directed to the removal of material and architectural barriers which restrict the mobility and accessibility of elderly and/or handicapped persons.

#### NATIONAL OBJECTIVE QUALIFICATIONS

##### Limited Clientele (LMC)

24 CFR 570.483 (b) (2) (ii) (A) - It must benefit a clientele who are generally presumed to be principally low and moderate income persons. Activities that exclusively serve a group of persons is any one or a combination of the following categories may be presumed to benefit persons, 51 percent of whom are low and moderate income: abused children, battered spouses, elderly persons, adults meeting the Bureau of the Census' Current Population Reports definition of "severely disabled," homeless persons, illiterate adults, persons living with AIDS, and migrant farm workers; or...

##### Low Mod Area (LMA)

24 CFR 570.483 (b) (1) (i) - An activity, the benefits of which are available to all the residents in a particular area, where at least 51 percent of the residents are low and moderate income persons. Such an area need not be coterminous with census tracts or other officially recognized boundaries but must be the entire area served by the activity. The LMA may qualify using the most current ACS Data or an approved income survey.

POLICY DISCUSSION

Architectural barriers are obstacles which impede the use of a facility by persons with physical disabilities. This discussion is related to all types of activities that remove barriers including but not limited to curb cuts, handicap ramps, public facilities improvements, etc.

Questions have arisen related to removal of architectural barriers and use of the CDBG Program. The questions include but are not limited to:

- defining what is a barrier;
- to what extent can CDBG funds be used to remove the barrier; and
- meeting the national objective of Limited Clientele on a presumed basis (LMC).

Determination of a Barrier/Section 504 Plan

- (A) Update or Conduct a review of the Grantees Section 504 Plan as it Relates to the Given Project – In order to determine if a barrier is present, the grantee as a recipient of federal funds is required to perform an assessment of existing conditions. Guidance on conducting an assessment under Section 504 can be found at:

<http://www.newpa.com/download/section-504-handicapped-accessibility-update-may-14-2013-pdf/#.Vz8F9E1wVhE>.

The Section 504 review/update will determine if a barrier exists. For example, a public facility does not provide bathroom facilities. There is no architectural barrier to be addressed. If the jurisdiction decides to install restroom facilities, the installation cannot qualify under the LMC presumed benefit because the new installation requires the bathroom installation to be handicap accessible.

However, the Section 504 review of the existing restrooms which are present and are available for use by everyone in the building have impediments for use by persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities cannot use the restroom facilities unless modifications are completed to remove the barriers. The activity may qualify on the national objective of benefit LMC – presumed benefit. Upgrading the restroom would be an eligible CDBG project but only to the extent of the actions necessary to remove the barrier. The

improvements included installation of a wall. The wall needs to be painted which would be eligible; painting the entire restroom would not as it has no direct impact on the barrier removal.

(B) Condition Of The Pedestrian Access Route –

The Pedestrian Access Route (PAR) must also be assessed when making determinations on where to install architectural barrier removal projects. A PAR for example, may be a sidewalk that allows pedestrians to get from point A to point B without obstruction. If a project identifies the need for a curb cut at street intersections, the PAR must also be evaluated.

Curb cuts may only be installed when there is a functional pedestrian access route. An example of a PAR assessment that has an obstruction might be the front porch on a house extending out in to the sidewalk - PAR. If there is not a minimum of 36" of walkway past the porch the PAR is blocked becoming non-functional for passage. In those installations there may be design alternatives for curb cuts and pedestrian access routes. The determination of an obstructed PAR is a local decision. Should the installation of a curb cut permit access to some type of facility prior to an obstruction blocking the PAR, the curb cut may be allowable. Should there not be some type of facility prior to an obstruction blocking the PAR the curb cut may not be permitted. These should be discussed with the design professional and the grantee's respective Grant Manager prior to commencing any work activity.

This may also be an example of where it may be necessary to move the curb cut to another location in the block in order to address the accessibility issue. Assessment of the alternative location is critical as well. If a curb cut is moved to an alternative location, the sidewalk may need to be widened at the curb cut location as well in order to provide sufficient PAR.

If the assessment identifies a project that only involves installation of curb cuts and there are no sidewalks, the curb cut is not an eligible activity. A sidewalk and curb cuts may be installed if the service area qualifies as having 51% or greater benefit to LMI persons (LMA national objective).

An additional item for consideration in the PAR is truncated domes. The use of truncated domes provides visually impaired persons with a means to traverse a community's walkways by identifying intersections. The domes are needed at signalized intersections, high volume traffic locations which may not be signalized and raised platforms related to bus and train stops. During the Section 504 assessment it may be determined a

given neighborhood has visually impaired residents which could warrant the installation of truncated domes in these neighborhoods as well as identifying those locations in need of truncated domes. Truncated domes may be installed at locations that currently do not have them provided the Section 504 review warrants installation.

**Technically Infeasible Form (TIF) Process and Form Used By PennDOT**

In the instance of areas where the design of an ADA compliant curb cut may not be possible, an alternate design may be approved through the use of PENNDOT's Technically Infeasible Form or TIF. The design engineer will need to complete a Technically Infeasible Form using PennDOT's TIF Design Standards. Completion of a TIF will detail the rationale for installing a curb cut that is not ADA compliant but still has standards which would permit the design of a usable curb cut. When a TIF is used for the design of a curb cut that does not fall under the purview of PennDOT's jurisdiction, the TIF must be reviewed and certified by a third party design professional. This individual/firm cannot be the same individual/firm performing the design and specifications. Any curb cut installation proposed where a TIF is completed and does not fall under PennDOT's jurisdiction, a copy of the third party certification must be supplied to the grantee's respective Grant Manager prior to commencement of any work activity.

**Projects Proposed for Buildings for the Conduct of General Government**

If an architectural barrier removal project has been installed related to a facility and is compliant with the minimum requirements for ADA compliance additional improvements will not be permitted.

**Improperly Installed Architectural Barrier Removal Projects**

If an architectural barrier removal project was undertaken and it is determined the project was not properly installed, use of CDBG Funds to correct errors will not be allowed.

**Existing Improvements that Met ADA Standards**

**Rehabilitation or Reconstruction** – An existing curb cut or other existing ABR project is in a deteriorated condition and in need of repair. Repairs are not eligible activities. Section 105 (a) (5) of the Housing and Community Development Act (HCDA) details eligible activities: special projects directed to the removal of material and architectural barriers which restrict the mobility and accessibility of elderly and handicapped persons. 24 CFR 570.482 further details eligible activities and those activities not specifically detailed are not

eligible. If the existing project is deteriorated beyond repair and reconstruction is warranted, reconstruction may be permitted following the criteria below:

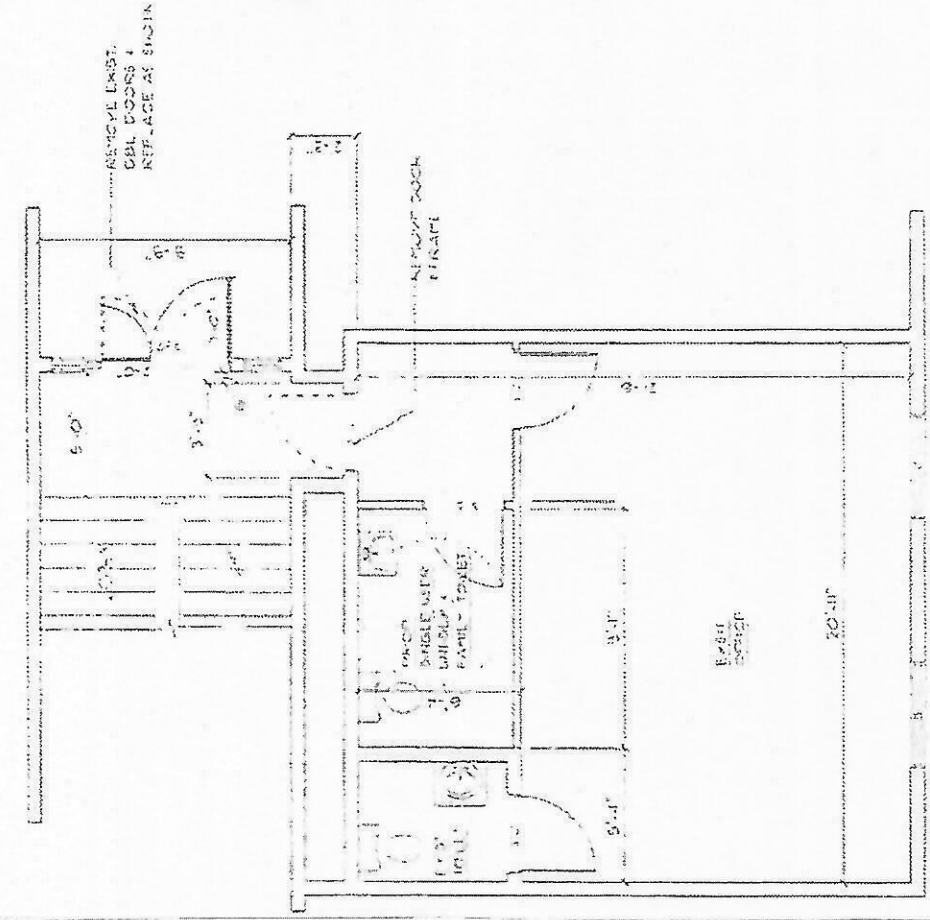
- Identify that the project has been in place a **minimum of 10 years** and has deteriorated to the point reconstruction is warranted. Documentation will be required to be submitted to the grantee's respective Grant Manager, including as a minimum an engineer's certification of the need for reconstruction, verification of age of the improvement with date of installation, photographs, etc. This may allow the proposed project to be reconstructed and deemed eligible using LMC presumed benefit.

The project has been in place a **minimum 15 or more years** and has deteriorated to the point reconstruction is warranted. Documentation will be required to be submitted to the grantee's respective Grant Manager, including as a minimum verification of age of the improvement with date of installation, etc. This may allow the proposed project to be reconstructed and deemed eligible using LMC presumed benefit **without the need for an engineer's certification**. Note: Grantees may be asked to provide photos of the existing activities and it is highly recommended that photos be included with application submissions.

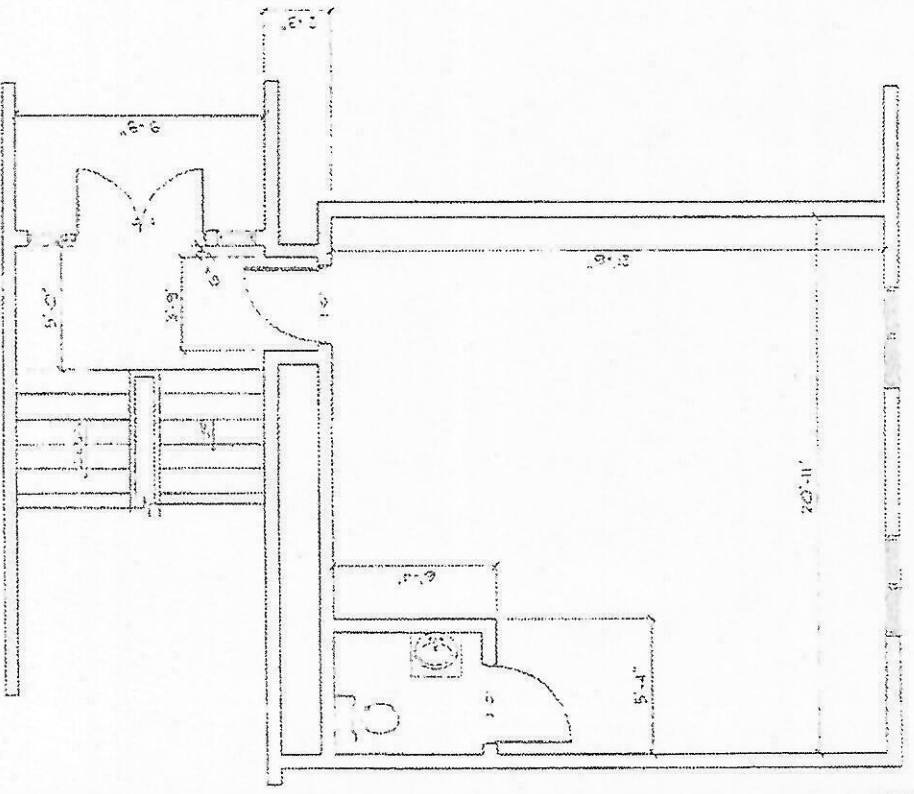
- The handrail on the handicap access ramp has deteriorated (rusted through) in several locations where it meets the ramp and needs to be repaired. This is a maintenance activity and cannot be repaired with CDBG funds as it is part of a barrier that has already been removed. However, it could be addressed if the users of the facility qualify at greater than 51% LMI as an LMA activity. Additionally this example could be eligible under presumed benefit if the serviceable life of the project has been met and warrants reconstruction with documentation from a qualified professional including certification that the serviceable life has been met.



DATE	2/14/2024
BY	JAN NISBET
CHECKED	REK
SCALE	AS SHOWN
PROJECT	COMMUNITY BUILDING
DATE	2/14/2024
BY	JAN NISBET
CHECKED	REK
SCALE	AS SHOWN
PROJECT	COMMUNITY BUILDING
DATE	2/14/2024
BY	JAN NISBET
CHECKED	REK
SCALE	AS SHOWN
PROJECT	COMMUNITY BUILDING



**SINGLE USER RESTROOM  
 FLOOR PLAN BLOW-UP  
 (RECOMMENDED)**  
 Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



**SINGLE USER RESTROOM  
 FLOOR PLAN BLOW-UP  
 (AS-BUILT)**  
 Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

NO.	REVISIONS	DATE	BY	CHK.