

Meeting Minutes  
Andover Commission on Disability  
March 28, 2012

Present: Maddy St.Amand, Bernadette Lionetta, Justin Coppola, Justin Coppola Jr., Ruth Rosensweig, Julie Pike, Stephen Surette, and Susan McKelliget. Guest: Jeff Dougan

Minutes: The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. Julie made a motion to accept the March 22, 2012 minutes. Justin seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Old Business—Program Updates:

- Jeff Dougan from the Massachusetts Office on Disability was present for the entire meeting and Maddy opened the meeting by presenting an overview of ACOD activities during the past year including “spot checking” for access problems overseen by Julie and Stephen, which include checking for appropriate curb cuttings, handicap parking, and access to downtown businesses.
- Maddy distributed newly printed colored pamphlets show-casing the concept of building new houses with access into and within the homes (a concept being played out in some areas of Georgia). Ruth brought this concept to the attention of the commission about a year ago, and continues to fine tune the message ie (re-naming the term “visitability” to “basic access”) as part of the overall attempt to introduce this house building concept into the community.
- Maddy also handed out the ACOD 2011 Report which summarized ongoing commission activities as well as emphasizing that ACOD’s modest budget is directed to one-time only proposals or new program initiatives for special needs individuals.
- The commission approved a motion at the February meeting to give \$1,000 to NEADS (National Education for Assistance Dogs Service) to help purchase a trained service dog for Jami Cope of Andover. Maddy learned that this was not approved by the town and Maddy will seek other sources of possible funding.
- There was a brief discussion of the need to monitor new buildings and renovations at the beginning of the projects (such as the upcoming renovations to Olde Andover Village) to ensure appropriate access compliance before the plans are finalized.

New Business—Program Proposals

- Bernadette put forward **three** proposals for the commissions’ consideration. The **first** one is a “**Peer Mentoring Program**” for middle school students who are not able to participate in typical after school activities The idea would be to recruit High School students to accompany students from the three middle schools to go downtown and participate in “structured” activities such as purchasing greeting cards for upcoming events, or getting an ice-cream. Andover Youth Services would administer the

program. It was proposed that ACOD would provide initial funding of \$600 to allow 6 outings with 10 kids and 10 helpers. ***Bernadette made a motion for ACOD to provide the sum of \$600 to help fund a “Middle School Peer Mentoring Program. Julie seconded and unanimously passed.***

- The **second** proposal is called “**My Own Voice—Treble Chorus**”. The Treble Chorus of New England is starting a new choral program for children and young adults with special needs to be called “My Own Voice”. It was proposed that ACOD would fund the start-up costs of this program. The costs involve musical supplies such as rhythm sticks and sheet music. ***Bernadette made a motion to provide \$550 to help fund My Own Voice, a special needs program of the Treble Chorus of New England. Stephen seconded and unanimously passed.***
- The **third** proposal was for IPOD Printers which would allow 15 to 20 students with special needs at Doherty Middle School who currently have IPAD and IPOD Touch devices (but no printers). It was proposed that ACOD provide funds for one printer for each grade and one for the teachers. ***Bernadette made a motion that ACOD provides the sum of \$593.85 to help fund IPOD printers for special needs students at Doherty Middle School. Stephen seconded and unanimously passed.***
- ***Ruth made a further motion for ACOD to approve additional funding if needed to completely fund the above proposals and Julie seconded.***

Guest Speaker: Jeff Dougan

Maddy introduced Jeff Dougan from the Massachusetts Office on Disability Client Services Program. Jeff visited ACOD about a year ago to encourage dialogue with the commission and provide updated information from the state and federal levels on disability issues.

Jeff distributed several packets of information including fact sheets for the revised regulations implementing Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which apply to public/state and local government entities and private businesses and places of accommodation. Jeff also discussed in general, employer tax credits for ADA-related eligible access expenditures, service animals, correctional facilities, and requirements for new construction and alterations. He noted that compliance with the 2010 regulations for new construction and alterations became effective March 15, 2012.

Adjournment: Julie made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Bernadette. The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

***Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 25, 2012, 7 o’clock p.m.  
Activity Room, Memorial Hall Library***

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McKelliget