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# CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## Commission On Disability

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**Meeting Date: December 14, 2020**  
**Room Zoom**  
**Time: 6:00PM \* New Start Time**

**MINUTES**

Ruthanne Fuller  
**Mayor**

Barney Heath,  
**Director, Planning &  
Development**

Amanda Berman  
**Director, Housing &  
Community Development**

Tiffany Leung  
**Planner  
Community Development**

**Members**

Lakshmi Kadambi, Co-Chair  
Anne Marie Killilea, Co-Chair  
Jane Brown, Treasurer  
Warren Abramson  
Rob Caruso  
Lucie Chansky  
Rosemary Larking  
Sandra Lingley  
Barbara Lischinsky  
Girard Plante  
Eileen Sandberg  
Matt Volpi

Jason Rosenberg  
**Chairman Emeritus**

**Advisor**  
Sergeant Dan Devine  
Newton Police Department

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

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**This meeting will be a virtual meeting on Zoom, by phone or by computer/iPad:**

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**Commission Members Present:**

Anne Marie Killilea, Co-chair, remotely on Zoom

Lakshmi Kadambi, Co-chair, remotely on Zoom

Jane Brown, Treasurer, remotely on Zoom

Rob Caruso, remotely on Zoom

Warren Abramson, remotely on Zoom

Lucie Chansky, remotely on Zoom

Rosemary Larking, remotely on Zoom

Sandra Lingley, remotely on Zoom

Barbara Lischinsky, remotely on Zoom

Girard Plante, remotely on Zoom

Eileen Sandberg, remotely on Zoom

Matt Volpi, remotely on Zoom

**City Staff and Advisors Present:**

**Jini Fairley, ADA/Section 504 Coordinator**

**Tiffany Leung, Planning**

**Shaylyn Davis, Planning**

**Sgt. Dan Devine, Police**

**Guests:**

**Ted Hess-Mahan, Chair of Fair Housing Committee**

**Councilor Bowman**

**Councilor Wright**

**Nancy Krintzman**



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

At the start of the meeting after introductions, Rosemary Larking had not yet entered the meeting. All the other members were participating remotely via zoom. The meeting was led by Anne Marie Killilea, co-chair.

### **2. Approval of 11/9/20 Meeting Minutes (6:05-6:10)**

Minutes were approved with one change, the inclusion of the word “governing” as pointed out by Girard Plante. The motion to accept minutes as amended was made by Lucy Chansky and seconded by Jane Brown. The motion was passed by a vote of 10-0-1 (Barbara Lischinsky abstained as she was not present at the November meeting. Rosemary Larking was not present so did not vote). All others approved.

### **3. CDBG Access Projects Report (6:10-6:20)**

Shaylyn Davis gave a quick update on the Access projects report for the FY21 curb cuts and for the phase one Marty Sender pathway installation, planning staff conducted a site visit on November 16, 2020 with Parks and Recreation, Jini and COD member Girard Plante in order to prepare the bid documents. Currently staff is working on the environmental review per HUD requirements. This report can be found on page 12.

### **4. Prioritization of Access FY22 CDBG-funded Projects (6:20-6:45)**

Tiffany presented the prospective projects for FY 22 CDBG funding. Her presentation can be viewed on pages 13-16. The city will receive this funding in the beginning of the fiscal year, which will be July 1, 2021. Several ideas were gathered from COD members, starting in September 2020, for which she provided an update reminding the members that allocation amount was due in May and the access funding is typically 5% of the annual allotment of CDBG and that is a ballpark of \$95,000. Three projects that are suggested for this year are the Richard McGrath Park accessible pathway, and that includes a creation of a little over half a mile asphalt path along the perimeter of the park, as well as the installation of 4 park benches along the path which was suggested by one of the COD members. And that project is looking at an estimated cost of \$83,000. Initially this scope of work was presented in September, where we were looking at creating a path of 0.42 miles and we were looking to create almost like a U shape path along the perimeter, utilizing the existing sidewalk to close the loop. Now we are eliminating the sidewalk portion and looking at closing that loop within the park and there are more additional points of entry. Again, we're looking at a little over half a mile so that brings it to 0.62 miles, not including the existing sidewalk along Washington Street. And that brings the estimated cost to now \$83,000. Path is connecting to three points of entry. The first one connecting to the existing entrance and accessible path located to the parking lot entrance. And then there's the point of access number two, which is connecting to the existing fence entrance located to the parking lot, exit. And so, access number one and two really leads pedestrians to the park from Washington Street. You don't necessarily have to park in the Warren House parking lot in order to tap into this proposed path. And then lastly access number three is connecting to an existing fence entrance along Myrtle Street. The project will align the path to the existing curb cut. As for the proposed locations of the benches, one will be at the entrance of the parking lot. The second one is in front of the parking spaces facing the field. Number three is facing the field, backing Myrtle Street. And the last one is faces the field.

Tiffany added that planning department did their best to try and get some data on usage. According to Parks and Rec this field alone is heavily used by the various leagues, the youth soccer, boys lacrosse, Frisbee, and softball. And there are also various groups that use it not for sports purposes but just for leisure. The courts are heavily used by Parks and Rec who host over 55 Tennis and Pickle ball classes throughout the week and talking with NCDF who own and manages Warren they indicated that 110 residents that live in Warren house of which 20 are children. This by no means limits anyone in the city of Newton, and maybe beyond to benefit.

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The second project is at the intersection of Beacon/ Sumner/Langley streets curb cut project, and that includes the installation of 12 curb cuts within the Newton center village intersection. And we're looking at a cost estimate of a little close to \$159,000.

The installation is to improve the pedestrian path of travel. So we are looking to, flatten the grades, there's a lot of steep roads in this intersection bump outs are going to be necessary in order to extend the sidewalk and also to flatten out that grade. We're also looking to reorient the crosswalks for a more natural path of travel by shifting the crosswalks so that they are away from the intersection making sure not to lead folks into the middle of the traffic. And she noted that the high cost is due to the grade and complexity of the intersection. So this project will require extensive police detailing for the safety of construction workers as well as any pedestrians who are walking through. Tiffany showed us some existing photos, the site visit was with DPW staff, Jini, and COD member Girard Plante.

Lastly are the curb cuts at crosswalks along Beacon street between Washington Street and Angier School including the installation of 10 curb cuts between Beacon Street and Washington Street, and we're looking at an estimated cost of \$60,000.

Jeannie and Shaylyn went on a site visit to Beacon Street with Alfredo from DPW. They visited six crosswalk locations on Beacon Street. This project would consist of approximately 10 total curb cuts at 5 crosswalks. The project would just be updating the curb cuts that already exists, a lot of them need a little bit of cleaning up. And they need the addition of tactile plates. Some of them have larger lips on getting onto the street itself. So, making those more accessible would be important. Shaylyn included photographs.

There is another crosswalk that would just be a little bit more involved. That would be at White Oak road and Beacon Street. The curb cuts are Apex not perpendicular to Beacon Street unfortunately. So those would need a little bit more help from DPW in redesigning them and potentially moving the crosswalk itself. But the project itself without doing the White Oak road should cost about \$60,000, with white oak road and those curb cuts there because we would need to add two curb cuts and redesigned the whole intersection there, that one could be an additional \$20,000 bringing the whole budget up to about \$80,000.

Barbara commented that she realizes that the project that Shaylyn was presenting was the cross walks at mid-block crossings on Beacon Street, not the sidewalk and side street crossings along Beacon Street. She believes that pedestrians walking along Beacon Street could benefit from the redoing sidewalks that are in atrocious shape and also from redoing curb cuts on Beacon Street as there are curb cuts that do not match opposing curb cuts. Also rain forms puddles to the area and makes it additionally difficult when crossing. It was also noted that sidewalks had not been addressed despite paving being done on Beacon Street.

Jini Fairley noted that they must have misunderstood Sandra's notes on curb cuts. There are six crosswalks crossing Beacon, and none of them have tactile plates, and most of them are perpendicular and they have some minor issues. She thought that is what was being recommended, not the small street crossings at the side streets. COD member comments further that everything shy of that section was done and having closed the traffic in both directions for quite a while they could have dug and done the sidewalks at that time.

Jini checked in with DPW regarding the paving on Beacon Street and they have not done the full milling and paving, that's when all the sidewalks and the curb cuts are examined and usually repaired at the same time, or even replaced. A couple of years ago, this portion of Beacon Street received some maintenance, called micro surfacing, where they just laid down a layer or two of asphalt, but they did not dig down like they do on some of the streets where they dig down to several inches depth, they call milling and then they pave many layers of asphalt over that. Unfortunately on that section of Beacon it was not done.

Jini responded with her comment that these definitely need work, and a lot of them are mid-block, many are not connected to another road. To get the new tactile plates at the crosswalks that are all now striped

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correctly it has to be put into new cement and we would be replacing existing curb cuts. One of the curb cuts has an issue of things growing in maybe a tree.

Barbara mentioned that some repair work will be needed at the curb cut at Manitoba and Beacon. There's a tripping hazard because there's a ditch now right before the tactile plate

Jane Brown wanted to know about the second project in Newton center, where would the additional money come from as fixing the Topography and the other issues. Would the city do part of the project now and wait to do rest later? She was concerned about where the additional funding was coming from.

Co- chair Anne Marie explained that this was an informational session more to decide on which project was more important to prioritize over the other.

Councilor Bowman was hoping to see a design that enables a pedestrian to easily cross the intersection in one light cycle. The crossings are getting a teeny bit shorter but not a ton, so she feels many pedestrians will still have to use two phases to cross the intersection which is a long time to stand on a small piece of real estate.

A COD member chimed in that they too would like to get across in one go and that would be good for everybody, not just people with disabilities. The other part of it is, if there's going to be a plan to completely redo this intersection in the next five years or so, the city or CDBG wouldn't want to fund just cleaning up the curb cuts themselves.

Another member thinks that we would not want the crosswalks to be any longer than they are now in segments and what we ought to be challenging is, how do we shrink up the intersection so those segments can be even smaller.

Another member expressed concern that with the scope of this project being so big, and since there is not yet a final design, and may not be ready for FY22, she felt this is much too soon to be considered by the commission right now. And it sounds like there is more designing to do.

Co- chair Anne Marie brought the discussion to a close by thanking everybody for their comments with appreciation for bringing this to light as the city needs to make it more accessible for people with disabilities to have accessibility throughout the city. We will be voting on this in the January meeting she concluded giving the floor back to Tiffany for concluding remarks.

Tiffany wrapped it up with the statement that the citizen participation plan outlines the city's responsibility to solicit active citizen participation developed to provide citizens and other interested parties with opportunities to participate and an advisory role in the planning, implementation and evaluation of CDBG programs, which is primarily to benefit, new in low and moderate income residents. So planning is looking for a vote from the COD to prioritize and make a recommendation for the use of CDBG funds in the realm of the architectural access program. What we're voting on next month is just FY22 CDBG funding. This is an annual allotment, this isn't the only funding that we will be working with. So, if a project is not prioritized for next year's funding. That doesn't mean that we're not going to continue to work on it. We have an ongoing list from a lot of the other ideas that were presented to us. We have a spreadsheet that we are continuously adding and updating. So, if the project is not shovel ready for FY 22. I just want to emphasize again that doesn't mean that it won't be considered for FY 23 or FY 24. So she really encourages the members of COD to please prioritize among these three, which one they would consider for the FY 22 funding and what we will undertake that year.

### **5. Accessible Fines Reports (6:45-6:50)**

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**Sgt. Devine gave the 2 Fines reports, which can be viewed on pages 17 & 18. Due to Covid, the number of tickets for violations of accessible parking regulations are still down.**

**6. Treasurer's Report (6:50-6:55)**

**Jane Brown, Treasurer of the COD, presented the Treasurer's report, which can be found on page 19. There were no changes since November's meeting.**

**7. ADA Coordinator's Report (6:55-7:05)**

**Jini gave her report of her ADA activities following the West Newton Armory discussion. You can view her report on page 20.**

**She mentioned that one of her site visits was in Newtonville, working on providing 2 accessible parking spaces within the Newtonville streetscape being constructed, one on each side of Walnut St. near the businesses. Jini also reported the action of the Traffic Council regarding the accessible parking space north of Washington St., also on Walnut, on the east side near more businesses. Although the members of the Traffic Council received the request by the COD to leave this accessible parking space exists, and she and Rob gave testimony in favor of keeping the accessible parking space, the Traffic Council voted 5-0 to move this accessible parking space north about 85 feet, just on the other side of the driveway. She and Rob were made aware that the current/existing accessible parking space was moved out into the travel lane with other parking spaces in order to provide a protected bike lane for a short distance north of Washington St. on Walnut. Considering the difficulties holders of valid disability placards or plates could encounter, such as deploying their wheelchair ramp into a bike lane, and have to cross bike traffic, as the space was no longer at the curb, moving this space back to the curb, albeit further north, seemed to be a good compromise. However, this won't be the first time bike lanes have impacted accessibility and members might want to follow more closely when and where new bike lanes are proposed and what it might mean for current or future accessible parking space. Jini also mentioned that she has requested an accessible parking space in front of the Newtonville Post Office, on Washington Street, on behalf of Newton residents. She will notify the members as to the date of the Traffic Council meeting where this request will be considered for a vote, and encouraged members to attend.**

**8. Armory Reuse with Chair of Fair Housing Committee (7:05-7:30)**

**Former counselor Ted Hess Mahan, Chair of the Fair Housing Committee was invited to talk to us about the Armory Reuse. He said he was here with a couple of different hats. One is as the chair of the Fair Housing Committee, but also he chaired the joint advisory planning group (JAPG) that worked on the recommendation to the city as to whether to purchase the armory, which began just about a year ago. The JAPG wrapped up our work towards the beginning of November.**

**Background: The armory has been at its current location since about 1912 and had been used by the Massachusetts National Guard for the last 110 years or so. They decided in 2018, that they no longer needed it for an armory. There's a number of other armories around the state of which the National Guard no longer uses, in part because the building, really was not sufficient for their needs. This is a very old building. , The Mayor and the City Council are looking into the possibility of acquiring the building for affordable housing or for municipal use, and DCAM, which is the owner manager of the building for the**

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Commonwealth made an offer to sell it to the city for \$1 If the city would agree to develop 100% affordable housing, that means all the units would be affordable to low and moderate income households. They also offered to sell this property to the city for any other municipal purpose but that was going to be for a considerably larger sum, somewhere between \$1.2 and 1.3 million depending on the fair market value of the Armory. The JAPG set about looking at this building, and the possibilities for it, starting last January. The first things that they looked at were to see whether there were any municipal uses that could be made of it.

The front part of the building, facing Washington St. is called the castle, which is the head house. It holds the offices, conference rooms, bathrooms, mostly for office use, and it occupies about 11,000, square feet. At the rear of the building there is a long extension, which is the drill shed, and is about 33,000, square feet. The property itself is located close to the Cheesecake Brook so from Washington Street, down to cheesecake Brook the land slopes significantly. Underneath is a way for a truck to get into deliver supplies or whatever. The drill shed is cavernous as it was used for doing drills, but it's now set up as a basketball or volleyball court. Underneath is the shooting range, which is no longer used and there's also some basement storage. So this is a really antiquated building and it was just not sufficient for what the National Guard needs it for now. Fortunately, the state was willing to give the city of Newton \$200,000 to hire a housing consultant, to determine whether it was feasible to build 100% affordable housing on this site. The JAPG also talked to the mayor's office, the Chief Operating Officer, and the Public Building Commissioner about possible municipal uses. The only municipal interest for using the building was for storing the historical archives and the City Clerk's records. But that would not have occupied a whole lot of space in the building, and the offer from the state was very specific: the city either uses the property for a municipal purpose or use it for 100% affordable housing, but you can't mix the two uses. So, given the cost to renovate the building to use it for a municipal purpose, regardless of the purpose, it was going to be \$2 million up front plus the acquisition cost of over a million dollars. Right now the entire building is inaccessible, there's no entrance you can get in that is fully accessible.

So the JAPG did look at it and ruled out a municipal purpose, after looking at what some other cities and towns have done with their Armory, as well as consulting with the departments about what they wanted to do with it.

The housing consultant came on in the beginning of the summer, due to COVID, they were really delayed in getting started, but they did do a very thorough and comprehensive job. Jini sent around to the members a link to the report. It will take a minute or two to download the report as it is fairly large and has a lot of photos and charts. If you're interested, this feasibility report by the consultants, Affirmative Investments, is online now.

Basically the housing consultant was hired to look at multiple scenarios, about the possible reuse of the building. There were fundamentally four scenarios that they looked at.

- 1) The first one was to reuse the existing building to create 31 units of affordable housing for seniors, or people with special needs, which would have been all one bedroom units.
- 2) The second scenario was to reuse the head house (the castle), demolish the field house/drill shed, and build new construction behind the head house to create 44 units of housing for seniors or people with special needs.
- 3) The third scenario was to reuse the head house demolish the field house and new construction, in place of the field house to create 44 units of family housing which would include a mix of one two and three bedroom units.
- 4) And then finally the housing consultant looked at the possibility of demolishing the entire building and building entirely new construction, possibly providing 46 units of family housing.

After going through all of those scenarios the housing consultant determined that the first scenario of reusing/renovating the existing building was simply not feasible for a number of reasons, not the least of

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which is that it's a historic building, and so anything that the developer or the city would want to do with it would have to go through the Massachusetts Historical Commission as well as MAAB. With the Mass Historical Commission, just to give you one example, to use it for residential units we would have had to widen all of the windows on the building because they're not sufficiently wide for egress.

The entire building is not accessible so it would need an elevator, and to adapt the Fieldhouse and put in additional floors would have been cost prohibitive. There was just no way to be able to do that in a way that wasn't going to far exceed the cost of any affordable housing project that had been done so far. In addition to having a private developer do this project, they'd probably would go through chapter 40 B in order to get around the zoning, they would have to use significant amounts of CDBG funds, as well as Community Preservation Act funds which are state and local funds. And there was just no way with preserving the existing building they'd be able to do that, even with historic tax credits because it would have been difficult to redo the building and keep it historical, which is what you need to do to qualify for the historical tax credits.

The second scenario was to demolish the Fieldhouse and replace it with new construction for 44 units of housing for seniors or people with special needs. Special Needs really refers to special populations, not just for people with disabilities, but also Veterans, Seniors, chronically homeless persons, and others who would qualify as having so called special needs. This is the consultants' language, not Ted's. So I just want to make sure that's clear. This scenario would be feasible, according to the housing consultant, expensive but it would be feasible.

The third possibility, which was to reuse the head house and create 44 units of family housing with new construction was also deemed feasible. This would be for low to moderate income families, 100% affordable.

Finally the last scenario is to demolish the entire building and newly construct 46 units of family housing. As I noted there are a number of obstacles when you start talking about demolition or changing the building. Again, you'd have to go through the Massachusetts Historical Commission. It would also go through the Newton Historical Commission so there's a lot of different steps along the way where approvals would be required in order to be able to adapt the building, and to demolish the entire building, probably would have resulted in a number of delays for getting the permit to do that. What the consultants recommended was to look at multiple different scenarios, and made clear to us that this is the Joint advisory planning group that the state through its funding agency at the Department of Housing and Community Development requires a developer seeking funding can only do one of three types of housing, either senior housing family housing, or housing for people with special needs, and that it's not possible to do a mix of these types of housing. Also, they looked at income targeting. Do we want, for instance, a building that's going to be mostly up to 60% of area median income level, which is, I believe, around \$50,000 for an individual or to have it a more deep subsidy for folks who make between 30 and 40% of the area median income or mix of those types of units preferably a mix of those type of units. And finally, as mentioned, the historic nature of the armory is going to, no matter who develops it, require some significant negotiation with Mass Historic Commission and the Newton Historic Commission. The Commonwealth has done this with a number of other armories, and has recommended to the city and the housing consultants that the developer who ultimately develops this property should enter into what's called a memorandum of agreement with the Commonwealth, Mass Historic Commission and the Newton Historic Commission to work together to preserve as much of the historic nature of the building as possible. this is the way that most of the successful projects have done so far. But that adds some time to it at the upfront to negotiate.

On the other hand, it is a much smoother process once you get into renovating and adapting the building. So ultimately, they took all of this information into consideration and recommended to the mayor and to the city council that the city purchased the armory for \$1, and convert it to 100% affordable housing. There were a lot of different views on the committee, that at least three of the folks on the committee live in the immediate neighborhood, including Ted, who can see from his bedroom upstairs the back of the

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armory. The other members of the committee had experience with affordable housing with various other funding and renovation and special building skills and so forth. So this is a very good, very well rounded committee and they came up with, you know, a lot of suggestions for what could be done there. But ultimately, we decided the general consensus was the city is going to have to go through a request for proposal process where they put together an RFP, send it out to bid for developers to come back with proposals for projects to create affordable housing at the Armory.

Members comments and questions to Ted:

Q: Sounds like the developer decides what the program is going to be like or who will be living, for whom the project will be designed and that doesn't seem like would be the best choice for the city. Shouldn't the city, be providing some kind of guidelines about what they want?

Answer: That's what the RFP is for is to provide some guidelines. But we as a joint advisory planning group didn't want to dictate to or recommend to the city, which population they should target for this particular project in their RFP. Because frankly, was this was beyond our expertise to know what were the most pressing need but also there are some limitations. For example, we talked to the Newton housing partnership, and to some housing experts as well as to the planning department who came in to our meetings to advise us. We asked about what is the need for affordable housing and for accessible housing, and every single one of them agreed, there's a need for every single population, particularly for families, but also for seniors and also for Accessible units, whether they're apartments or condominiums, these probably be apartments but, to make sure one thing that the Fair Housing Committee, we often hear about is that a lot of these units which are fully accessible, don't end up going to someone with a disability who could take the best advantage of it being fully accessible, and that often has to do with income limits so we didn't want to dictate to the city what the income limits ought to be either, because, again that the planning department, and their consultants the housing consultants going to be involved in, in, in shaping the RFP as well as with the input of the Commission On Disability and the Fair Housing Committee and Housing Partnership, should shape what the RFP is and either provide multiple options, or it could be narrowed down. But again, the JAPG was not saying just to leave it wide open, we were saying that we're leaving it wide open to the city to decide what to put into an RFP.

Member comment:

You talked about possibly having it for people with special needs. If you're talking about a population like people with intellectual disabilities, there are two things to keep in mind. One is their income if they're living on government benefits and are not able to work, they're probably well under \$20,000 a year. They also need more than one bedroom if they're going to be living with a caregiver. Some people can't live independently. So, giving them one bedroom, may not be useful to many people with special needs. And then you're talking about a veteran who might live there but a veteran may have a family so they need more than one bedroom

Answer : I encourage you to give some input to the planning department and/or to the housing consultant prior to them putting together the RFP because I think you folks know better than I do. Obviously, you know what the needs are out there for people with disabilities. There are areas where there are housing needs for a lot of populations, and it would have to be tailored in a way for income levels and so forth, that would make it a feasible project, and also setting the priorities. We, the JAPG, didn't feel that we should be setting the priorities I think that that's something that community should do in terms of what the greatest need is and the greatest benefit. You know this is going to be again around 45 units of housing. The Lynn Armory is in the process of converting to housing for veterans and they were going to it was 45, or 50 units. And these were mostly for homeless veterans. Some of them might very well have families but you're absolutely right for personal care attendance or, or anyone who's assisting, a person with a disability that attention should be given to providing an additional bedroom if it's for overnight. Parking can also be



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an issue, making sure there's enough parking during the day for people who are coming in, either visitors or PCAs.

Member comment:

Did you look at Natick there's a building that looks very much the same in the front but it's housing.

Answer:

Yes we did look at that. The Natick armory is virtually identical but the location of the site, is a flatter site. Ultimately was sold to a private developer who then developed it with a 40 b so it has 25% affordable units, but very nice building, they did a really good job with it. They demolish the rear of the building and built all new construction in the rear. A number of the head house offices were converted and conference rooms were converted into residential units, a beautiful job But that was done privately, If anybody has any more ideas or thoughts about this, you can get in touch with Barney Heath, or Amanda Berman. Ted is happy to pass anything along, he sees Jeannie all the time and she could also pass more questions or comments along to Ted as well. He chaired the JAPG committee for almost a year. At this point we've submitted our final report to the city council. I'm still going around and talking to different committees, like COD and the Housing Partnership, Fair Housing Committee, and others to update them on the status of the project. The committee will not do any more work on this project it's really going to be up to the city council to decide whether to let the mayor purchase it, and if so, it's going to be up to the mayor's office the planning department and the housing consultant to put together an RFP, to put out to bid for developers.

**Ted let everyone know that he has been updating the Fair Housing Committee, as Chair, as to the progress of the review of the Armory to be converted to affordable housing, and that Jini advises this committee on accessibility laws for each project under review. Jini mentioned that not all fully accessible affordable apartments are occupied by someone who uses a wheelchair but they usually have mobility challenges. Jini also mentioned that in her experience, many people with disabilities see affordable apartments where the rents are geared to households earning 30% AMI and below. Ted added that members of the COD could follow this project through the city process, starting with the meeting this Wednesday evening, December 16 at the Real Property Re-Use Committee of the City Council. We all thanked Ted for his leadership on this project and his valuable experience as a former City Councillor.**

### 9. Emergency Planning-Power Outage (7:30-7:50)

While Rosemary was connecting to the meeting via Zoom, Jane mentioned that the link Jini sent out regarding 'Safety Tips for Power Outages', on the Mass.gov website is excellent. She suggested perhaps going into more depth at a future meeting after members have read it. Rosemary explained her situation where she uses a ventilator 24-7 in order to get oxygen into her lungs and that the ventilator only has a 3-hour back-up battery. She asked for a reasonable accommodation to use the outlet connected to the building generator where she lives, but so far they have said she couldn't use it as it is located in a locked office. Even though a generator may seem like a solution, they must be operated outside with an extension cord brought inside. Generators are expensive and don't last forever, before needing to be refueled, which is not practical for Rosemary to own and operate. At least during Covid time, her Pulmonologist doctor does not want her going to the ER/hospital or rehab/nursing home, even temporarily,

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until power is restored. She has checked with her health insurance, and since she wouldn't be going to the ER due to illness, this visit would not be covered. There were lots of suggestions as to reaching out to the Health Dept. to find a solution or the Fire Department, or Springwell, to possibly put pressure on her housing apartment complex to provide access to their backup generator. Eileen suggested contacting Eversource and getting on their high priority list to have power restored, in the event of a power failure, as soon as possible. Another suggestion was to ask a case manager in the doctor's office to help her find a solution that works for her. Even if she was connected to power at a local fire station, Rosemary said that she can't stay sitting in her wheelchair for hours on end, certainly not overnight. Another suggestion was to contact the Director of MassHealth to help find a solution for her needs during a power failure/outage. And another idea was to buy a backup battery to use when the original back up battery has run out, and finding a way to continue charge up a spare battery at all times. A generator is really what Rosemary says she needs but she or her husband could not operate/refuel it but she will explore that possibility with NCDF and also the Fire Department.

### 10. NWH Committee Update (7:50-8:00)

Sandra gave a brief report of the issues already brought up last year with NWH staff, including a pedestrian activate signal to alert vehicles that a pedestrian was in the crosswalk at the West entrance to the hospital and Jini will coordinate a meeting with the Facilities Manager of NWH and city engineers, accessible medical equipment, training for staff so as to make it safer and more accessible for patients who have vision and hearing disabilities, and ER experiences which deny patients to PCA assistance and other rights violations. In addition, complaints about employees smoking on and near the sidewalk and ramp entrance to NWH is very problematic and they are working on a solution as no one should have to walk through cigarette smoke. Sandra said that she and Jini are working on getting a date for a January meeting with NWH staff and will keep all the members posted..

### 11. Nominating Committee Update (8:00-8:05)

Matt reported that several members have sent in nominations for the 3 officer positions, as he requested, either in advance or at the January 11 meeting, so keep them coming.

### 12. Police Chief Search (8:05-8:10)

Lakshmi reported that she and Anne Marie met with the consultants, International Association of Police Chiefs, who are helping the Mayor and Search Committee to find a new Police Chief for Newton. They emphasized that they would hope that the new Chief would be very supportive to have trained professionals, such as Social Workers, Psychologists, Case Managers, as staff to provide needed assistance to people with all different disabilities, including those with not-so-obvious disabilities, such as hearing loss, mental illness, etc. Anne Marie said she would like to see the new Police Chief either have a disability or a family member with a disability, to be educated and possess a sensitivity towards people with disabilities. Lakshmi asked if women are being considered as well. Anne Marie also brought up the issue that Police Officers are not

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

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licensed, as nurses, teachers, and many other professionals are, and would like to see the new Chief consider this seriously. Jini sent around the survey to all members for an additional opportunity for their voices to be heard.

**13. 2021 COD Meeting Dates (8:10-8:15)**

Jini emailed the dates for all the COD meetings in 2021. There is only one conflict with the COD's usual second Monday of the month, which falls in October, as usual, due to the federal holiday. In this case, the COD meeting will be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of October. She assumes that the meetings will be completely on Zoom for at least 6 months, possibly longer. The dates can be viewed on page 21.

**14. Year in Review (8:15-8:30)**

Anne Marie thanked all the members for stepping up their participation, helping with the ADA events, brochure/pamphlets, subcommittees, correspondence, guest speakers, topics, and much more. Lakshmi looked back at the minutes of the extra March meeting where members shared their goals for the COD, and many have been accomplished or are in progress. She said she has learned so very much from members and our guest speakers and thanks all the members for their support, especially in the last 3 months, during her personal loss, everyone has made it easier.

**15. Adjournment (8:30)**

Everyone wished each other happy holidays and a Happy New Year 2021! The meeting adjourned at 8:29PM.

These minutes were prepared by Jini and Lakshmi and respectfully submitted by Jini.  
**NEXT MEETING DATE: January 11, 2021**

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](mailto: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.

## Reports and Materials:

### **Newton Commission on Disability CDBG Access Projects Report December 14, 2020**

**FY21 Curb Cuts** – (CD21-03C; Budget: \$84,043.00; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$84,043.00)

Installation of curb cuts at the following intersections: Watertown Street/West Street and Watertown Street/Edinboro Street. **MAAB approved variance for the Watertown/Edinboro curb cut.**

**Phase I Marty Sender Pathway Installation** – (CD21-03A; Budget: \$52,000.00; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$52,000.00) Reconstruction of the Marty Sender Path with an accessible route, covering approximately ¼ mile of the route. **Staff conducted a site visit on 11/16/2020 with Parks & Rec, Jini, and Girard in order to prepare bid documents. Staff is working on the MOA and Environmental Review per HUD requirements.**

**Prospective Projects for FY22 CDBG Funding\_12.14.2020.pdf**

**Overview of Prospective Projects for FY22 CDBG Funds**

**Commission on Disability Meeting, 12/14/2020**

**Submitted by Planning and Development Department**

**Anticipated Available FY22 CDBG Funds: \$95,000**

**The following are prospective projects that are up for consideration for FY22 CDBG funds:**

**list of 1 items**

**1. Richard McGrath Park Accessible Pathway:**

**list end**

**The proposed project includes the creation of a 0.62 mi. accessible path along the perimeter of McGrath Park. In addition, the project will include the installation of four benches along the path.**

**Total estimated cost: \$83,000**

**list of 1 items**

**2. Beacon Street/Sumner Street/Centre Street Curb Cuts:**

**list end**

**The proposed project includes the installation of 12 curb cuts within the Beacon Street/Sumner Street/Centre Street intersection.**

**Total estimated cost: \$158,814 (approx.\$13,235 per curb cut due to the complexity of the intersection)**

**list of 1 items**

**3. Beacon Street, from Washington Street and Angier School:**

**list end**

**Updates to be provided at the COD meeting.**

**182**

**Shift existing entrance on Myrtle to make accessible**

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**203**

**Path to connect to existing entrance from Washington St.**

**Existing Accessible path from Washington St.**

**Ex. Accessible Parking**

**232**

**Total loop with existing sidewalk: 0.57 mi**

**Version 1.0**

**Total Path Length: 0.42 Miles**

**Total estimated cost: \$50,800**

**Existing sidewalk accounts for 0.15 mi**

**273**

**Shift existing entrance on Myrtle to make accessible**

**286**

**287**

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**Path to connect to existing entrance from Washington St.**

**Existing Accessible Entrance from Washington St.**

**Ex. Accessible Parking**

**Addition of 1,048 feet of path (0.20 miles)**

**Version 2.0**

**Total Path Length: 0.62 Miles**

**Total estimated cost: \$83,000**

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**Benches dispersed throughout path loop.**

**A train on a lush green field**

**Description automatically generated**

**A large green field with trees in the background**

**Description automatically generated**

**Top Left: Views of the tennis courts, which are relocated along Washington Street—near the parking lot entrance. At this time, Newton residents must walk on grass to travel along the park perimeter.**

**Bottom Left: McGrath Park is located behind Warren House, with the park wrapped around—shaped like a “U.”**

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**Ex. Accessible Parking**

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**Entrance #3 –on Myrtle Street**

**Entrance #2 –close to the parking lot exit**

**Entrance #1 –close to the parking lot entrance.**

**Three Points of Access**

**A person standing next to a fence**

**Description automatically generated**

**Entrance #1:**

**The proposed path will connect to the existing entrance and accessible path, located close to the parking lot entrance.**

**A sign in front of a house**

**Description automatically generated**

**Entrance #2:**

**The proposed path will also connect to an existing fence entrance, located close to the parking lot exit.**

**Entrance #3:**

**Finally, the proposed path will connect to the third point of access which is an existing fence entrance from Myrtle Street. The project will align the entrance to the existing curb cut, shown above.**

**A tree in a yard**

**Description automatically generated**

**A close up of a fence**

**Description automatically generated**

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**Ex. Accessible Parking**

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**Bench #3: Facing the field, back to Myrtle Street**

**Bench#2:infrontoftheparkingspaces,facingthefield**

**Bench #1: In front of the tennis court fence**

**Four Benches Along Proposed Path**

**Bench #4: Facing the field, back to the woods. This view will look at the back of Warren House.**

**Richard McGrath Park**

**Accessible Path**

**Beacon St./Sumner**

**St./Langley Rd.**

**Map**

**Description automatically generated**

**As shown above, the proposed project will include the installation of twelve (12) curb cuts within the Newton Centre intersection. The high cost is to grade and complexity of the intersection.**

**Total estimated cost: \$158,814**

**A close up of a crosswalk on a city street**

**Description automatically generated**

**786**

**TopLeft:AtBeaconStreet crosswalk, looking to Langley Road,theroadisverysteep.**

**Bottom Left:Standing at the Chase ATM storefront, the former Peet's Coffee, viewers can see the significant increase in grade –going up Langley Road towards the Newton CentreTstation.**



# NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

## NEWTON COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

### PARKING TICKET AND FINES REPORT

NOVEMBER 2020

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TOTAL NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	4
TOTAL VALUE OF TICKETS ISSUED	\$ 800.00
REDUCTION AMOUNT	\$ 200.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 000.00
TOTAL OUTSTANDING	\$ 600.00

#### CODE # 26 ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS

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

#### CODE # 27 CURB CUTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	0
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 000.00
REDUCTION AMOUNT	\$ 000.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 000.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 000.00

# NEWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

## NEWTON COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

### PARKING TICKET AND FINES REPORT

#### FISCAL YEAR 2021

*As of November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020*

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#### FY 2020 Year-to-date Parking Ticket Totals

TOTAL NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	16
TOTAL VALUE OF TICKETS ISSUED	\$ 3,200.00
REDUCTION AMOUNT	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 600.00
TOTAL OUTSTANDING	\$ 1,600.00

#### CODE # 26 ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	12
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 2,400.00
REDUCTION AMOUNT	\$ 800.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 400.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 1,200.00

#### CODE # 27 CURB CUTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	4
TOTAL VALUE	\$ 800.00
REDUCTION AMOUNT	\$ 200.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 200.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 400.00

# Treasurer's Report

Given by Jane Brown, Treasurer of the Commission On Disability

Presented at the December 14, 2020 COD Meeting

As of December 11, 2020, the balances of the COD accounts have not changed since the November meeting 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: \$61,939 (should increase after city audit is complete)

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: \$1880.89

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 #13D10901 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, and presented at the December 14, 2020 COD meeting.

## Site Visits:

- **Marty Sender Path- with Girard, Luis Perez, and Shaylyn Davis, section for FY21 CDBG funding**
- **Newtonville- locating accessible parking spaces within limits of streetscape**
- **Beacon Street Mid-block Crosswalks- Reviewing condition of curb ramps**

## Trainings:

- Webinar: Spotlight on Mental Health: Understanding Psychiatric Advance Directives
- Webinar: Accessible Kiosks
- Webinar: Creating Accessible Websites
- Moving Together Conference- very good sessions over 3 mornings
- The Carroll Center Technology Fair- Day long, Excellent workshops and exhibitors

## Meeting/Events/Conference Calls:

- **NWH Subcommittee Mtg- attended, Sandra chaired it, several NWH staff**
- **Traffic Council Mtg- accessible parking space in commercial area on Walnut St., voted by TC 5-0 to move the accessible space to other side of the driveway**
- **Overdue: Richard Rothstein- excellent**
- **Design Review Committee- NewCAL**
- **SEPAC- Attorney Heffernan on Special Ed on rights during Covid**
- Police Reform Task Force- attend weekly, one of several city staff resources to task force
- Comm Ave Carriage Way from Ash to Charles River - bi-weekly with city staff & consultants
- Sidewalk Snowplow -Meeting weekly- reviewing 6 routes with DPW
- NewCAL- every other week meeting
- Fair Housing Committee- I attend this monthly
- DRTs- Colman House, and former CVS in Newtonville
- Complete Streets Committee & Road Paving- I attend every other week
- CODA- monthly meeting- with other CODs' members and ADA Coordinators
- West Newton & Newtonville Streetscapes Working Group- every other week updates

## 2020 Newton Commission On Disability Meeting Dates

Below are the Commission On Disability meeting dates for the 2021 calendar year:

Monday, January 11, 2021  
Monday, February 8, 2021  
Monday, March 8, 2021  
Monday, April 12, 2021  
Monday, May 10, 2021  
Monday, June 14, 2021  
Monday, July 12, 2021  
Monday, August 9, 2020  
Monday, September 13, 2020  
\*Monday, October 18, 2021  
Monday, November 8, 2021  
Monday, December 13, 2021

\*The Commission usually meets on the second Monday of every month and starts at 6:00PM, held on Zoom until further notice or in Conference Room 204 in the Newton City Hall. The \* date is the exception this year due to a national holiday. In October, the COD meeting will be held on the third Monday of the month