

Meeting Minutes
Andover Commission on Disability
Memorial Hall Library Activity Room
September 25, 2013

After the agenda was duly posted and distributed, the meeting was convened on Wednesday, September 25, 2013, at 7:20 in the Activity Room of the Memorial Hall Library. Preceding the business meeting was a presentation by Chief Michael Mansfield of the Andover Fire Dept.

Present: Maddy St. Amand (Acting Chair), Julie Pike, Stephen Surette, Patricia Commane, Justin Coppola Jr., Ruth Rosensweig, and Jade Perry.

Also Present: Chief Michael Mansfield, Andover Fire Department; Donna Gorzela (former ACOD member) and Justin Coppola Sr. (former ACOD Chairperson).

Minutes: Pat made a motion to accept the July 24, 2013 minutes, Stephen seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Our Guest Speaker for the evening, Chief Michael Mansfield, Andover Fire Department gave a presentation to the ACOD on the **Andover Fire Rescue Residential Lock Box Program.**

Chief Mansfield opened the presentation by noting that Maddy had presented this lock box initiative to TRIAD based on her prior research of a similar program in Danvers, and that the issue was brought to the June 2013 TRIAD meeting. Chief Mansfield noted that lock boxes of a similar nature are already in place in commercial and industrial settings in town, and that a “modified” box for use by safety responders to get access to the elderly and disabled community is certainly a public safety need.

With the sponsorship of ACOD in the form of a \$5K grant awarded for the implementation of a residential lock box program, Chief Mansfield entered into a partnership between the Town and public safety company **Kidde**, which already provides the commercial lock boxes used in Andover.

This “start up” ACOD grant allowed the purchase of 70 lock boxes designed for door mountings, and October 1 is the start date for the program. It is anticipated that demand for the lock boxes will drive additional monies from the state, grant funding, and perhaps citizen support.

Chief Mansfield handed around examples of lock boxes and explained that Andover emergency personnel would always have available a specially-made “master” key which would open residential lock boxes. The lock boxes in turn would contain the home-owners’ key and possibly medical emergency information. The “master keys” would be kept securely in the cabs of fire apparatus. Public Safety Telecommunications will have a special notice on their dispatch screens that indicate a lock box is in use.

The Program is voluntary, at no cost to residents, and both on-line and printed applications will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Stakeholders include: ACOD; TRIAD; Andover Senior Center; Andover Council on Aging, Andover Fire Rescue; Andover Police Department; Andover Health Department;

Old Business

- **Spot checks** – Stephen reported that Bartlett and Wheeler sidewalks have been smoothed and re-paved; Essex Street sidewalk has been repaired and resurfaced, and Elm Street sidewalk will be re-done from the North Andover line to about Washington Street next week.
- **CAM Training in Haverhill October 8 & 9** –Justin Jr. and Justin Sr. plan to attend this two-day training program at Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill. Review of ADA specifications is particularly relevant to our upcoming site visits to the Bancroft School .
- **Online Resource Directory** – During the summer, Pat met with the two interested High School students to set up the proposed ACOD website link to an on-line resource guide to agency service providers. Chris Primes, one of the students, has set up a site and

Justin noted that instead of using the town site, a low cost service provider will be used which is more accessible. Pat provided the students resource content material and local directories of agency service providers, including the “Green Book” distributed by NILP.

- **Outdoor Dining Survey**—During the summer, Maddy, Justin Jr. and Justin Sr. completed a site review of all outdoor dining in downtown Andover – both new permit holders and previously established eating venues—to determine whether outdoor dining was equally available to all residents.

The results of this site review was shared with the group with ACOD (as an advisory commission) making recommendations going forward to decision makers. A general discussion ensued, with emphasis on both general lack of knee space for wheelchairs to fit under the tables, difficult restroom access and other physical barriers. The conclusion of the survey was that ACOD urges the Town officials to refer future applicants for permits to be required to review their projects’ compliance with ADA accommodations.

“We recommend that the Town raise its collective conscience in understanding the needs of people with disabilities in order to better assist those residents.” *Survey of Outside Dining 2013*

Motion made by Stephen to accept the survey as completed by the subcommittee, which Julie seconded

New Business

- **Administrative**—Maddy announced that Nancy Hogan has submitted her resignation to the ACOD. Donna Gorzela, a former ACOD member, attended tonight’s meeting and has submitted a new Talent Bank application to re-join the Commission.
Action Item: The opening will be listed on the Town’s website and Maddy will interview applicants who appear interested and relevant.
- **Bancroft School**—Maddy gave a brief update on this project noting that Ed Ataide, as project manager, will be conducting

access “walk-throughs” soon. Maddy asked ACOD members to consider participating on the project sub-committee. She noted that earlier training on the Bancroft School blueprints should be relevant. Justin Sr. said he asked Massachusetts Office on Disability’s Jeff Dugan to consider joining the sub-committee in view of his work with the up-dated rules or changes in regulations. ***Action Item:*** *Maddy will speak to Jeff concerning his availability to join the sub-committee as well as set a date for the first assembly at the school even if it is not yet ready for a full site visit.*

Announcements

Donna announced that today is International Ataxia day. Ataxia is a relatively unknown neurological condition shared by Jade and Donna and it was briefly discussed.

Julie reported on newspaper articles about: Open House at Center at Punchard (Fire Chief Mansfield Presentation) and an Autism Forum at the Tenney School in Methuen tomorrow.

Adjournment:

Julie made a motion to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. Jade seconded and it unanimously passed.

Next meeting: **Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 6:30 pm**
Activity Room, Lower Level, Memorial Hall Library

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McKelliget