

SVAN Congratulates the Mayor's Senior Advisory Committee For their work on behalf of Saratoga's Senior Population!

Recent improvements in handicap accessibility at the downtown Post Office have been bringing accolades from seniors and people with disabilities. The first upgrade was the installation of an automatic, push button door opener at the top of the ramp of the south entrance. This was followed shortly by a new "Handicap Only" parking space at the rear of the Post Office closest to the beginning of the ramp. The downtown location is the only Post Office handicapped accessible to many Saratogians.

The need for an automatic door opener was brought to the attention of Post Master Dan Riley through a letter from Mayor Scott Johnson who had been alerted to the problem by members of the Mayor's Seniors Advisory Committee, which hears suggestions from local seniors.

The Mayor's Seniors Advisory Committee has been functioning for approximately five years. The mission of the committee is to spot problems or potential problems for Saratoga Springs seniors. Often, members hear about concerns directly from local citizens. The current Chair of the committee is Mary Zlotnick and previous Chair was Cliff Ammon. Senior concerns are brought either to the Mayor or the appropriate City Commissioner for remedial action. Deputy Mayor Shauna Sutton is the committee's liaison with the mayor's office. Several members of the committee (Cliff Ammon, Mary Marsicano and Ed Grocki) brought the issue of a need for an automatic door opener to the mayor. Mayor Johnson wrote a letter to Postmaster Dan Riley and the problem was solved.

Members of the committee recently timed the pedestrian crosswalk streetlights on Broadway. They found that brisk youthful walkers had plenty of time. However, it was not enough time for a lame person or someone with a walker to cross before being stuck in the middle of four lanes of traffic. The problem has been taken care of by the Department of Public Safety.

The committee has also devoted their time and effort to helping bridge the information gap between seniors and various public and private agencies designed to help them. Seminars have been arranged at various locations for seniors to learn what resources are available to them.

In addition, classes have been given to motorized wheel chair riders regarding traffic regulations and safety tips. Marilyn Rivers, the city's Risk Manager, has given out iridescent jackets so that car drivers can see wheelchair riders more easily.

The Mayor's Seniors Advisory Committee is currently working with the city on emergency planning. Any community members interested in senior issues and/or has a problem they would like to bring to the table is welcome to come to an Advisory Committee meeting. The committee meets the first Monday of the month at noon, at the Senior Center located at 5 Williams Street, Saratoga Springs.