

## **Andover Commission on Disability—May 27, 2020 Commission Meeting**

After the agenda was duly posted and distributed the meeting was conducted virtually through WebEx at 6:30 p.m.

**Present:** Chair Julie Pike, Justin Coppola Sr., Justin Coppola Jr., Kathleen Dolan, Trish Leelman, David Kahan, Virginia McLeod, Eileen Reilly, Faisal Bashir, Jemma Lambert, and Steve Surette. Also present: Town Manager Andrew Flanagan, Assistant Town Manager Patrick J. Lawlor, and Town Clerk & Chief Strategy Officer on Historic Mill District/Town Yard Town Meeting Articles and Town Meeting Information, Austin Simko, Town of Andover Facilities Director/ADA Coordinator Janet Nicosia, and Center at Punchard Liaison Molly Bicking

Julie announced that two current members of the Commission on Disability, Stephen Surette and Trish Leelman plan to remain on the commission. Judy Wakefield will not be serving another term and therefore there is an opening on the commission. Julie asked that members think about asking a new member to join and she will also be checking the talent bank.

**Minutes:** Julie announced that the February 26, 2020 minutes will be voted on along with the May 27 minutes at the June ACOD meeting.

**Update from Town Manager** Town Manager Flanagan gave an overview of the Town Offices Access Project, noting that the town offices were last transitioned in 1983. The current transition involves a Phased Project approach. In the first Phase, the Select Board meeting room on the third floor will be re-designed to roughly twice the current space, with accessible aspects including wider doorways, and enhanced listening devices enabling attendees to hear proceedings both within and outside the conference room. The other floors will have ADA compliant modified service counters, as well as compliant entranceways. The entire ground floor will be re-designed to allow for ease of one-stop customer service. The aim is to create a “central hub” atmosphere for transacting town business.

Julie asked about the timeline for this project and Manager Flanagan responded that after Town Meeting appropriations, the bidding process begins and the time-frame could likely be 18 months or so. Ms. Nicosia noted that although some of the design work has been completed, further protections such as plexiglass partitions must be considered due to COVID 19. There are “many moving parts” to increase overall conference areas.

Kathleen asked whether the Town Manager has plans to discuss protections for the town’s seniors and people with disabilities as she has heard that some of these people feel threatened by the lack of some in and around town to wear masks and properly “social distance”. Manager Flanagan responded that police officers have the power to enforce these protections and are able to do so, on bikes and foot patrol.

Jemma offered to talk with Kathleen off-line to see what else can be done to make people feel safer. Jemma mentioned that within the Senior Center, measures such as delivering meals, medicines, and assisting with transport to grocery stores and doctor appointments, has increased. An enhanced newsletter

is issued each month with information about how to stay safe during this corona virus

Manager Flanagan also noted that the Select Board will vote on policy changes Monday with respect to using parking spaces in town for restaurants to expand outdoor seating for social distancing. This does not involve using sidewalk space which would restrict mobility, especially for people with disabilities.

Discussion then ensued regarding two upcoming articles to be taken up at Town Meeting: Article 22 and Article 24.

Article 24 concerns the above-mentioned town office renovation/accessibility project and Ms. Nicosia asked for the Commission's support of this Article. Molly said that it would be good if town renovations open up space. It is a \$360K free cash (rather than borrowing) item. It was hoped that the Commission would vote favorably on this Article tonight in time for the Finance Committee meeting.

Roll call vote: Julie Pike, yes; Justin Coppola Sr., yes; Justin Coppola Jr., yes; Kathleen Dolan, yes; Trish Leelman, yes; David Kahan, yes; Eileen Reilly, yes; Faisal Bashir, yes; Jemma Lambert, yes; Steve Surette, yes

Article 22 concerns School improvements, and specifically mentioned at other ACOD meetings, the re-design of the Doherty School elevator and ramp removal that has long been an access issue. This re-design and ramp removal are an \$200K item.

### **Historic Mill District Presentation/Discussion**

This proposed district incorporating the old town yard of 3.4 acres, abutters, and the 100 acres or so beyond that area will be considered within the RFP process. A map of the area showed the railroad tracks and Shawsheen River cutting through the entire district. The 21<sup>st</sup> century vision includes a plan for "re-integrated work-life environment" centered within proximity of transportation, and mixed--use buildings.

The zoning overlay district approved for mixed use zoning seeks to divide the area into three "corridors" for design, traffic, and circulation remedies.

A place-making study was undertaken to ensure gathering places for people within the center of the community. Over the past several years, walking tours, interviews, online surveys, and interviews with community leaders are among the steps taken for input into the design of this type of environment.

RFP planning objectives give direction to potential developers as to the type of development desired so that proposals will be consistent. The RFP process lays out 7 planning objectives such as maintaining consistency with area buildings, improving connectivity through mixed use space, dedicated community spaces to showcase the arts, culture, performance arts and the like, as well as a good mix of ground floor commercial and upper floor residential space. The buildings would be LEED certified and areas such as the Pearson Street intersection need to be re-configured to make traffic flow and pedestrian safety paramount.

The Town would take by eminent domain the discontinued area of Lewis street and the old town yard to

clear title.

Kathleen asked how the term “historic” fits in to plans and noted her concerns about the taking by the town of part of Lewis street. Mr. Simko responded that the development was consistent with the historic mill district—the mills surrounding the area. The old town yard is currently an eyesore but what will be put there would be consistent with historic design.

David responded that the town and partners have done a good job with the process to date. Trish asked whether there would be any changes to Andover Commons and the answer was no.

Faisel suggested the commission look at the warrant before voting on it.

Eileen asked how ACOD weighs in and Mr. Simko replied that improved accessibility and safety were issues of concern to ACOD. Jemma added that safety in terms of foot traffic for the those living and shopping in that area would be built into the overall design.

Molly asked about housing for seniors and the response was 15% of units will be dedicated to affordable housing.

Noting concerns about voting prior to reading the warrant, Mr. Simko will provide links to the warrants for further consideration.

Julie asked that the commission meet on Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup> a week prior to the Town Meeting on June 24<sup>th</sup>, to discuss the Articles prior to any ACOD votes.

**Adjournment:** David made a motion to adjourn at 8:19 p.m. and Eileen seconded. Unanimously approved.

**Next meeting:** *June 17, 2020 held virtually.*

Respectfully Submitted,  
Susan McKelliget

Andover Commission on Disability Wednesday, May 27, 2020 6:30 PM Virtual Meeting Broadcast by Andover TV Comcast Channel 22 Verizon Channel 45 Or Stream online at [www.andovertv.org](http://www.andovertv.org)

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Revenue and Expenditure Task Force will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to watch the meeting may do so in the following manner: Andover TV COMCAST CHANNEL 22 AND VERIZON CHANNEL 45 or stream online at [www.andovertv.org](http://www.andovertv.org) .

Every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.