



Commission on Disabilities

Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2019

9:30 am

Room 126, Town Hall, 472 Main St. Acton, MA 01720

Present: Mady Harvey (Chair), Nancy Corcoran, Lisa Franklin, Danny Factor, Franny Osman, Joan Burrows, Leslie Johnson.

1. Opening

Facilitator Harvey opened the meeting at 9:35 am.

2. Regular Business

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Ms. Harvey made a motion that the COD approve the January Minutes. Ms. Corcoran seconded. The COD voted 5-0 to approve. The motion was approved.

Ms. Franklin made a motion that the COD approve the February minutes. Mr. Factor seconded. The COD voted 5-0 to approve. The motion was approved.

B. Citizens' Concerns:

- i. A resident of the Minuteman neighborhood, near Musket Rd., whose child has visual impairment, came to discuss the intersection of Jefferson and Hayward, where the resident believes there should be an upgrade to the crosswalk by addition of some sort of signalization. He defers to traffic engineers and the Town engineering department regarding the type of improvement. People speed, hurrying to and from the schools. There have been two pedestrians recently hit by cars in this area. In addition to this child who crosses there, there are many others, including some with hearing impairment. The resident spoke to the Town Manager about this issue about six weeks ago. Franklin made a motion that the COD retreat be on the usual COD meeting day, June 18th. The Commission voted 4-0 to approve. The motion was approved.

Ms. Corcoran made a motion that the COD send a letter to the Town Manager and Engineer stating that we see this issue as one of high priority, based on the safety issues. The Commission voted 5-0 to approve. The motion was approved.

C. Announcements:

- i. Ms. Johnson said that the bike store Pedal Power will purchase four adaptive bikes for rental, cost of rental to be decided. There will be an



adaptive bike kickoff day in May that the nonprofit AccessSport America will run.

- ii. Mr. Factor announced that a group of residents is forming a new nonprofit called “Community Corner” that will, among other things, assist people with the cost of rides that the van service and Neighbor Brigade cannot provide.
- iii. Ms. Osman announced that she worked with Scott Zadakis, Executive Director of CrossTown Connect, and Doug Halley, Acton’s Transportation Director, to submit an application to Acton Boxborough United Way for support of introducing Acton seniors to ride-hailing technology to add tools for filling unmet ride needs.

D. Board of Selectman Update:

The Board has been focused on warrants for Town Meeting. Discussion of sewer enterprise warrant item.

- E. Review of next meeting’s agenda: There was a discussion about vacancies and terms of people with and without disabilities. Mr. Factor requested that this item be on a future agenda for full transparency.

3. **Publicity**

Ms. Corcoran suggests Ms. Johnson create a public service announcement at Acton TV about the Adaptive Bike Coalition.

Ms. Franklin made a motion that COD members work with Ms. Johnson to expand publicity regarding adaptive bikes to include the Boston Globe, inviting people of note, and using the Acton TV spot. Ms. Harvey seconded. The COD voted 5-0 to approve. The motion was approved.

4. **State disability policy**

Ms. Harvey used to do the monthly calls with the state COD Alliance; now Ms. Franklin does these calls instead. Ms. Franklin said that the COD Alliance is supporting legislation, H2019 and S1441, to align state architectural access board (AAB) regulations with the federal ADA regulations. The Massachusetts Office on Disability would like to know that local commissions are in support of this move. Mr. Factor commented that a positive result of this bill would be that it would expand the jurisdiction of the AAB code into the workplace.

Ms. Franklin made a motion that the COD support this legislation and add our names to the list of supporters on any publicity that the Disability Policy Consortium does about these bills. Ms. Corcoran seconded. The COD voted 5-0 to approve. The motion was approved. Ms. Harvey will fill out the MOD Organizational Endorsement to do this.



On another issue discussed by the COD Alliance, there is disagreement between the Disability Policy Consortium (DPC) and the Department of Public Licensing as to the hiring process for the new Commissioner of the AAB following the death of Tom Hopkins. The Disability Policy Consortium is concerned that the Department of Public Licensing is violating statute by conducting their own search for the new head of AAB instead of allowing the AAB to choose their own head as state regulations require. The COD Alliance is asking CODs to support the DPC's objections and to petition with them for a search committee containing members with direct experience of disability.

The COD Alliance meeting also discussed the lack of movement in the appointing the new Mass. Office on Disability Commissioner. Again, a qualified individual with a disability is the group's preferred result.

Ms. Franklin made a motion that the COD state its support for the COD Alliance opinions. Ms. Corcoran seconded. The COD voted 5-0 to approve the motion. The motion was approved.

4. Town Meeting Warrant Items

Mr. Factor suggested that the COD discuss the following warrant articles (6- sidewalks, 11 (Community Preservation Program) F K and L, 13 (Main St. 31-unit affordable housing by Housing Authority), 22 (Ambulance Enterprise Budget), 23 (Transportation Enterprise Budget), 30, 31 (Detached Accessory Units). Lisa points out that we voted in February to support the Accessory Dwelling Unit proposal and that the minutes reflect that we have differences of opinion about the square footage and other details.

After further discussion of the articles, Mr. Factor made a motion that the COD publicly be in favor of 6, 11 F K and L, 13, 22,23, 30, and 31. Lisa seconded. The COD voted 5-0 to approve. The motion was approved.

Members were assigned to each warrant item, speak up if comment was warranted at Town Meeting: Article 6-Mr. Factor; 11-F Mr. Factor, K Joan, L Leslie; 13-Franny; 22-Nancy; 23- Mr. Factor; 30,31-Ms. Burrows.

Lisa reminded members that there were quotable housing statistics available in the Independent Living email she had sent.

5. Handouts for Town Meeting

Ms. Osman made a motion that the COD give out a handout at Town Meeting urging people to vote for the articles that we support. Ms. Burrows expressed reservations. ____ seconded. The COD voted 5-0 to approve the motion. The motion was approved.

Wording on the handout will be such as follows: "The COD urges you to vote YES on..." and "We support these articles because they address the needs of people with disabilities." The handout will be on a brightly colored card.

Mr. Factor made a motion that the Commission approve a budget of up to \$25 to print the cards. Nancy seconded. The COD voted 5-0 to approve the motion. The motion was approved. Nancy and Franny volunteered to get the cards copied at Staples.



The following three items will be distributed at the table at Town Meeting:
Brochures (Leslie has some, Franny has some, Lisa has some, there are some in the closet in Town Hall)
Bright Orange cards with COD opinion as to how to vote (mentioned above)
Draft list of Resources

6. Access Coordinators' Report:

Mr. Factor referred to the list of access reports from the agenda. Due to a wrist injury, he would give only a verbal report. COD may want to take action on these:

Gould's and Ace Hardware: Regarding lack of raised handicapped parking lot signage at Gould's and Ace Hardware, Building Commissioner Frank Ramsbottom requests that we give him a formal request for communication. Ace Hardware has been sent two letters and not responded. Gould's Plaza say they won't due it due to difficulties plowing. It was mentioned that Gould's could apply for a variance from the AAB. It was mentioned that these businesses do a good job plowing and salting. Someone said that people who use the handicapped spots know where they are because they are closer to the business; someone else pointed out that it is the other drivers who need to know.

Mr. Factor made a motion that the COD advise that Acton Building Commissioner Frank Ramsbottom find Goulds and Ace Hardware in violation of the code regarding the handicap parking signage and that the AAB be contacted. Ms. Franklin seconded. The COD voted 4-0 with one abstention because the member doesn't like the raised poles that are to code because they make it necessary for people with disabilities to back up to exit the parking spot.

Nagog Park: The inspector went out to see the handicapped signage in the parking lot and found that although they had said they had installed the signs, there was still insufficient signage. Mr. Factor and Inspector Frank Ramsbottom will follow up.

Moodz Salon: This business had been taken off the list as it is now in compliance.

30 Sudbury Road: Mr. Factor said that Frank Ramsbottom has suggested that the planned COD site visit of the Senior and Social Services Center be delayed until the recommendations of the transition report consultants are further studied.

7. Adjournment

At 12:42 p.m., it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.
The motion was approved unanimously.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting:

- Meeting minutes of January 2019



- Meeting minutes of February 2019
- An Act Relative to the Architectural Access Board