

Lucy Vincent Beach

Update on Progress on Implementation of the March 2024 Recommendations and Compliance with Accessibility Standards¹

(March 2024 Recommendations in standard back font. Updated observations *in red italics*.)²

1. While the completed survey and follow up visit by the Dukes County Assoc. Commissioner for Disabilities, did indicate some accessibility issues, they do appear to be easily remedied both because of what is already provided and the topography of the beach area.

2. With regard to the parking lot and route from the designated accessible parking spaces to the beach entrance, it is recommended that improvements be made to that route to make it fully accessible. First, currently the parking space signage requires the driver to pull up as far as possible when parking. The result is that part of the vehicle may end up on grass as opposed to the firmer surface on the rest of the parking space. Either the grassy area should be made firm or the request should be removed from the sign. Second, after parking as a person moves from the parking space to the beach entrance, a distance of about 40 feet, the surface become gradually sandier and softer creating a problem particularly for wheelchair users. This should be corrected. Third, consideration should also be given to moving the two accessible parking spaces closer to the beach entrance. Good accessibility features present.

No progress on the three issues and recommendations under No. 2.

3. While the route from the beach entrance to the beach and high-water mark, did have wooden walkway, it does not appear in use and has been abandoned. In any case, it is a short walkway (about 12 feet long) and thus does not nearly cover the route to the highwater mark. The pathway itself is about 200 feet long and then there is another 50-70 feet to the high-water mark and consists entirely of beach sand. A 4-foot wide firm and stable route is required. This could be done by using beach mats or a combination of a compliant wooden walkway and a beach mat. This a level area so that there are no grading challenges to overcome. For accessible route specifications, see attached resource sheet or the USDA's Forest Service *Accessibility Guidebook for Outdoor Recreation and Trails*, 8/2012 <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Accessibility-Guide-Book.pdf>.

Two wooden walkways present covering approximately 160 of the 275 foot distance from the parking lot to the beach and highwater mark. Two measures are necessary to bring the route into compliance.

¹ For standards specifications/dimensions for beaches, see the USDA's Forest Service *Accessibility Guidebook for Outdoor Recreation and Trails*, 8/2012 <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Accessibility-Guide-Book.pdf>.

² The original recommendations were furnished in March 2024 and were based principally on June 2023 beach operators' self-surveys and September and October 2023 follow up on-site visits by Dukes County Assoc. Commissioner for Disabilities. This update is based on an 9/8/24 visit.

First and foremost, lengthen at least one walkway to cover the full distance from the parking lot to the high-water mark or add a beach mat or a combination. Whichever is done, the beginning section from the parking lot to the start of the wooden walkway should be firm and stable. Currently, that is not the case as you approach the current walkway.

Second, several gaps from 2 to 4 inches were observed along the wooden walkways. This should be addressed. Standards require gaps no more than ½ inch. Additionally, portions of the wooden walkways especially toward the end had excessive sand on them. A maintenance plan should be implemented to address this issue.

Note: Technically only one walkway/route has to meet standards. So if the above improvements are made to only of the walkway/routes, that route should be identified through signage as the accessible route.

4. As the survey indicated there is a porta potty available apparently during the season, but not an accessible one. This could be remedied by adding an accessible one (the preferred solution or replacing the pre-existing porta potty with an accessible one. According to the beach survey two beach wheelchairs are provided. If lifeguards are present, making available a floating wheelchair, weather conditions, permitted might also be considered.

Two porta potties present one standard, the other accessible.

Two large beach wheelchairs present, but no floating wheelchair. However as stated in the recommendation, we are only recommending the availability of floating wheelchairs when lifeguards are present.

5. For an update on the progress made on the cross-cutting recommendations with respect to this beach and Chilmark's other beaches, *see accompanying Progress report on those recommendations.*

Richard Cohen, Dukes County Associate Commissioner for Disabilities
Original Recommendations' Report 3/2024, updated November 5, 2024