

## Commission on Disabilities (COD)

Meeting Minutes  
November 17, 2020

Zoom link :

<https://zoom.us/j/96765753686>

Or From a telephone, dial (646) 876-9923 and enter Webinar ID: 967 6575 3686

### **Present:**

Full Members: Joan Burrows, Ann Corcoran (Chair), Lisa Franklin, Leslie Johnson, Franny Osman.

Others: Director of Governmental Affairs Austin Cyganiewicz

Board of Selectman Liaison: Jim Snyder-Grant

Prospective member and other residents

### **1. Opening**

Chair Corcoran opened the meeting at 10:00 am.

### **2. Regular Business**

A. Shared Concerns (timely issues not on the agenda, formerly “Citizens Concerns”)- none

B. Announcements – Director of Governmental Affairs Austin Cyganiewicz made these announcements:

Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> there will be a forum on Main and Prospect St. intersection.

Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> there will be a forum on MBTA service reductions.

Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> there will be a forum among MAPC, Acton, and Maynard about connecting the Powdermill Rd. corridor. MAPC is doing a study and asking for feedback from the public.

There are Financial Assistance programs with emergency rental assistance and mortgage assistance available to the public (both from the Regional Housing Services Organization). Social Services Coordinator Laura Ducharme is the contact.

C. Liaison Updates- Ms. Osman gave an update on transportation: Various public forums about properties or intersections have been organized, including one on the property at 19-21 Maple St., by the train station. CrossTown Connect Transportation Management Association has a new director, Karen Dumaine.

D. Review of Minutes- Ms. Corcoran made a motion that the April 2020 minutes be approved. Ms. Franklin seconded the motion. The COD voted 5-0 in favor of the motion, by roll call vote. The motion passed. Ms. Corcoran made a motion that the October 2020 minutes be approved. Ms. Franklin seconded the motion. The COD voted 5-0 in favor of the motion, by roll call vote. The motion passed.

### 3. **New Business**

- A. Acton Housing Authority Main St. Property- Ms. Franklin, liaison to the Acton Housing Authority Main St. property committee, explained that the recommended number of accessible apartments within a senior development varies depending on which guidelines are used. It was suggested that if cost is cited as a reason for including fewer accessible units, we should ask to see the cost estimates.

Ms. Franklin made a motion that the COD follow along with the development of this housing and write a letter to the Housing Authority asking them to put in additional accessible units. Have conversations with Senior Center Director Sharon Mercurio and Senior Social Services Coordinator Beverly Hutchins because they have a sense of the population's needs. Ms. Osman seconded the motion. The COD voted 5-0 in favor, by roll call vote. The motion passed. The secretary, Ms. Osman, was asked to write the letter to the Housing Authority Board.

- B. Jones Field Playground- Ms. Corcoran reported on the progress on redevelopment of the Jones Field playground, an effort toward which the COD contributed funds at a previous meeting. Already the playground is being well-used, even though construction is still underway. The parking is complete but the accessible ramp and track, and pickleball court, are not yet complete. The COD plans to participate in the grand opening.
- C. Bike Program Status- Mr. Cyganiewicz reported on Massachusetts Office on Disability grant applications. Last year's application, to support accessibility improvements such as a bathroom, next to the Faulkner Room in Town Hall, was not granted, but the work was ultimately done anyway. This year the Town applied for \$8000 through the same MOD program, to purchase two adaptive bikes for use by the public, to be stored at NARA Park.

Ms. Corcoran moved that the COD earmark \$500 of our budget to go toward adaptive bike purchase. Ms. Franklin seconded the motion. There was a discussion of \$500 vs. \$1000. The motion was modified to read: The COD will set aside up to \$1000 for the adaptive bike program such as getting a bike for NARA park. The modified motion was seconded by Ms. Burrows. The COD voted in favor of the modified motion by roll call 5-0. The modified motion passed.

Ms. Corcoran said that purchase of the adaptive bikes is exciting and fits in with other features that Acton has that make our community friendly to residents with disabilities, such as the Miracle Field and new housing.

Mr. Cyganiewicz said that because Zagster went out of business the Town is looking for another company to do our bike share program, and they will take into account whether the company has an adaptive bike program. It was noted

that Worcester has a bike share program that offers adaptive bikes (contact: Mike Kennedy at Worcester Center of Living and Working). The Town Manager was appreciated for keeping adaptive bikes in mind. Discussion of various types of adaptive bikes including trikes that are pedaled with feet, hand cycles, and child-sized bikes. AccessSports America just got a grant to get a hand cycle. Reminder to include money for maintenance of bikes and training of repair people.

D. Arboretum Planters- After some difficulty identifying the appropriate accessible planter for the Acton Arboretum, Ms. Corcoran purchased two planters. Natural Resources Director Tom Tidman has arranged assembly. Ms. Corcoran moved that the COD pay the \$500 for the planters, as agreed to in the spring. Ms. Osman seconded the motion. The COD voted 5-0 by roll call vote in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

E. Slate of Officers- A slate of officers was agreed upon with most people agreeing to have their title in name only, and planning to share the work. The key thing is that the work get done. The following slate would be presented for voting at the December meeting:

- Ms. Johnson as Treasurer (Ms. Franklin will share the duties)
- Ms. Franklin as Vice Chair
- Ms. Burrows as Clerk (Mr. Cyganiewicz will take minutes)
- Ms. Osman as Chair (Ms. Franklin will share the duties)

Ms. Corcoran appreciated the contributions of member Pesha Kokis.

F. COD Handbook- Ms. Corcoran wants to complete the editing of the Handbook by December. Ms. Franklin and Ms. Kokis will work on it, following the work past member Mr. Factor and Ms. Kokis did to identify areas of concern. Ms. Corcoran made a motion that the work on the handbook would be done in December then presented to the Commission. Ms. Burrows seconded the motion. The COD voted 5-0 in favor of the motion, by roll call. The motion passed.

#### **4. Adjournment**

At approximately 12 noon, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

The motion was approved unanimously.