

Meeting Minutes
Andover Commission on Disability
Memorial Hall Library Activity Room
January 22, 2014

After the agenda was duly posted and distributed, the meeting was convened on Wednesday, January 22, 2014, at 6:35 p.m. in the Activity Room of the Memorial Hall Library.

Present: Maddy St. Amand (Acting Chair), Julie Pike, Bernadette Lionetta, Justin Coppola Jr., Ruth Rosensweig, and Jade Perry.

Also Present: Justin Coppola Sr. (former ACOD Chairperson), Sarah Paterson, candidate for ACOD member, and Selectman Mary Lyman.

Ruth made a motion to accept the November 20, 2013 minutes, Bernadette seconded, and the minutes were passed unanimously.

Old Business / Updates

Unable to be present, Stephen had reported to Maddy that he will see to the order of new handicap violation signs with the \$250 penalty on it, and members should let him know if they notice HP signs missing around town. This follow-up is a result of earlier reports that there were missing HP signs as well as the secondary fine signs with the \$250 penalty.

Action Item: 1. Stephen is seeing to the order of signs with the Highway Department. 2. All members are asked to make an effort to spot missing signage.

New Business

❖ Bancroft School Project (Meeting 1/16/14)

Justin Coppola Sr. discussed his review of the Bancroft blueprint plans completed in the last few months with the assistance of an architectural consultant from MOD. One of the things he tried to get clarification on, from the building architects, was the access to a cafeteria platform (stage) which had two access areas--one a few steps up to the platform, and the other a ramp up the platform. The ramp route from the audience seating to the stage leads to a door (out

of public view) which might be locked at times, and then leads to a wall at the back of the stage. Queries made to the project manager were not answered or were inconclusive on the ramp access. Justin filed a Request for an Advisory Opinion with the Architectural Access Board (AAB) to determine whether the stage as planned meets the AAB requirements and if not, to ensure the issue is properly addressed before construction of the stage.

The Bancroft School platform issues were clarified at the 1/16/14 meeting with Ed Ataide, Plant & Facilities, Lorraine Finnegan, the architect, Rich Crowley, project manager, Chris Clemente, building inspector, Chris Becker, MOD, and Maddy St. Amand.

Action Item: ACOD and the Bancroft Building Team including the architect will review the “As Built” design of the platform at the Bancroft School “walk-through” to determine if any next steps are required.

Several commission members expressed an interest in attending the walk-through in order to learn first hand about monitoring for new construction access.

❖ Meeting with Police Chief Patrick Keefe

1. **Mass DOT HP Placard abuse/misuse**— Maddy met with Chief Keefe and four lieutenants recently to discuss their observations of possible misuse of HP placards in town. It was expressed that the ticketing program of ACOD has not really been utilized or enforced for the past two years and that parking violations are substantially down. This discussion was specifically in regard to placard misuse with police personnel present expressing no real awareness of this type of violation. Maddy explained the problem as reported in other towns and cities with the theft of placards, use by relatives of placards, bequest of placards in wills, etc. There have been a few reports in Andover and the commission would like to assess whether we have a problem as reported elsewhere

Discussion then followed concerning possible ACOD sponsorship of a “pilot program”, a short-term funding effort for officers to be deployed to identified targeted areas where

non-handicapped people run in and out of stores or restaurants. This would allow officers to devote a few hours per week to patrol with this violation a priority and enforce any violations when placards are being used illegally.

Action Item: In exchange for officers making this effort, ACOD would act as “spotters” making note of the time of day/location/ for feedback purposes. It was agreed that the most appropriate timing would be in late winter/early spring when people are more out and about. Placard misuse violation carries a fine of \$500.00 which other municipalities (Waltham) have used to add new staff to their police departments. It was expressed that it is the hope of the Commission that any such revenue be directed towards law enforcement rather than the general fund.

2. **Handicap Parking Program**—There was general agreement that this problem has diminished since proper signage has been put up in town. It is ACOD’s understanding that the police department will review this program, informing us if prosecutions went forward from our civilian ticketing and the current state of issuing parking tickets for HP spaces.

Action Item: Report due back from the police department to the commission.

3. **Project Lifesaver**—ACOD sponsored this project which allows people to wear a locating device—an electronic chip which tracks people who have a tendency to wander-- such as Alzheimer patients, some years ago. Families in town who are eligible, may get the locator for free. This project is widely regarded as a success and is funded from various town resources. **Action Item: ACOD will request a report on this project from Lt. John Pathiakis, who coordinates the effort.**

4. **Lock Box Program**—This program, also initially sponsored by ACOD, is under the Fire Department and overseen by TRIAD. As previously reported, lockboxes are installed by the fire department at eligible households to enable firefighters to open the boxes to get a homeowners key to open rather than break down doors in case of an emergency.

The initial purchase of equipment was 60 units and the commission would like to see more eligible townspeople have access to them, therefore more outreach or advertising is needed. **Action Item: Ensure that applications are located at the Center at Punchard and town office, and the old Town Offices.** This was discussed at this time since the police are also first responders.

- ❖ **Evacuation**—Discussion ensued about how to make sure that any elderly person or person with a disability who wants to be in the police data base for notification/assistance in the event of a disaster, be aware that they can make their information known to the police for that purpose. It is difficult to determine who may be eligible, which is why self-identifying is key to the program's success. When a person reports an age-related difficulty or disability to the police it enables the E-911 Dispatch center (Police) to quickly see that persons' profile so that they can assist them. The homes with a Lock Box are already on the E-911 data base. **Action Item: Bernadette will bring the information to SEPAC. Maddy will contact the Triad board regarding continued out-reach and education on this issue. (application forms)**
- ❖ **Snowplow Issue**—ACOD discussed the matter of contracted snow plows dumping snow/debris into handicap parking spots/areas and whether there are any laws, policies, or penalties for violators. There are no policies or penalties per se. Anyone noticing this practice can simply call 911 and the snow will be removed by the town's highway department.

Sarah noted that she noticed snow-banks from plowing up against signal poles blocking the button for street crossing and insufficient cross-walk and sidewalk clearing after snow storms in the Shawsheen Square intersection.

Action Item: When Sarah is approved as an ACOD member, she and Stephen will work on this matter.

Adjournment

Jade made a motion to adjourn at 8:05 p.m., Julie seconded and unanimously passed.

*Next meeting: Wednesday, February 26, 2014, 6:30 p.m.
Activity Room, Lower Level, Memorial Hall Library*

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McKelliget