

4/2/24

Mayor Robert E. Cone
Berlin City Hall
168 Main Street
Berlin, NH 03570

Dear Mayor Cone,

I am writing to you regarding access to the Berlin City Hall for mobility handicapped citizens.

Facts:

1. Present chair lift is in poor condition.
2. Chair lifts do not meet the needs of wheelchairs or even walkers. Therefore, replacing the old chairlift with a new one is at best a "Band Aid" solution.
3. The entrance door to the basement is too small and not user friendly.
4. There is one handicap parking space in front of City Hall.
5. Berlin has a high percentage of senior citizens 65 and older. The older age group results in many needing canes, walkers, or wheelchairs to travel.
6. Mobility challenged people are not able to enter City Hall either for business reasons or to attend meetings.
7. While the application of the on-line web access to meetings might be good for some, it does not serve an important group in the city of Berlin – the senior population. Many people either do not have access to the technology or are not skilled enough with computers to access the technology.

Suggestions:

1. Arrange for several handicap parking spaces near City Hall.
2. Build a user-friendly entryway to the basement which would include a wide door with a door opener designed for handicap accessibility. Ex. Northway Bank entrance.
3. Research the availability of a small but reliable elevator. At a minimum it needs to accommodate two people and a wheelchair or walker.

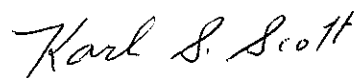
Personal information

1. My wife and I bought our home in 1957 and have paid taxes each year.
2. I am 99 years old.
3. I am a WWII Army Combat Infantry Veteran ETO.
4. I worked for 35 years for Brown Company and James River in their respective Woods Departments.
5. I use a walker.

I previously wrote a letter to the Editor of the Berlin Daily Sun regarding this problem. However, publishing my thoughts on this very important issue did not seem to catch the attention of the city administration at the time. I have included a copy for your review.

One last comment, the personnel at City Hall are dedicated to serving the public and make every effort to help the handicapped. I appreciate the friendly and helpful service!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karl S. Scott". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid.

Karl Scott
17 Twelfth Street
Berlin, NH 03032
603-752-5569

Fall of ~~2022~~
2023

To the Editor:

When most folks go to city hall in Berlin, they are faced with two problems: where to park their vehicle and climbing a rather steep set of stairs to reach the main floor of city hall.

When folks with mobility problems, such as having to use a walker or a wheel chair, they not only have to find a place to park their vehicle, but also negotiate the existing handicap facilities.

Presently there is a chairlift extending from the basement to the main floor of city hall. To use the lift, one must enter the basement through a not too user-friendly door. If one must carry a walker or wheelchair on a chairlift, it creates a nearly impossible situation.

For those of us who have mobility problems, the staff at city hall are very helpful. For example:

1. You can receive your tax bill by mail and pay by mail.
2. You can receive a letter for renewing your vehicle registration and town tax which you can pay by mail.
3. You receive your sewer bill and it can be paid by mail.
4. If you request an absentee ballot, the city clerk will arrange for you to get one.

All these services are provided by the staff at city hall in a professional and helpful way.

However, if folks who have mobility handicaps want to attend any activities such as, Council meetings, property revaluations, entertainment or to listen to political visitors/Presidential candidates, they really are left out.

Can this be fixed? Of course, it would take some money and planning to improve entry from the street and replacing the chairlift with an elevator.

Will this be considered? One can always hope!

Karl Scott

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