

Andover Commission on Disability—October 25, 2017 Committee Meeting

After the agenda was duly posted and distributed, the meeting was convened on Wednesday, October 25, 2017 at 6:40 p.m. at the Memorial Hall Library Activity room

Present: Chair Julie Pike, Justin Coppola Sr., Justin Coppola Jr., Bernadette Lionetta, Stephen Surette, Donna Gorzela, Judy Wakefield, and guest Trish Leelman

Minutes: Bernadette made a motion to accept the August 30, 2017 meeting minutes and Justin Sr. seconded. Motion was passed unanimously (No September minutes—meeting cancelled so members could attend the MVRP Second Open House on Affordable Housing)

Old Business – Updates

- **Spot Checks**--Stephen reported that the Taylor Cove/ River Street area is not paved yet and when finished the curb cuts will be completed (there is a curb cut on one side of the road but no” reciprocal curb cut” on the opposite side.)
- **HP Parking Fine Signs**-- Julie noted that the State sets handicap parking violation fines for *hash marks* at \$500 and *regular handicap parking* sign violation are set by the town. The latter are scheduled to increase from \$ 250 to ? Steve noted that Safety Officer Glen Ota has jurisdiction over the signs. *Action Item: Steve noted that perhaps new fine information could be put on the flash boards to inform drivers of the fines and he will look into this.* Steve also noted that signs are currently recycled here in town and the signs are high visibility and at no cost.
- **Andover Day**-- Julie asked whether it was worth it to participate in this town-wide September event and there was general consensus that it was a good idea. Justin Jr. noted that he responded to several queries raised by the public and Justin Sr. noted that the freebies (jar openers and stylus pens) were a hit and help our marketing efforts.
- **Vacancies**-- Donna will be leaving the commission next month and we still have two openings after mid- November. Trish expressed an interest in joining.
- **Triad photo ID event**-- Julie reminded the commission that this event for people with disabilities will be on October 27, 2017 at the Center at Punchard. Free of charge.
- **Downtown Parking Study Talks**-- Justin Sr. reported that HP spots are on the town web-site on the Commission on Disability page. He also reported that there will be a CIP put forward for next year’s Town Meeting for re-striping the parking area on the east side of Bartlet street (the four- hour lot

where Domino's Pizza is now located) This will allow for a 20 % increase in parking over what is available now.

- **MVRPC Second Open House--** Members agreed that after attending the first three Open Houses, they will not attend a fourth session in late January.
- **Playground Update--** Joe was not at the meeting but he will keep the commission informed of updates regarding the playground at Wood and High Plain Schools.

New Business

- Julie reported that she, Justin Sr. and Justin Jr. presented a “Certificate of Excellence” and card to Ed Ataide from the Commission on his retirement. Steve reported that Janet Nicosia formerly Manager of Energy and Utilities is the interim Deputy Director.
- **Accessibility at St. Joseph Church, High Vale Lane**—A commission member received a call about a person who uses a wheel chair not being able to enter the church as there is no ramp or other access point. Although it was noted that religious churches are not subject to the ADA, they are subject to state laws. *Action Item: Julie will notify the church that this issue cropped up.*
- **Funding Project--** Bernadette reported on a program in town called Autism Hike (about a dozen or so people typically involved) and she asked whether ACOD might be interested in funding t-shirts or hiking poles for this group as part of ACODs outreach in the community. Justin Sr. and Justin Jr. agreed that it was a good marketing idea but declined to vote on the issue due to anticipated Transition Plan expenses.
- Julie reported on a discussion she had with Ed Ataide concerning the second floor of the Doherty School where a long and steep ramp near the auditorium. Justin Sr. followed up to say he and Justin Jr. have long noted that this is out of compliance with respect to height and slope. Justin Sr. further noted that there may be a CIP warrant to provide an elevator in this area which would need to be reconfigured to be ADA compliant. The Transition Plan may address this issue. *Action Item: Bernadette agreed to find out the number of physically disabled students at Doherty school.*
- **Newsletter and Website--** Justin Sr. and Justin Jr. gave a presentation on the ACOD website which can be accessed on the town web site by clicking on “disability” search. Upcoming events, ACOD projects and other information are now available on-line.

- Discussion about the newsletters cited on the web site (last one published in 2008) centered around the possibility of accessing social media such as a Facebook page rather than starting up printed newsletters again. Bernadette said that although ACOD would control content the Deputy Town Manager would need to be consulted if ACOD wants to pursue social media as a vehicle. *Action Item: Julie will consult with the Town Manager on next steps toward pursuing a FB account*
- Discussion about future project—Justin Sr. expressed a concern that many of the connections the commission used to have with town employees have changed (retirement for the most part) and ACOD needs to figure out how to re-connect with the new people.

Announcements: Julie announced the Town is hosting this year's Holiday Happenings on December 1st. Main Street will be closed for activities and shopping and fireworks will be on display at the Playstead.

Adjournment: At 8:26 p.m. Stephen made a motion to adjourn, Justin Jr. seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

Next meeting: *November 29, 2017 at 6:30 pm*

Memorial Hall Library, Activity Room, Lower Level

Respectfully Submitted
Susan McKelliget