

## Menemsha Town Beach

### Update on Progress on Implementation of the March 2024 Recommendations and Compliance with Accessibility Standards<sup>1</sup>

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

1. As indicated in the completed survey, the route from the paved parking lot (and from the two designated accessible parking spaces in the lot) to the beach is not completely accessible. The parking lot is about 4-5 feet from the actual entrance to the beach. That 4-5 foot area consists of beach sand which then continues on the beach to the water's edge, a total distance of about 70 feet from the paved parking lot. Because this is a very level and well-maintained area, accessibility could be easily achieved through placement of five-foot wide beach mat(s) running from the end of the pavement to the high-water mark. It is also recommended that the two accessible parking spaces should be located next to or near the accessible route if it is not already.

*While this recommendation suggested a beach mat running from the pavement on the left (or south) entrance to the beach, the Town chose another equally satisfactory alternative. The mat was installed at the right (north entrance) to the beach from and overlapping with the long wooden walkway. On the 9/5/24 site visit, considerable sand covering portions of walkway, especially shortly after the mat joined the wooden walkway was observed. Particularly if this occurs frequently, this needs to be addressed e.g. through implementation of a better day to day maintenance plan.*

2. It is also recommended that the following repairs or improvements be made to the wooden walkway from the accessible toilet facilities to the beach:
  - address gaps between slats of more than an ½" and some considerably wider in which sand has built up.
  - widen the section of the walkway (about 30 feet in distance) where the width is reduced from five to three feet.
  - extend the walkway's reach to the beach as its currently ends about 35-40 feet short of the beach.

Many openings between slots exceeding a half inch, some as much 3-5 inches remain and needs to be addressed.

*Such gaps continue to exist and need to be addressed.*

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<sup>1</sup> 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>.

<sup>2</sup> 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 9/5/24 visit.

3. Consider providing at least one floating wheelchair if a lifeguard is present, water conditions permitting.

*No beach or floating chair present when I was there. As I was there in the evening they could have been out during the day. However, at least the beach wheelchair could have and should have been out at this sunset hour as there were hundreds of people on the beach as there is during many evenings during the Season and before and after.*

4. Beveling may be needed at the beginning of the shorter wooden walkways from the parking lot to the front entrances of the toilet facilities. Currently the rise from the pavement to those wooden walkways appears to exceed  $\frac{1}{2}$ "

*The beveling was done though the width of the beveled areas is only about 35-36 inches. 48-inch width would have been preferred which is also the approximate width of the walkway. The width of the vast majority of wheelchairs (wheel to wheel) is well less than 35 inches so this welcomed improvement should be adequate.*

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