

Meeting Minutes
Andover Commission on Disability
February 24, 2010

Present: Justin Coppola, Sr., Justin Coppola, Jr., Gilbert DeMoor, Julie Pike, Maddy St. Amand, Bernadette Lionetta, Ruth Rosensweig, Pat Commane, and Susan McKelliget.

Minutes:

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm. Maddy asked for a friendly amendment to the January 27 minutes to include an action item concerning brochures for ACOD's advocacy and education piece. Julie moved to accept the January 27, 2010 minutes with the amendment which will be re-issued. Seconded by Gil and unanimously passed.

Old Business

ARCHITECTURAL ACCESS BOARD (ABB)

Justin Sr. distributed a revised copy of the AAB's variance process and noted that ACOD will now be notified at the time of application for a variance, by legal service of process which is (up-front) notice. Other parties such as the AAB Office, building inspector, and the local independent living center (if any) that represents the town where the property is located are also notified at this time. Previously, ACOD only received notice of a variance after the fact.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAW

Julie collected the hard copies of the State Ethics Commission Receipts for the Conflict of Interest Law Online Training Program from most members. **Action item:** Members who have not yet complete training or turned in their receipts will do so during the next few weeks.

ANNUAL REPORT

Justin Sr. distributed a copy of the ACOD FY 2009 Annual Report which includes the Commission goals and a four page Executive Summary.. Members spent a few minutes reviewing the Report and agreed that it is an accurate and complete report (with the exception of a few edits). **Action Item:** Maddy will continue to edit the report and Justin Sr. will submit it to the Town Manager's Office.

New Business

ACCESSIBLE NEW CONSTRUCTION

Ruth reported on research she has done on a concept called "visitability" which means integrating key "access friendly" building modes into newly constructed homes. A few states require new construction to adhere to these requirements, but ACOD is looking into the merits of a *voluntary* type model where the advantages include access for the disabled who live in the home, access for disabled visitors to the home, and better resale opportunities when the

home is sold. Some of the access issues discussed were “zero-step” entrances—where at least one entry to the home was graded to the street in such a way that no steps would be involved; a first floor bathroom requirement; and bathroom doors that would be wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs. Overall, this concept is forward looking in that it considers the needs of multi-generational families who may be able to live together as well as an aging population who may wish to remain in their own homes.

Action Item: Ruth will write a “concept paper” incorporating key ideas. Maddy will lead ACOD’s editing efforts so that the finished piece can become one of ACOD’s brochures to further educate citizens and town leaders about this innovative idea.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Justin Sr. handed out the ACOD FY 2010 Budget and noted that the total available monies for commitment to specified projects by June 30, totals \$3,850. Justin proposed spending this money on signage in Braille for the West Elementary School -- a currently un-met ADA requirement. Further, the amount of approximately \$3,800 would need to be voted on prior to March 1, which is when the monies would need to be encumbered for the signs. There was considerable discussion around the merits of spending nearly the entire ACOD budget on signs for the visually impaired, when the number of students deemed to have this particular disability was insignificant, if at all.

Another idea proposed by Pat and Bernadette was to see whether the money could be better spent on a larger disabled population—the non-physically disabled—specifically the special education population. Members agreed that the special education teachers/administrators are in the best position to decide which type of assistive technology (e.g. software or other products) would be most beneficial to this group.

Action Item: In response to SPED’s recommendations for expenditure, Bernadette and Pat will also determine what process is involved in linking the special education personnel with potential ACOD-funded products. ACOD members will vote prior to the next meeting on spending \$3,800 for West Elementary Braille signage unless ACOD decides to spend the money on special education products. Communications will be via e-mail.

Justin Jr. moved that we adjourn; Julie seconded and so moved.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McKelliget