

**Town of Acton
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES (COD)**

**MEETING MINUTES
September 19, 2017**

Members Present: Madeleine Harvey (Chair), Ann (Nancy) Corcoran, Danny Factor, Leslie Johnson

Members Absent: Lisa Franklin

Associate Members Present: Joan Burrows

Others Present: Kelley Cronin (Executive Director, Acton Housing Authority), Patricia (Pescha) Kokis (volunteer), Franny Osman (volunteer) Nancy Tavernier (Chair, Acton Community Housing Corporation)

Call to order: 9:30 am

Citizens' concerns: None

Announcements

- We voted unanimously to spend \$140 on the *Lives That Matter* DVD.
- Mady noted that West Acton is holding an Oktoberfest, but it is too late for COD to join this year. Mady noticed an announcement for this in the recent edition of *Action Unlimited*. We had not been informed, and were under the impression that this event had been permanently canceled. It seems to be largely for vendors, but we will consider involvement next year.
- A substance abuse committee is being developed by the Town and it has been requested that a COD member join. Franny Osman has agreed to serve on that committee assuming the BOS approves her as our new associate member.
- We were reminded of the sustainability policy document that had been sent to us recently; COD and other committees have been asked to give thought to ways in which we can contribute and to put forth ideas. Danny noted that the environment is important to everyone and can especially affect low income residents and persons with disabilities.
- We are looking into ways to have an online presence in *Wicked Local/Beacon*.
- Franny noted that the late bus has been reinstated for the high school and distributed the schedule.
- Nancy requested that the restrooms and parking be checked at the new senior center, as they may not meet specifications (toilet height, handicapped parking some distance from the front door etc.) Danny and Joan will follow up on these matters with Andrea Ristine, Municipal Properties Superintendent.

- We discussed the possibility of shortening the length of COD meeting minutes.
- Mady pointed out that while the door at Town Hall is now accessible via an electric door opener, there are no such options for entry to the clerk's office or the building department. Once inside, a person using a wheelchair only has access to the elevator, and has to rely on someone else to open those doors. Danny will follow up on this matter.
- Pescha Kokis noted that the outside electric door opener was not working. Danny will follow up on this matter.

Minutes

Minutes of the September meeting were approved with minor corrections

Election of COD Members

Elections were held for COD members through June 2018 (going forward, elections will be held in June, as per the bylaws). Results:

- Chair: Madeleine Harvey
- Vice Chair: Ann (Nancy) Corcoran
- Secretary: Joan Burrows with assistance from Madeleine Harvey
- Treasurer: Leslie Johnson
- Access Co-Coordinators: Danny Factor and Joan Burrows
- Transition Plan Coordinator: Lisa Franklin was suggested for this position, but as she was absent from the meeting, this is to be voted upon next month.

The COD is seeking one additional associate member. Franny Osman has been put forward by the Volunteer Coordinating Committee, but had not yet been voted in by the Board of Selectmen.

Accessible Housing Discussion

Kelley Cronin, Executive Director of the Acton Housing Authority (AHA) and Nancy Tavernier, Chair of the Acton, Chair of the Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) attended our meeting and discussed the need for accessible housing. There are unacceptably long waiting lists for such housing at this time, with priority being given to certain categories of applicants. The issue of accessory housing was briefly discussed, and Kelley and Nancy support this and will work with us. Danny noted that elevator buildings are needed to allow more people to use the housing. Two projects are underway (one on Mass. Avenue and one on Powdermill Road [the latter to be shared with Maynard]) and both will be elevator buildings. Danny and Franny will try to attend housing meetings whenever possible. By unanimous vote (nomination by Nancy), Danny was nominated to be our liaison to the AHA.

Executive Session

An executive session was held to discuss a matter involving mention of the physical and mental condition of a citizen.

Volunteers

We did not have time to discuss this matter, and it is tabled to the next meeting. However, Franny distributed a draft document regarding areas in which volunteers could assist the COD. They would either be on call or assigned short projects.

Strategic Planner

This was discussed again. It was agreed that Sarah Burskey will be invited to call in to a COD meeting in January to introduce herself, and we will arrange for her to conduct a strategic planning session in spring of 2018.

Acton-Boxborough (AB) School Access

J.D. Head, Director of Facilities and Transportation for the AB schools, will be invited to our next meeting to update us on progress.

Updates/Old Business

Danny provided updates on 10 access issues that are in progress and explained next steps for each one. All proposals in his report were approved.

Budget for COD 30th Anniversary Celebration

Joan requested funds for the COD's 30th anniversary celebration, and up to \$500 was unanimously voted on for mailings, food, and other costs associated with this event.

Adjournment 12:30 pm

Documents

- Late school bus schedule
- AHA projects with budget, waiting list times etc.
- Draft of ways to utilize volunteers
- Access Coordinators' reports

(These items not yet on Docushare)

Respectfully submitted by
Joan Burrows and Madeleine Harvey