

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

In the Matter of the Application of  
Kingdom Life Church,

FINAL DECISION  
Dated: August 12, 2020

Application No. 20-03

This matter came on for hearing before the Access Review Board (“Board”) on May 27, 2020. 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. Fatima Porter and Victoria Robinson were present on behalf of Kingdom Life Church 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 chair lift should be granted.

Kingdom Life Church previously requested a waiver of the State Building Code in order to install two stairway chair lifts at its church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The church is a two-level split entry building with the sanctuary upstairs and the fellowship hall downstairs. At its January 10, 2020, meeting, the Board reviewed the application pursuant to the factors identified in Minn. Stat. § 471.471, subd. 3 and approved the application for a waiver from the building code to install a stairway chairlift on the stairway leading to the fellowship hall in the basement but denied the application for a waiver from the building code to install a stairway chairlift on the stairway leading to the sanctuary at Kingdom Life Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Kingdom Life Church has renewed its request for a waiver of the State Building Code in order to install a stairway chair lift on the stairway leading to the sanctuary at its church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Kingdom Life Church indicates it consulted with several chair lift companies and concluded that it is not feasible for the church to install an incline platform lift leading to the sanctuary.

The Board reviewed the renewed 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 the church has

some members who use a wheelchair and are carried up and down the stairs to access the sanctuary and fellowship hall.

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, Kingdom Life Church stated that the estimated installation and maintenance costs of an incline platform lift leading to the sanctuary was \$25,000 to \$35,000. The church stated that Kingdom Life Church is a young church, which could not incur the estimated costs. The Board determined it was not architecturally feasible to provide a greater degree of accessibility to the sanctuary at this time but encouraged Kingdom Life Church to continue fundraising efforts for future installation of a platform lift.

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, installation, and annual maintenance cost for the chairlifts of \$8,000 is justified.

With regard to the fourth factor, the reliability of the proposed device or equipment, the Board noted that the proposed chair lifts 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 chair lift devices 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 noted that the stairway leading to the sanctuary is 116 inches wide and the stairway leading to the fellowship hall is 60 inches wide. Kingdom Life Church proposed relocating one handrail on the stairway leading to the sanctuary to the center of the stairway. The folded chairs protrude 13.5 inches. The Board noted that there was sufficient room on the stairway leading to the sanctuary to maintain a clear width of 35 inches of clear passing space as allowed by IBC Chapter 10, Sections 1009.4 and 1012.8. The Board also noted that the building has a smoke detector and an alarm system but does not have a fire sprinkler system. 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.

After considering these factors, Board member Reinke made a motion to approve the application for a waiver from the building code to install a stairway chairlift on the main wider stairway leading to the sanctuary at Kingdom Life Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Board member Fenley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

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

- 1) The stairway chair lifts shall comply with the Minnesota Building Code and Minnesota Elevator Code requirements. Only licensed elevator contractors may install stairway chair lifts. 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 chair lift shall be maintained in the folded position when not in use.
- 3) The Board encourages Kingdom Life Church to continue fund-raising effort for the purpose of installing a lift device that would afford greater accessibility to the sanctuary of the church.

  
KAREN GRIDLEY, Chair  
Access Review Board