

## Andover Commission on Disability

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

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**Call to Order** Justin called the virtual meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Roll call: Trish Leelman, Y; Katherine Ananis, Y; Carlene Bell, Y; Jemma Lambert, Y; Stephen Surette, Y; Justin Coppola, Y. Kathleen arrived after roll call.

Also Present: Janet Nicosia, Director of Facilities, and ADA Coordinator Liaison, Ellen Townson, Vice Chair, Conservation Committee Liaison, Gail Bloom, Council on Aging Liaison, and Liam Flanagan, Andover High School Liaison.

### **Liaison Reports & Announcements**

**Jemma** — had nothing to report

**Janet** — Reported that the Town of Andover has recently received a \$500K grant to develop the Haggett's Pond Accessible Rail Trail. She held a grant writing workshop tonight, and there will be a meeting of Haggett's Pond abutters to give them information and answer questions or concerns even though they have had previous notices.

There will be a Nason's Landing Kayak Launch Design kick-off at 5 Campanelli Drive, July 10 at 7pm. Stakeholders are invited for design input. A disabled veterans group called "Healing Waters" has pledged to help out.

Employees have moved out of Town Offices. Construction is ongoing at the Doherty School elevator project and the General Contractor bids are due July 17<sup>th</sup>. The elevator should be operational for School Year 2024-2025.

**Ellen** — Conservation will be involved with permitting the kayak launch and the rail trail as both are located near wetland areas. She asked if members hear anything in the community about these projects that was of concern, to let her know.

She suggested that the next Institute for Human Centered Design event be hosted in Andover, in light of the kayak launch and accessible rail trail. Carlene noted Janet's involvement years ago with High Plain Road and Wood Hill access to the playing fields. Ellen said that there has been a very positive trajectory in the last several years with the new Andover accessible projects.

Trish reminded Ellen and the group that she would like to volunteer to check hiking trails and note issues that may crop up with wheelchair use. Katherine added that she would also like to volunteer as her son uses a wheelchair, to see if anything should be done to improve access.

Justin said he will give them notice of any trail or other ADA on site visits.

Gail — attended the Andover Leadership Academy and encouraged others to attend. These sessions provide information on Town department functions. Gail said Andover has unique programs and support systems and that it was enlightening to see how the Town works. The Town is open to new ideas and that the Ballardvale Fire Station innovations were interesting.

Jemma added that the Academy is open to anyone living/working in Andover and that the next one will start in the Fall, with shorter intensive sessions.

### **Minutes of 4/26/23 and 5/24/23**

It was moved by Stephen, seconded by Trish, and voted 6-0 to approve the minutes of 4/26/23 and 5/24/23

Roll call: Trish, Y; Katherine, Y; Carlene, Y; Stephen, Y; Jemma, Y; Justin, Y.

### **Old Business**

- **DPW & ADA Accessible Projects Updates**—Stephen said that Janet, Justin and he met with Paul Materazzo and David Biancavilla, BSC Group, and discussed options for the Merrimack River boat dock and the details around the dock. Next meeting will be an on-site review of the ADA accessible Lawrence Boat launch. All are invited to attend. So far, ACOD has been involved in 3 boat launches involving ADA Program Access. ACOD members again thanked Janet. Janet said she executes in cooperation and planning with others, those ideas that have been put forward. Justin said we have come a long way with ADA Program Access, since the ADA was passed in 1990. Nason's Landing and the Rail Trail are programs that will give those with disabilities similar access to others in town. Ellen noted that the Rail Trail idea started back in 2016 with her organizing a tour of people with various disabilities for inputs with the Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD). She thanked everyone for making it a reality.
- Justin noted that Ellen is a member of the Regional Food Insecurity Task Force. She discussed the planning of an accessible ADA community fridge in the rear of Doherty School. Justin reported that he did an on-site review and submitted his recommendations. The first community fridge opened at the Ballardvale United Church on Clark Road. There are complexities when locating anything on town property. Jemma and Ellen praised Janet's ability to get projects done and to make things move forward. Food insecurity issues are increasing in Andover as well as in other communities. Trish said she would like more information on this food insecurity project and food resources.
- For Andover Day, we have reserved a booth for ACOD, located on Main St. on September 23, 10 AM – 4 PM. Justin asked for members to sign up for shifts of 2 hours, at the next meeting or to email him their preferences beforehand. Justin asked members to contact him if they have ideas for the upcoming ACOD newsletter.

**Accessible Andover on Andover Cable Access TV** –Kathleen reported that on Tuesday the segment on Project Lifesaver was filmed. Detective Robin Cataldo and Sargent Steven Neal, of the Andover Police Department talked about Project Lifesaver, and Janet talked about ADA access within the town. There are now eight programs and a segment on autism comprised of two sessions would ideally be next. The first of these might be someone who

tells what autism is, and the second part might feature someone close to a person with autism who could describe the challenges and ways the town can help. Justin said another segment might include Ellen talking about food insecurity.

**Preferred Disability Terminology** –Eileen and Trish have been working on this and in July plan to bring recommendations to the ACOD meeting. Information for Andover Day and the ACOD web site is planned.

**Elder/People with Disabilities Residential Tax Relief**—There is a balance of \$625 in ACOD’s budget to be used before July 1. Jemma said this program helps people who qualify for residential tax relief, and it is always needed and appreciated. She suggested the commission vote to add the remaining \$625 in ACOD’s budget to help fund it. It was moved by Carlene, seconded by Stephen, and voted 7-0 to approve disbursement of the \$625 remaining in the ACOD budget to the Elder/People with Disabilities Residential Tax Relief program.

Roll call; Jemma, Y; Stephen, Y; Katherine, Y; Kathleen, Y; Carlene, Y; Trish, Y; Justin, Y.

### **New Business**

Merrimack River ADA Accessible Boat Dock –there was a kick-off meeting focused on accessibility for a proposed boat launch.

### **Announcements**

06/29/23 Complete Streets (better accessibility, improved safety) Cormier Youth Center  
6:30 PM

07/26/23 Next ACOD meeting 6:30 PM on Zoom

August - No ACOD meeting

09/23/23 Andover Day --- ACOD Booth, Main St. 10 AM – 4 PM Specific Location TBD

### **Adjournment**

It was moved by Trish, seconded by Katherine, and voted 7-0 to adjourn the meeting at  
7:16 PM