



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Department of Planning and Development
Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

Established 1975



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

June 24, 2010

Art Cabral, Acting Public Buildings Commissioner
Public Building Department
52 Elliot Street
Newton, MA 02461

Re: Angino Farm Barn Renovations Recommendations

Dear Mr. Cabral,

At their June 14 meeting the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities reviewed the concept plans for the Angino Barn Renovations. Members of the Mayor's Committee also conducted a site visit on Saturday, June 5 with Kathleen Cahill, Alice Ingerson, and members of the Farm Commission (Peter Barrer, Ted Chapman, Judy Hepburn). According to the Community Preservation Committee's February 2, 2010 funding recommendation for the 'Angino Farm Barn – Interior Rehabilitation' the Mayor's Committee was asked to review and submit comments on the project's concept plans. The following are the recommendations of the Mayor's Committee on specific elements of the current concept plan for renovations.

Permeable pavers. During the site visit members of the Farm Commission stated that permeable pavers were being considered for the driveway and parking area outside the basement entrance of the barn. While permeable pavers conform to the current ADA requirements that surfaces be firm, stable, and slip resistant these pavers can fall under noncompliance if not well-maintained. The development of a maintenance plan, including a financial set-aside, would address these concerns.

Egress. During the site visit there was some discussion about the accessible means of egress from the back of the barn to the driveway and how far from the exit the path needed to be plowed. The Mayor's Committee's recommendation and interpretation of the regulations (CMR 521.20.11) concludes that in order to maintain an accessible means of egress and continuous path of travel from the exit to the public way this path needs to be plowed and the stone dust needs to be maintained appropriately.

Accessible Bathrooms. Currently the plan calls for two accessible unisex bathrooms. The Mayor's Committee recommends that one accessible unisex bathroom is located on the basement level and one accessible unisex bathroom is located on the mezzanine floor. The accessible bathroom on the basement floor would provide service to the basement space as well as participants in the learning garden. A lift connecting the basement and mezzanine floors should be installed. The alternative, using the outdoor accessible pathway from the mezzanine to the basement floor is not a practical solution, especially considering this route is unsheltered from the elements.

Housing and Community Development Division

1000 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton, Massachusetts 02459-1400
Telephone (617) 796-1120 Telefax (617) 796-1142 TDD/TTY (617) 796-1089
www.ci.newton.ma.us/cdbg

Demonstration Kitchen. If a demonstration kitchen is installed as part of the renovations the kitchen should also be designed to accessibility. This accessibility could be achieved through adjustable sinks and surfaces or a standard, permanent setup.

Use of the First Floor. If the first floor is intended for public use or if the programmatic use of this space is unclear the lift should extend to this floor in order to fulfill accessibility requirements. If the space is intended for employee only use the extension of the lift is less of a priority.

Safety Alarms. It's essential that all new alarms (smoke and carbon monoxide) be accessible to individuals with both auditory and visual disabilities.

The Mayor's Committee also recommends that the Farm Commission consider contracting with an accessibility consultant as the Commission works from concept plans to a final design.

During the site visit to Angino Farm members of the Mayor's Committee noticed the lack of accessible bathrooms in addition to difficulty that people with disabilities may have trying to shop at the farmstand. An accessible portable toilet should be switched out for the non-accessible model that is currently located at the Farm. A bell and accompanying signage at the farmstand would help alert staff that assistance was needed by a patron.

The Mayor's Committee would like to commend the Farm Commission Inc. for their efforts to renovate the Barn and the Farm's programs, such as the Learning Garden, in a way that is inclusive of the entire community. The Committee appreciates having the opportunity to visit the Farm and review the plans.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Cahill
Staff Person, Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

cc: Frank Nichols, Project Engineer
Alice Ingerson, Community Preservation Program Manager
Alexandra Ananth, Senior Planner