

## **Commission on Disabilities (COD)**

Meeting Minutes

June 16, 2020

10:30 am

Virtual Meeting due to pandemic

Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88079749069?pwd=TEFvbS92NnczYzRQN3RUUnpWWXdrQT09>  
Dial by your location +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

### **Present:**

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

Associate Members: Pasha Kokis, Jim Snyder-Grant

Others: Director of Governmental Affairs Austin Cyganiewicz

### **1. Opening**

Chair Corcoran opened the meeting at 10:30 am.

### **2. Regular Business**

- A. Shared Concerns (timely issues not on the agenda, formerly “Citizens Concerns”) – none
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes – none
- C. Announcements – none.
- D. Access Report – none.
- E. Selectmen Liaison Report – none.
- F. Report from Austin Cyganiewicz, Director of Governmental Affairs – none.

### **3. New Business**

- A. Discussion of potential Dog Park location on Main St. next to future Acton Housing Authority (AHA) development, Ms. Osman moved that the COD support the Dog Park Committee in locating the dog park at the Main St. site next to the AHA proposed development. It is a good central location with access by pedestrian, public transportation, and car. We would reconsider this support if the AHA is not in support of the location or if it interferes with the AHA Board’s preference after they speak about it. We request that there be some parking available right at the field and porch, for people

with and without handicapped placards who have mobility issues. Ms. Franklin seconded the motion. The COD voted 5-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

- B. This year is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The COD will propose a newspaper series to the Beacon Newspaper. It was suggested that the series start with an article in July 2020 about the effect the passing of the ADA had on the original Acton COD, followed by a series of articles based on interviews with people involved with the COD who lived in Acton before and after the ADA. Ms. Mahoney at the Beacon would do the interviews and writing. Ms. Burrows and Ms. Franklin are putting the Beacon in touch with these people.
- C. Horticulture Educator and retired Director of Acton Recreation Department Cathy Fochtman joined the meeting to discuss the proposed planter for which the COD offered its funds. One planter that was being considered was deemed inadequate because it did not allow people in wheelchairs to wheel up to it and underneath it to work on plantings. People spoke of the soothing and calming feeling that comes from touching and working with plants. We were reminded that the idea for this planter came from realizing that a previous memorial plant donation from the COD was not in an accessible location. The COD now was looking for a more permanent and accessible memorial. We acknowledged the participation of the original COD in helping to start the Arboretum. The present spending freeze was discussed. We looked online at one company's accessible planter ([www.greencirclegarden.com](http://www.greencirclegarden.com)). Ms. Fochtman said that the Town will look for an accessible planter.
- D. There will be no formal meeting in July 2020, but some members may organize a social event. Ms. Osman moves that we replace the July 2020 meeting with a social event on July 21. Ms. Franklin reminded members that if public vans were not available for that event, the Neighbor Brigade might have alternatives.
- E. Ms. Corcoran discussed the need for recruiting new members. She noted that Ms. Franklin and Ms. Burrows have been involved much longer than ten years, and Ms. Johnson for more than five years. Outreach ideas were discussed: Action Unlimited; Beacon Newspaper; Acton TV; facebook; Open Door Theater; participants in past COD events; holding a virtual movie event; and through members of related committees such as Transportation Advisory Committee, Acton Housing Authority, and Acton Housing for All. While we like to have members who have disabilities or family members with disabilities, or who care for people with disabilities, the most important qualities of members are empathy, understanding, and an ability to work hard for the community. The charter asks for five full members. We also have associate members and volunteers.
- F. No members offered to run for officer positions, so the nominating committee of Ms. Franklin and Mr. Snyder-Grant suggested that we keep the same officers and redistribute roles in the fall. Ms. Osman made a motion that we keep the same officers and redistribute roles in the fall. Ms. Franklin seconded the motion. The COD voted 5-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

## 1. Adjournment

At approximately 12:00 noon, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.