

**STATE OF MINNESOTA**  
**ACCESS REVIEW BOARD**

In the Matter of the Application of  
Timothy Speight Residence,

FINAL DECISION  
Dated: December 9, 2021

Application No. 21-10

This matter came on for hearing before the Access Review Board (“Board”) on October 26, 2021. The hearing was held remotely via WebEx after Board Chair Karen Gridley determined that an in-person meeting was not practical or prudent after Governor Walz declared a peacetime emergency under chapter 12 of the Minnesota statutes due to COVID-19. The record closed at the conclusion of the hearing.

All members of the Board were present via WebEx.

The issue in this application is whether the application for a waiver of the State Building Code for the purpose of installing a stairway chairlift should be granted.

Timothy Speight requested a waiver of the State Building Code in order to install a stairway chairlift to his residence in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota. Speight is unable to walk the stair to access his apartment in a split-level apartment building. The proposed stairway chairlift would allow Speight access to his residence at the top of the stairs.

The Board reviewed the application pursuant to the factors identified in Minn. Stat. § 471.471, subd. 3.

With regard to the first factor, the need for limited accessibility when a higher degree of accessibility is not required by state or federal law or rule, the Board noted that Speight is unable to walk the stair to access his apartment in a split-level apartment building.

With regard to the second factor, the architectural feasibility of providing a greater degree of accessibility than would be provided by the proposed device or equipment, the Board noted that it is not architecturally feasible to install an elevator or platform lift because the entry landing is not large enough to accommodate either piece of equipment.

With regard to the third factor, the total cost of the proposed device or equipment over its projected usable life, including installation, maintenance, and replacement costs, the Board determined that the estimated purchase and installation cost of \$6,500, plus another \$300-\$500 per year for maintenance is justified.

With regard to the fourth factor, the reliability of the proposed device or equipment, the Board noted that the proposed chairlift is manufactured by Stannah, which is a reputable company.

With regard to the fifth factor, the applicant's ability to comply with all recognized access and safety standards for installation and maintenance, the Board discussed that the chairlift device allowed the user to fold the chair out of the way when not in use for safety and to maintain the device in good condition.

With regard to the sixth factor, whether the proposed device or equipment can be operated and used without reducing or compromising minimum safety standards, the Board discussed that the building has a 46 inch wide stairway and that the folded chair protrudes 13 inches, leaving 33 inches of clear passing space. The Board noted that 33 inches of clear passing space is a compliant clearance as allowed by IBC Chapter 10, Sections 1009.4 and 1012.8. The chairlift model includes remotes on both landings to call the chair from upper or lower landings if the chair is not in the needed location and a key lock to prevent unauthorized use. The Board also noted that the building has smoke detection and an alarm system but does not have a fire sprinkler system. The Board further noted that the building owner approved the installation of the chairlift.

After considering these factors, Board member Reinke made a motion that the application for a waiver from the building code is approved to install a stairway chairlift in stairway serving Speight's residence in Brooklyn, Minnesota. Board member Shokohzadeh seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board's approval is subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The stairway chairlifts shall comply with the Minnesota Building Code and Minnesota Elevator Code requirements. Only licensed elevator contractors may install stairway chairlifts. Proper permits, inspections, and certificates for use shall be obtained by the licensed elevator contractor installing the lift. Licensed elevator contractors may be found by searching License Look Up at:

<https://secure.doli.state.mn.us/lookup/licensing.aspx>

- 2) The stairway chairlift shall be maintained in the folded position when not in use.

  
KAREN GRIDLEY, Chair  
Access Review Board