

Andover Commission on Disability—February 26, 2020 Commission Meeting

After the agenda was duly posted and distributed the meeting was convened on Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at 6:40 p.m. at the Memorial Hall Library on the third floor.

Present: Chair Julie Pike, Justin Coppola Sr., Justin Coppola Jr., Kathleen Dolan, Bernadette Lionetta Trish Leelman, Stephen Surette, Davide Khan, Selectperson Annie Gilbert, Janet Nicosia, Town of Andover Facilities Director/ADA Coordinator, and guest Sarah Sundman Farese

Minutes: Bernadette put forward a motion to approve the January 27, 2020 minutes and Trish seconded. Approved unanimously.

Old Business – Updates

Spot Checks: Steve and Justin Sr. were contacted and recommended a solution about sidewalk ramps on the side of Argyle Street heading toward Balmoral Street which needed to be replaced. Jeff Dougan of the Mass Office on Disability was also contacted.

Update on 25th Celebration: Kathleen reported that she has been in touch with Community Services Librarian Stefani Traina who is helping to set up this program. Justin Sr., Justin Jr., Trish, Judy and Kathleen will also be meeting with Stefani next month. Stefani proposed having the library co-sponsor this program which would allow it to then be part of “elect to connect” with the library--which engages the community without using the internet.

Stefani also offered to provide publicity for this event which means information about it would be included with other Library materials such as “10 things happening in Andover”, pamphlets and emails. Stefani also prepared the following statement for approval by the commission, which if approved, would be added to the library website. Julie is working on who will produce the 25th anniversary newsletter.

The motion before the commission is whether to approve the following:

“On the 25th anniversary of the Andover Commission on Disability, the public is invited to meet and hear the stories of some of our neighbors who are living with a disability They hope sharing their stories will educate people and raise awareness about some of the issues they face on a daily basis as they navigate both physical and social landscapes. Handouts with resources will be available. A collaboration of Memorial Hall Library and the Andover Commission on Disability.”

Stephen made a motion to approve, seconded by Trish and unanimously approved.

Annie asked if the commission was aware that the Historic Mill District (HMD) warrant will be taken up at Town Meeting and a brief discussion followed. Annie noted that the town owns (and may sell subject to town meeting vote) the 11 Lewis Street site. This area which is where the former town yard was located. The proposed district also includes the area by the train tracks bounded by Shawsheen river, the land near Whole Foods and School Street –which would be redeveloped into a mixed used (commercial/residential) area. A traffic study was completed for the area.

Town Clerk, Austin Simko is seeking public comments for the upcoming town meeting on the HMD. Members expressed an interest in hearing more about the RFP, and Annie Gilbert will ask Mr. Simko to present the HMD RFP at the March ACOD meeting.

Sarah asked about the process for handling questions when residents (particularly those new to town) have questions about how the schools handle issues having to do with children with disabilities or needing special education services. Sarah noted that SEPAC may be starting up in the Shawsheen School where her son is a student and Bernadette agreed to attend the next SEPAC meeting at that school to give an overview of ACOD.

Janet noted that there is an ADA line item each year in the budget to address unanticipated or ongoing issues related to access or services. Justin Sr. talked about the formal process and the ADA Transition Plan, that was recently updated Town-wide, an extensive report defining and prioritizing ADA nonconformance issues of all town buildings, schools and parks.

New Business:

Julie asked that the previously established work groups spend the rest of the meeting organizing in their groups and reporting back to the commission their identified tasks.

The “**Disability Law**” group includes Janet, Justin Sr., Justin Jr., Stephen and Kathleen. They reported that they will formalize a process and develop a schedule of ADA activities.

Initial schedule to include review at the planning stage by facility and schedule for a “Walk and Roll” (on-site visits) prior to a facility being occupied to ensure ADA compliance. Also, they will be tracking emergency gas reconstruction sites for ramps and other items which need to be revisited for compliance and Janet noted that she will be meeting with staff to review ongoing plans which will be reported back to ACOD.

The “**Accessible Andover**” group includes Jemma, Bernadette, Eileen and Virginia. Since Bernadette was the only member present, she spoke about her follow-up with Rep. Nguyen who, at last months ACOD meeting, invited “My Own Voice” to sing at the State House. Bernadette reported that this group will perform on April 21st.

The “**Marketing**” group includes Trish, Judy, David and Faisal and they reported that they will be reaching out to the community to get input on who may be a resource for Disability issues. This is the group that may have a member speak at town meeting supporting the Town Office Renovations Warrant and potentially other issues and other forums on the role of the commission.

Following these workgroup breakouts, Julie announced that there was a request from Bernadette for ACOD to approve \$400-\$500 for “My Own Voice” to cover the transportation costs for the 30 or so participants and also stipends for two directors for the April State House performance.

Kathleen made a motion to allocate \$400-\$500 for event, seconded by Stephen and unanimously approved.

Adjournment: Bernadette made a motion to adjourn at 8:10 p.m. and David seconded. Unanimously approved.

Next meeting: *March 25, 2020 at 6:30 pm in the Memorial Hall Library in the Activity room of the library.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan McKelliget