



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

MINUTES

Meeting Date: June 10, 2024

Room: Zoom

Time: 6:00PM

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

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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
Sgt. Jay Babcock, Police
Hattie Kerwin Derrick, Mayor's Office
Lara Kritzer, Planning

Guests:

Jenni Acosta, UOD
Joanna Mann
Nathan Persampieri
Christine Kerry
Joan Bellisle, COA
Jesse King
Rob Caruso

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

The meeting started at 6:04 with 6 members, but not a quorum. Ima moved onto the Accessible Fines reports with Sgt. Babcock and returned to the minutes approval after.

2. Approval of the May 13, 2024 Meeting Minutes (6:05-6:10)

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Ima for a motion to approve/accept the minutes. Jane made the motion to approve the minutes as read/distributed. Petr seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 8-0. Jini mentioned that she forgot to enter the page numbers where supplemental reports/materials are located within the minutes. She will do that before posted on the webpage. Hattie asked if I had looked at a sentence about Lucie and Barbara's comment regarding the potential dog park accessibility. Jini had not heard from Barbara or Lucie and explained she could rewrite that sentence if Lucie and Barbara would like.

She will be in touch with Barbara and Lucie.

3. Accessible Fines Reports (6:10-6:20)

Sgt. Babcock gave the 2 accessible fines reports, May's activities and the year-to-date for the FY24 fiscal year. These reports can be found on pages 5 & 6.

Jack asked about the uptick in the number of blocked curb cuts in May. Sgt. Babcock has no tolerance for violators, especially those just running in to pick up or get a drink. His motto is if you see it, tag it. The ticket can always be appealed.

Ima asked about encountering parents at school parking lots pulling into an accessible parking space, staying for a few minutes, to let their child off, preventing parents with a disability placard to pull in to safely drop off/pick up their disabled student. Sgt. Babcock said that the Parking Control Officers, at the time of drop off in the morning and the pick up in the afternoon, are working as school crossing guards. He said he can red flag Newton South and starting in September reach out to the administration and/or assign an officer to issue tickets (it's a little late in the school year to be effective).

4. CDBG Report & FY26 Project Ideas (6:20-7:00)

There were no updates to the CDBG Report for the past month, this report can be viewed on pages 7 & 8.

Lara joined the discussion and to assist with the vote for the top 4 potential FY26 CDBG funded projects. Ima read the list of projects that were emailed in an Excel spreadsheet. Each project was described and the number of votes received:

Access from Newton Centre Triangle parking lot to the Newton Centre green is not accessible for anyone using a mobility device, curb cuts have a substantial lip, the 2 pathways through the green are in need of replacement, from Beacon to Langley, and more, especially on the Beacon St. side. Sandra suggested this project and a site visit would be necessary with DPW to determine the scope: 7 votes

Centre St. & Trowbridge, make curb cuts compliant and add a continental crosswalk to cross Trowbridge- suggested by DPW a couple of years ago: 3 votes

Modernize the old elevator at City Hall on Homer St.- fully discussed by members last month, has had recent issues of downtime, could very well be over CDBG allocation but perhaps other funding could be found as well: 8 votes

Entrance and vestibule to old elevator and outside route to new elevator to be explored: 8 votes

Boat launch at Nahanton Park accessibility improvements, suggested by Ahron & Luis, PRC: 4 votes

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Interior automatic Door openers at NSHS to navigate to the theater stage accessibly, 2 heavy doors, at auditorium and at stage door, and explore possible improvements for the NNHS stage access from auditorium, including the auditorium door itself: 2 votes

Florie's Path Extension, suggested by PRC, to make temporary bridge accessible and explore extending an accessible path along the river on other side of the bridge at Nahanton Park (Florie's Path is accessible): 4 votes

Lara said if these are new projects, not already on the CIP or on the radar of the department, there may not be the possibility of a commitment from the department for the upcoming FY26 CDBG funding year.

A motion was made by Jane to have The top 5 projects (there was a tie for the 4th place) to be vetted by the appropriate department, which are: Modernize the old City Hall elevator, Improve the accessibility to that elevator , the vestibule, and explore the outside route to the War Memorial elevator, Accessible improvements from the Triangle parking lot to and through the Newton Centre green, Make accessible the boat launch at Nahanton Park, Extend the accessible Florie's path along the Charles River to include the bridge and beyond. Barbara seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 9-0.

5. Treasurer's Report (7:00-7:05)

Nyree, COD Treasurer, reported that there were no changes during the month of May. This report can be found on page 9.

6. ADA Coordinator's Report (7:05-7:15)

Jini's report can be viewed on page 10. She described her site visit with Myree to try out a sample of stamped concrete that has a brick pattern, to be installed in the renovation of Pettee Square (Upper Falls Village center at Oak and Chestnut Streets. Nyree said it passed with flying colors, very smooth using her wheelchair. Jini said it was also smooth walking over it, using a white cane, and then with her guide dog. The space between each brick in the stamped pattern are very narrow, making it indistinguishable between one brick then the next. As always, Jini spoke about webinars she attended and many city meetings, and encouraged members to send her questions or requests for archived links to the webinars.

Taken up before Treasurer's Report and ADA Coordinator's Report

7. Disability Pride Event with UOD (7:15-7:30)

Jenni Acosta, from Understanding Our Differences (UOD) spoke about the plans, along with the Co-Chairs & Jini, and Lily Weitzman from the Library to organize this collaboration for the Disability Pride event, to be held on Wednesday, July 17, from 7-8:30, doors open at 6:30 for conversation and networking. Jenni has made arrangements for an ASL Interpreter. The moderator of the panel is Gary Alpert, Co-President of UOD, and the 4 panelists are Barbara and Nyree from COD, Robert Solomon, and Nathan Persampieri. All of the panelists and the moderator are persons with disabilities and will begin the conversation with 'What does disability pride mean to me?' July is Disability Pride month and July 26 is the 34th Anniversary of the signing of the ADA. Besides this central question, if anyone here has other questions, please email the Co-Chairs in advance. There will also be a Q&A portion of the evening. In addition, a video

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is being put together where community members, including COD members, will be answering the same question, to be shown at this event. This is an in-person event and NewTV will be filming for future viewing. Jenni said that Rebecca Lubens, UOD Executive Director, has been reaching out to Newton disability organizations to have a table of information to distribute, and so far, Pathway to Possible and The Price Center will be there and hopefully a few more. This will be a great opportunity for disability organizations and disability advocates to be together and lift up the voices of the Newton disability community, and potentially have more dialogue of issues with a disability lens. Ima said she really hopes everyone can come and participate, bring family, friends and neighbors and spread the word to your networks!

Ima mentioned that last month the COD approved funds for the Moderator's fee for this event, but he has graciously declined an honorarium. But the event will have at least one ASL Interpreters, so she wants the COD to revote and allocate the same amount of funds, up to \$200 for the ASL fees with the same contribution from UOD. Lucie made that motion. Nyree seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 9-0. Ima thanked Jenni for coming to the meeting for this discussion.

Co-Chairs' Corner (7:30-7:45)

Ima said she is seeing a slight shift in her work on the NPS anti-ableist curriculum group, as to a willingness to hear all voices of the disability community. Ima also mentioned that she advocated for this at a recent School Committee meeting, as a parent, not as COD Co-Chair. Jack said last month's Disability Advisory Group meeting was cancelled but he has one last meeting soon before the summer break. Jack would like to meet one-on-one with COD members, if anyone would like to, checking in on how the first half of the year has gone, any topics/areas they would like the COD to cover in the next 6 months, goals, etc. Ima seconded that offer, interested in meeting with members, too, one-on-one. Lucie asked, if there is a COD meeting hiatus, is it in July or August. Ima and Jini said it is usually in August, especially it is helpful to have a July meeting, like this year, for any additional preparation and advertising of the Disability Pride/ADA anniversary event. Whether to take an August hiatus will be on the July meeting agenda.

8. 2024 COD Awareness Event (7:45-8:00)

Ima said that she is still hoping that the COD Awareness event will happen in late October/early November and asked Hattie if she has heard back from NSHS theater availability, and she has not heard back yet.

9. Adjournment (8:00)

The meeting adjourned at 8:13PM.

NEXT MEETING DATE: July 8, 2024

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

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.

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Supplemental Reports and Materials:

NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
NEWTON COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

PARKING TICKET AND FINES REPORT

May 2024

TOTAL NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	48
TOTAL VALUE OF TICKETS ISSUED	\$ 9,600.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 4,600.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 2,800.00
TOTAL OUTSTANDING	\$ 2,200.00

CODE # 26 ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	37
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 7,400.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 4,200.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 1,800.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 1,400.00

CODE # 27 CURB CUTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	11
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 2,200.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 400.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 800.00

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NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEWTON COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

PARKING TICKET AND FINES REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2024

As of May 31, 2024

FY 2024 Year-to-date Parking Ticket Totals

TOTAL NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	396
TOTAL VALUE OF TICKETS ISSUED	\$ 79,200.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 16,600.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 23,800.00
TOTAL OUTSTANDING	\$ 38,800.00

CODE # 26 ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	349
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 69,800.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 16,000.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 19,000.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 34,800.00

CODE # 27 CURB CUTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	47
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 9,400.00
SUCCESSFUL APPEALS	\$ 600.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 4,800.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 4,000.00

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CDBG Access Projects Report

June 10, 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 re-assessing 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

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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.

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Treasurer's Report

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

Presented at the June 10, 2024 Newton COD Meeting

As of June 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**

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ADA COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Given by Jini Fairley, ADA/Section 504 Coordinator

Presented at the June 10, 2024 Newton Commission On Disability meeting, for activities during the month of May, 2024.

Site Visits:

- Visited samples of the stamped concrete to be used on the sidewalks in the renovation of Pettee Square with Nyree and Isaac- very smooth
- Cypress Municipal Parking Lot with Alfredo- added one more required accessible parking space, signs, sidewalk-great work

Trainings:

- **Webinar: ADA Regulations for Doors & Gates- very good**
- **Webinar- The ADA and Opioid Use Disorder**
- **Webinar: ADA Title III and Readily Achievable Barrier Removal-**
- **BCIL 50 Years In: Wins, Lessons, & What's Next for Independent Living- excellent video**

Meeting/Events/Conference Calls:

- FHC Awards to Deb Crossley and Vicky Danberg- great program
- Bay State Council of the Blind conference- excellent
- Newton Highlands Improvements in-person- very well attended
- Newton Corner Long-Term Study Kickoff- community stakeholders and city staff
- Walk/Ride/Roll Plan Advisory Committee- good meeting
- 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