

Ruthanne Fuller Mayor

Barney Heath, Director, Planning & Development

Lara Kritzer Director, Housing & **Community Development**

Sharon Cullins Planner Community Development

Members

Ima Jonsdottir, Co-Chair Jack Lovett, Co-Chair Nyree Kibarian, Treasurer Jane Brown Lucie Chansky Petr Chovanec Nancy Kritzman Sandra Lingley Barbara Lischinsky Matt Volpi

> Jason Rosenberg **Chairman Emeritus**

Advisor

Sergeant John J. Babcock **Newton Police Department**

Staff

Jini Fairley ADA/Sec 504 Coordinator 617-796-1253

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CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS **Commission On Disability**

DRAFT MINUTES

Meeting Date: May 13, 2024

Room: Zoom **Time: 6:00PM**

This meeting was a virtual meeting on Zoom, by phone or by computer/IPad:

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/i/84610100556?pwd=L2FuS2Rsemt1UDlNeGlHOEpndnJ6OT09

Meeting ID: 846 1010 0556

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Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York) Meeting ID: 846 1010 0556

Passcode: 279296

Commission Members Present:

Ima Jonsdottir, Co-Chair, participating remotely Jack Lovett, Co-Chair, participating remotely Nyree Kibarian, Treasurer, participating remotely Jane Brown, participating remotely Lucie Chansky, participating remotely Petr Chovanec, participating remotely Sandra Lingley, participating remotely Barbara Lischinsky, participating remotely Matt Volpi, participating remotely

Commission Members Absent: Nancy Kritzman

Staff:

Jini Fairley, ADA Coordinator Lt. Mike Wade, Police Sgt. Jay Babcock, Police Officer Justin Lau, Police Hattie Kerwin Derrick, Mayor's Office

Guests:

Councilor Susan Albright **Councilor Downs** Jo-Louise Allan Jesse King Rob Caruso

1. Introductions (6:00-6:05)

Jack introduced everyone present at the start of the meeting, with 8 members. Barbara and Nancy sent emails that they were running a little late. Barbara joined shortly after the meeting started and Nancy was not able to attend.

2. Approval of the April 8, 2024 Minutes (6:05-6:10) Jack asked if there were any edits to the draft minutes for the April 8 meeting. Hearing none, Jane made a motion to accept the minutes as read/distributed.



Nyree and Matt seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 6-0-2 (Nyree and Petr abstained).

3. Accessible Fines Reports (6:10-6:15)

Mike Wade introduced Sgt. Jay Babcock as his replacement, as Lt. Wade has been promoted and moved to a different division of the Police Department. This is his last meeting. He gave the 2 Fines reports which can be viewed on pages 8 & 9.

Ima asked if there were penalty fines for non-payment. Lt. Wade said that there was a \$15 added after 21 days and one more penalty after that, and then it is reported to the RMV. Eventually those tickets are paid when the person goes to register, his/her vehicle. Jack thanked Lt. Wade for all his assistance and service to the COD, as advisor, these past 3 years. Jini welcomed Sgt. Jay Babcock, who was the Police advisor to the COD when she became the staff to the COD in 2015.

4. Housing for People with Disabilities- Councilor Albright (6:15-6:40)

Jack introduced Councilor Albright. She said that, on the Council she and her colleagues often speak about and vote for affordable housing, but she often hears that there are adult children with development disabilities living at home, needing supports services to live independently, and there is nothing available for this group. The parents are getting older and they worry for their adult children. A very small percentage of parents ban together and 4 families contribute \$500,000 for a \$million dollar home with at least 4 bedrooms and shared living space, and often hire an agency to provide housing supports in-house. This only works for a very few, and she would like to get together a small group of housing and disability advocates, maybe 6 or 7, to explore what, if anything, is offered or available for these adult children. She wants to research the issue, perhaps docket an item to discuss and assess if there is a role the city can play. Jack has volunteered and Lucie also offered to be a part of this group. Councilor Albright said that someone from the Planning Dept. will also join them, to study the depth and breadth of this issue in Newton. Councilor Albright said that she used to be a Social Worker and worked with the department of Developmental Disabilities and wrote the plan to de-institutionalize the state schools and institutions where many adults with developmental disabilities lived. Some are living in the community, but many others are living at home with their parents. Lucie has personal experience with group homes and the vendors who provide this housing and supportive services but DDS is not serving all that need this help. Both Barbara and Lucie pointed out the some of the housing complexes like Avalon have apartments set aside for residents with disabilities, many whose income would not be enough to afford the rent at these housing complexes nor the supports that night need. Barbara also pointed out that there are people with different disabilities, besides those covered by DDS, like deaf and blind, or with mental health disabilities. Nyree mentioned that reaching out to the day programs for residents with different disabilities would also be a good place to find out the needs of their clients, and also from the clients themselves. Jo-Louise shared her family experience with group homes and the many housing options out there, maybe 15 different options, and that Catherine Boyle, who offers courses and information to help parents navigate the many housing possibilities. Lucie reminded us that there is a range of disabilities, from mild to profound, and many need direct care and supervision and supports that is not always

available, except through their parents/families, to take advantage of these options. Jini offered to assist with this working group in whatever way Councilor Albright would like, she worked to find housing for many individuals and families with different disabilities in her previous job, it is a very complicated and huge issue. Jack mentioned that Nancy Zollers wanted to attend tonight for this discussion and is very passionate about this particular housing issue, but she is out of the country. Lucie mentioned that Nancy used to work for ARCMass, an important advocacy organization serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Next steps, Councilor Albright will get this working group together. There was discussion about the number of COD members participating, and whether this group be a subcommittee of the COD. It was decided it would not, at this point, that COD members may lend their expertise when invited to do so, and that not more than 2 COD members would be members of this working group. Jack thanked Councilor Albright for coming to the COD and beginning her initiative to study and research supportive housing for Newton residents with developmental disabilities.

5. CDBG Report & FY26 Project Ideas (6:40-7:00)

There were no new status updates to the CDBG funded projects, and this report can be found on pages 10 & 11.

Jini said that Sharon had reached out to the departments where often CDBG-funded project ideas come from. One idea from PRC was making the boat launch at Nahanton Park accessible, possibly install a lift. Another idea from PRC was to extend the accessible Florie's Path in Nahanton Park along the Charles River and to make a small bridge at the end of this path accessible. I will be looking at the Off-Leash Dog Parks for making them more accessible where feasible and that might be a project from PRC as well. DPW might be interested in making improvements to one or more of the city-owned parking lots, using the 2018 audit to review which one (s) could be in the right range for the CDBG allocation. Alfredo mentioned that perhaps the Watertown and Chapel intersection to retrofit diagonal curb ramps into perpendicular ramps and possibly move or add signal poles to house the APS. Alfredo mentioned that the Beacon/Langley/Sumner will need more funds as the design had to be out-sourced due to this project size ad complexity. Jini said she has inquired about modernizing the old City hall elevator with Public Buildings but it's looking like the cost would be way above the CDBG allocation. Sandra commented that this elevator is the primary elevator used by most people with a mobility disability to get to all the important offices, such as the Clerk's office, Treasury, voting, etc. Lucie suggested, even if the elevator modernization is too costly for CDBG funding, could we recommend cleaning and improving the vestibule, to be more welcoming, attractive, and more climate-controlled (heating and cooling). Lucie loves the idea of the boat ramp more accessible and wondered if there is an accessible path from parking to the boat launch is fully accessible. Jini said that would be part of the scope of that project if the path to the boat launch is not. Barbara and Lucie were not interested in choosing the Off-Leash dog parks accessibility project, wanting to accommodate people first than dogs. Sandra said that the paths from the Newton Centre triangle parking lot to the sidewalks need to be more accessible, especially towards the green and benches along Centre St. to add to the project idea list. Jini mentioned that NPS is in the process of making a list of accessible improvements to their school buildings, such as exterior automatic door

openers, signage and door hardware. Ima emphasized the need for automatic door openers, especially in the secondary schools, as her son encounters either non-working automatic door openers or non-existent, especially to and from the theater stages at both high schools. Barbara identified a curb cut crossing Beacon from the school side to Manitoba. She has reported to 311 and has not been repaired yet. Jini said the project to reorient curb ramps and prevent ponding on the north/school side of Beacon St. between Washington and Angier School will be underway this construction season, funded by ARPA, which was originally a suggested CDBG project. Barbara also suggested making the many apex curb ramps more perpendicular along Washington St. between Comm Ave and Beacon St., since they didn't do this about 5 years ago when also paving that section of Washington St. Even some of those apex curb ramps are starting to degrade or have a noticeable lip where the ramp meets the street pavement. And she mentioned a gap between the sidewalk and the fence along the golf course side of Washington St. that is very dangerous and needs to be filled in.

Ima said that she is making a list of all these ideas and will check in with Sharon and Nika to present next month.

Disability Indicator Form & Advertising with Officer Lau (7:00-7:20) Officer Lau works in the Community Services of the Police Department. He has been in touch with Jini regarding the 911 Disability Indicator form, which Barbar brought up at March's meeting. The form, provided by the state, is on the Police department page of the city's website. He explained that residents with disabilities voluntarily fill out this form with their contact information and send to the Police department. It is then entered into the communication system between each city/town's Police dispatch and Verizon, so that if an emergency call/911 comes in from the phone listed on this form, there will be a dispatch note indicating a resident lives there with a particular disability (indicated on the form). Much of the questions and discussion focused on how to advertise this from to all residents, not just to known residents with disabilities. Many years ago, this form was provided in a quarterly mailing from the city, possibly the water/sewer bill or the tax bill. Officer Lau suggested working with Jini to put out on the Police's social media communications. Also suggested is to annually have it written up in the Mayor's newsletter, and explore putting the actual form in a mailing that goes out to the most residents. Ima asked if there was a way to put 2 cell phones for an address, instead of one, for example 2 parents of a disabled child. He said that was possible, but he will double check. Perhaps 2 forms would need to be filled out each with a different cell phone. Lucie suggested that community (group) homes be notified, if they are not already, about this form and to make the Police/Emergency personnel about several residents with disabilities. Lucie also recalled that stickers were given out to put on the window of the where the person with the disability slept. Officer Lau was not aware of these stickers, and said that when emergency personnel are responding to a fire, or cardiac arrest, they are not looking at the windows but running in the main door. It would be helpful, in some cases, and this sticker could be discreet but known to First Responders that it means someone in the household has a disability, and maybe more helpful on the front door (if not street-facing) and the door of the bedroom of the resident with the disability. Nyree suggested the Police send out a Twitter periodically, and the Newton Facebook pages. Officer Lau was planning on a quarterly or semi-annual basis. Ima asked if the emergency is not at home, but a car accident, for example, would it still give notice to the First Responders about someone

with a disability in that emergency, or is just information about a residence. Officer Lau said he will look into this aspect, and whether more than one form needs to be filled out or not for multiple cell phone numbers, as mentioned earlier. Jini and Officer Lau will work on both the digital accessibility of the form, answers to the questions here and make a plan for advertising and get back to the COD when launched.

7. MAAB Variance-120 Seminary, Lasell Village (7:20-7:40)

Mariah Seaboldt, a code consultant and Greg, architect, presented the reason for a MAAB variance for Lasell Village new construction/expansion. Basically, the planned new construction building with independent living apartments and underground parking, has an access route through an adjacent building. This access route does not have the MAAB required clearance for an accessible van which is 98 inches. There is only 6 foot 8 inches to 7 feet clearance along the access route. They explored ways to have direct access to the underground parking of this new building, but it is infeasible due to the closeness of the existing buildings. To mitigate not having this required clearance for the van-accessible parking spaces, there will be at least one surface/at grade van-accessible parking space and 8 regular parking spaces adjacent to the new building. In addition, there will be 2 van-accessible parking spaces and 2 standard accessible parking spaces in the underground parking of Lasell's 'Town Hall' building across the street. There will be an elevated walkway between this new building and Lasell's 'Town Hall'. There were several questions and helpful suggestions by Lucie, Nyree, Ima, and Jini, including providing a drop off/pick up accessible loading zone close to the door of the proposed new building for a large accessible van used for outings for many residents, and providing at least one 8 foot access aisle in the proposed new building's underground parking garage to allow for the smaller vans to easily park with an adequate access aisle. Greg thought that would be possible to provide that. A motion was made by Nyree to support the variance along with the recommendations to provide a covered drop off/pick up area, if possible, at the entrance of the new proposed building at 120 Seminary Rd. and provide at least 1 8 foot access aisle in the new building's underground garage. Jane seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0-2 (Barbara and Lucie abstained).

8. Treasurer's Report (7:40-7:45)
Nyree, COD Treasurer, gave the Treasurer's report. This report can be viewed on page

9. ADA Coordinator's Report (7:45-7:50)

12.

Jini gave her report of her ADA activities for the month of April, which can be found on page 13. As part of the working group for the new Senior Center, she and other members visited 2 furniture showrooms, giving their opinions about the chairs, tables, and sofas to be purchased. Jini was most interested in the accessible options, for all these items.

She attended the annual CHAPA meeting where former Councilor Deb Crossley was honored for her advocacy for a more expanded MBTA Communities plan. Jini encouraged to email or call her if they have any questions about other meetings she attended, such as the virtual meeting about the design and plans for the renovation of the Memorial Playground in Oak Hill Park.

10. Disability Pride Event with UOD (7:50-8:05)

Jack and Ima updated the members as to when and where. The library is going to sponsor this event and will be in-person at the library and be held mid July, during Disability Pride month and close to the 34th ADA Anniversary. There will be a moderator and panelist, and theme is What does disability pride mean to you. Ima asked for any other ideas/questions for the panelists, given to them in advance, plus questions from the audience after the panelists speak. Ima mentioned that the Disability Flag is black with diagonal stripes across, different colors, each color representing a different disability. Barbara commented that it is very intriguing. Ima said that the panelists would have diverse disabilities and Lucie advocated for someone with an intellectual disability. Ima, Jack, and Jenni really wants that disability represented and have someone in mind, the speaker at the Understanding Our Differences gala, if he is available. Ima encouraged if any COD member would like to be a panelist to let her and Jack know.

The plan is to give an honorarium to the Moderator, to be shared by UOD and COD. A motion was made by Jane to spend up to \$200 for the COD's half of the honorarium for the panel moderator, from either the COD's revolving account or the Fines Funds. Nyree seconded the motion, The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 7-0.

11. Co-Chairs' Corner (8:05-8:15)

Jack is part of a focus group at the Library giving a disability perspective, as they are looking for a diverse representation of residents to discuss the library needs in the future, as part of their strategic plan.

He and Ima attended the UOD event and the virtual meeting on the Newton Commuter Rail stations, now concentrating on Newtonville first, instead of all 3. Today he attended the Fair Housing Committee award ceremony honoring Councilor Vick Danberg and former Councilor Deb Crossley, for their advocacy and work on the Zoning Redesign and the MBTA Communities Plan, as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council's Zoning and Planning Committee. The Disability Advisory Group for NPS meets a little later this month continuing the review of the anti-ableist curriculum. He is also working with a group to repeal the Winter Overnight Parking ban.

Ima said that the members of the developing anti-ableist curriculum for NPS are reviewing all the experts comments, 6 have presented to this group so far. All of them recommended that the framework for this curriculum is a Social Justice framework, learning about different disabilities, not to pity or feel bad for their peers or even adults who have a disability.

12. 2024 COD Awareness Event (8:15-8:25)

Ima reported that she is still hoping that a venue and date can be found for the performances planned. Looks like Newton North Theater is not available at the end of October or early December, so she is waiting to hear about the availability of Newton South Theater.

13. Project Ideas for MOD Grant (8:25-8:30)

Jini will be applying for this grant, application due June 14, so wanted to see if there were any project ideas the members would like to suggest. Lucie thought the canoe access at Nahanton Park would be unique and a possible project to propose. There may also be CDBG projects, which have been over the CDBG allocation, which could be considered.

14. Adjournment (8:30)
The meeting adjourned at 8:46PM.

The minutes were prepared and respectfully submitted by Jini Fairley, staff to the COD.

NEXT MEETING DATE: June 10, 2024

The location of this meeting is wheelchair accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities requiring assistance. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA/Sec.504 Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253. For Telecommunications Relay Service, please dial 711 or call City Hall's TTY/TDD line at 617-796-1089.

Supplemental Materials and Reports:

NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEWTON COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

PARKING TICKET AND FINES REPORT

April 2024

34
\$ 6,800.00
\$ 1,000.00
\$ 2,200.00
\$ 3,600.00

CODE # 26 ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	30
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 6.000.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 1,600.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 3,400.00

CODE # 27 CURB CUTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	4
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 800.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 000.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 600.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 200.00

NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEWTON COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

PARKING TICKET AND FINES REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2024

As of April 30, 2024 FY 2024 Year-to-date Parking Ticket Totals

TOTAL NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	348
TOTAL VALUE OF TICKETS ISSUED	\$ 69,600.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 12,000.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 21,000.00
TOTAL OUTSTANDING	\$ 36,600.00

CODE # 26 ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	312
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 62,400.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 11,800.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 17,200.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 33,400.00

CODE # 27 CURB CUTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	36
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 7,200.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 200.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 3,800.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 3,200.00

Newton Commission on Disability CDBG Access Projects Report May 13, 2024

FY22 McGrath Park Perimeter Path Installation – (CD22-03A; Budget: \$91,300.00;

Expended: \$0; Balance: \$91,300.00)

Constructing an accessible perimeter path around Richard McGrath Park.

The LAX practice wall was impacting the perimeter pathway construction. The League was given a deadline for the 3rd of April to fundraise for said wall and has not responded in time. In lieu of the wall, the pathway will be able to run around the entire perimeter of the park with entry/exits on Washington St and Myrtle St. Designer is reassessing the parking lot side of the park as well as reconfiguring the irrigation system and redoing the fence around the tennis courts to provide an accessible entry. Due to the rise in costs, the pathway cost is higher than expected, and Parks has requested the Community Preservation Committee to cover the gap of \$48,000, which they agreed to. With the addition of playable fields, McGrath has become close to a million-dollar project. The most up to date design of the park and perimeter was presented during the May meeting. DPW is moving forward with arranging all necessary documentation for the Conservation Commission permit. As they were preparing the Notice of Intent for the Conservation Commission, it came to light that the pathway exceeds the amount of impervious area allotted, which in turn triggers a necessary stormwater permit that must be completed by DPW. DPW is now working to identify a funding source for the required drainage systems.

DPW is moving toward final design construction documents and expects to go before the Conservation Commission and out for construction bid this Winter. **No new update**.

FY23 Langley/Warren/Chase Crossing – (CD23-03A; Budget: \$100,000.00; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$100,000.00)

Installation of accessible crossings at Langley Rd. and Warren St. This includes a bump out on the northeast corner of the intersection to create the space needed to install a curb cut to cross Warren St.

DPW has completed the scope of work and concept design for this project. Project was presented at the December 2022 meeting. DPW posted the bid on the City of Newton's website on January 5th. The bid opening date was January 19th. The contractor chosen was Antonellis Construction. The bid came in just a

little under \$150,000. Construction started on May 30th, 2023, and ended on June 16th. Although the bulk of the project has been completed, there is a vendor back order. Antonellis Construction is waiting for the push button for the RRFB. It is expected to be in stock mid to late September. In addition, DPW is waiting for the final as-built inspection and report from the Contractor. The Push buttons have been installed. The contractor submitted an as-built plan, but there were some comments and are waiting for the contractor to submit the revised as-built plan. Still waiting for an as-built plan. No new update.

FY24 City Hall Campus – (Cost Estimate: \$42,000)

All work was completed and we're working to close out the contract.

FY25 Langley, Sumner and Beacon-(Cost Estimate: is \$306,400. \$190K in ARPA funds set aside for this project, the **COD** funding for constructions is \$116,400.) The consultant working on the design of this project is expecting to receive the existing conditions plan of the intersection this month. Once they receive this information, they plan to start working on the design of the pedestrian access improvements at the intersection. The anticipated date for the completion of the design is this calendar year. **No new update.**

Treasurer's Report

Given by Nyree Kibarian, Treasurer of the Newton Commission On Disability (COD)

Presented at the May 13, 2024 Newton COD Meeting

As of May 1, 2024, the account balances have not changed and are as follows:

Account # 5500-335518 H-P. Fines-Disability Commission

Type: Receipts Reserved for Appropriation (These funds have to go before the City Council to be appropriated before

being used)

Balance: \$ 76,889.60

Account 01C60218-524090 Set up to purchase accessible play equipment for Williams School Playground

Type: Special Appropriations

Balance: \$10,831.12

Account # 01C10802-513010 Operation Access – Disability Commission

Set up to pay for targeted enforcement of accessible HP Fines violations by the Police

Type: Special Appropriations

Balance: \$166.54

Account # 01C40128 Set up to pay for RRFB at Langley/Warren/Chase intersection

Type: Special Appropriations

Balance: \$18,000.00

Account#C401083-586005 Set up to purchase and install Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) units at the

Waverly/Tremont intersection Type: Special Appropriations

Balance: \$50.50 (8 APS units installed in December 2018

Account # 5064D103 Set up in Fall 2015 to receive Community Access Monitor Program fees and pay expenses)

Type: Revolving Account

Balance: \$29**0.00**

ADA COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Given by Jini Fairley, ADA/Section 504 Coordinator

Presented at the May 13, 2024 Newton Commission On Disability meeting, for activities during the month of April, 2024.

Site Visits:

- 2 Boston Furniture Showrooms- For Cooper Center for Active Living- accessible tables & other furniture selections

Meeting/Events/Conference Calls:

- Memorial Playground Community Mtg-Zoom-Ima and I and by public- well attended
- CHAPA Annual Symposium- excellent presentations Deb Crossley honored
- Cooper CAL Working Group & construction community mtgs
- DRC/SBC &Working Group meetings- Countryside School
- DRC/SBC & Working Group meetings -Franklin School
- DRC/SBC & Working Group meetings for Horace Mann addition
- Fair Housing Committee (FHC)- attend monthly meetings
- FHC Subcommittee- attend monthly meetings when scheduled
- Complete Streets Committee & Road Paving- attend bi-weekly meetings

Commissions On Disability Alliance monthly meetings