I probably shouldn’t waste emotional energy on the front door to the building where I work, but I am aggravated every time I come in. Just before the end of the year, the old doors were removed and a new one took its place. The remodeling was prompted by the need for an accessible entrance. You cannot open this door without hurting your back. While, upon close scrutiny of ADA regulations, it is ADA compliant, it certainly does not meet the spirit of the law.

Because Carnegie Hall is on the Historic Register, there are certain exclusions. Thus, the door is attractive and looks good, but is so heavy that few able-bodied persons can open the door let alone someone with a physical disability. Furthermore, because of city regulations, all doors in Forest Grove must be a “left-hand” open. The location of the door and the entrance from the ramp to the platform would work better if the door were a “right-hand” open door. Finally, the handle is placed at an uncomfortable low height for anyone not in a wheelchair. Interestingly, the automatic button to open the door is at a more normal height. As a result of the heavy door, almost everyone entering the building is using the automatic opener. Thus, we waste energy while the door is open longer and, I believe, sincerely cause people to wonder about the sensibility and logistics of making a building accessible. I’m most upset because I believe it sends the wrong message about people with disabilities and what we should be doing to advocate for their accessibility. Bummer!