

STATE OF MINNESOTA

ACCESS REVIEW BOARD

In the Matter of the Application of
Danebod Folk School

FINAL DECISION

Dated: January 6, 2026

Application No. 25-22

This matter came on for hearing before the Access Review Board (“Board”) on December 16, 2025. The record closed at the conclusion of the hearing.

Board Chair Karen Gridley and Board member Elise Wehrman were present in person, while Board members Marvin Forbragd, Jim Weaver, and David Fenley were present via teleconference.

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.

The Danebod Folk School is located in Tyler, Minnesota. The school hosts community events and camps for all ages. The school requested a waiver of the State Building Code to install a stairway chairlift to access the dining hall in the basement.

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 school’s application does not identify any specific person currently in need of a chairlift to access the basement.

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 and the cost of providing a greater degree of accessibility, the Board noted that the floor plans and photos submitted with the school’s application indicates that there is a compliant ramp leading to the basement and therefore, a stairway chairlift would not provide any greater degree of accessibility unless the ramp does not connect to an accessible route. The Board was not able to determine whether the ramp connected to an accessible route because the application did not contain floor plans of the main level.

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 total installation and maintenance costs of the proposed device of \$5,450 is justified.

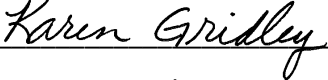
With regard to the fourth factor, the reliability of the proposed device or equipment, the Board noted that the proposed chairlifts are manufactured by Stannah, which is a reputable company.

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. The chairlift model includes dual call and send remotes.

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 noted that the proposed stairway is 66.5 inches wide, and the folded chair protrudes 13.5 inches. The Board determined that 53.5 inches of clear passing space on proposed stairway is a compliant clearance as allowed by IBC Chapter 10, Sections 1011.2 and 1014.8 where the occupant load is over 50 on the second floor for this type of building. The building has a smoke detector system and an alarm system but does not have a fire sprinkler system.

After considering these factors, Board member Wehrman made a motion to deny the application for a waiver from the building code to install a stairway chairlift at Danebod Folk School in Tyler, Minnesota because the application did not identify a specific user for the chairlift and a greater degree of accessibility already existed at the school. Board member Fenley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The application for a waiver of the State Building Code to install a stairway chairlift leading to the basement of the Danebod Folk School in Tyler, Minnesota is denied.



KAREN GRIDLEY, Chair

Access Review Board