



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

Meeting Date: February 11, 2019
Room 204
Time: 6:30 pm

MINUTES

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Barney Heath,
Director, Planning &
Development

Rachel Powers
Manager
Community Development

Tiffany Leung
Planner
Community Development

Members

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

Jason Rosenberg
Chairman Emeritus

Advisor

Sergeant Bob Lee, Jr.
Newton Police Department

Staff

Jini Fairley
ADA/Sec 504 Coordinator
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Commission Members Present:

Rob Caruso, Co-chair
Girard Plante, Co-chair
Jane Brown, Treasurer
Lucie Chansky
Rosemary Larking, participating remotely
Anne Marie Killilea
Matt Volpi
Lakshmi Kadambi
Warren Abramson

Commission Members Absent:

Barbara Lischinsky
Sandra Lingley

City Staff Present:

Jini Fairley, ADA/Section 504 Coordinator
Tiffany Leung, Planning
Sgt. Robert Lee, Police
Rachel Powers, Planning
Stephanie Lapham, Parks & Recreation

Guests:

Eileen Sandberg
Reza & Ghulam Hadipanah

1. Introductions (6:30-6:35)

Rob called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. Although planning to attend remotely, Sandra was not able to join the meeting. Barbara was absent. And, at the time of introductions, Matt and Girard had not yet arrived.

2. Approval of 1/14/19 Meeting Minutes (6:35-6:40)

Rob asked if there were any changes to the minutes of the last meeting. Hearing none, Rosemary made a motion to accept the minutes as read and distributed. Jane seconded the motion. The



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

motion passed unanimously by a vote of 8-0, as Matt had joined the meeting.

3. CDBG Report (6:40-6:50)

Tiffany gave the following CDBG report of Access Projects:

Highlands Playground Access – (CD15-032 Budget: \$123,750.00; Expended: \$117,562.50; Balance: \$6,187.50). Accessible pathways component began in spring 2017 with contractor David White & Son. **Staff is waiting to receive retainage bill from Parks & Rec to proceed with project close-out.**

Newton Corner Curb Cuts – (Project CD15-034 Budget: \$141,119.06; Expended: \$141,119.06; Balance: \$0). The project included the installation of 11 accessible curb cuts on Washington Street and around the Newton Corner Circle. The Highway Division completed several curb cuts in and around Park Street improvements during the previous fiscal year. A. R. Belli also completed improvements through an existing contract with the City. **Staff has paid retainage and is preparing project close-out.**

FY19 City Hall Wheelchair Accessible Single Use Toilet Room- (CD19-03A Budget: \$114,822.33; Expended \$0; Balance: \$114,822.33) The COD voted to allocate FY19 architectural access funds to the installation of a wheelchair accessible toilet room on the first floor of City Hall. The project will be managed by the City of Newton Public Buildings Department. Contractors are Vanguard Construction and P.J. Kennedy. **MOU and contracts have been fully executed. Staff held pre-construction meeting on 1/30/2019. Contractors will begin work 2/7/2019.**

4. CDBG Overview and Annual Action Plan (6:50-7:00)

Rachel gave the following presentation, giving an overview of the CDBG program and the Annual Action Plan:

FY20 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

Allocation of Funds

Purpose of Funds

**Provision of decent housing, suitable living environment,
and expansion of economic opportunities for LMI persons.**

**Creation of affordable housing for low-income households, including
building, acquiring, and/or rehabilitating**

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

HOME

affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance.

Supports outreach, operation and improvement of shelters, and prevention/rapid rehousing services for

ESG

homeless and at-risk individuals and families.

5 YR Consolidated Plan Annual Action Plan CAPER

Consolidated Plan

5 YR Consolidated Plan

Citizen Participation

Needs Assessment

Stakeholder Consultation

Strategic Plan/Visioning Data Collection

Annual Action Plan

Citizen Participation

Update Goals/Objectives

Resources

Action Steps

CAPER

Citizen Participation

Annual Performance

Review Outcomes Expenditures

Anticipated FY20 Allocation

Program FY20

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

\$1,735,805

HOME Investment Partnerships Program

\$1,160,828

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)

\$156,875

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

Total\$3,053,508

FY19 CDBG Category Allocation

Previous Year's Allocations

59.5%

15%

5.5%

20%

Housing Production and Rehabilitation

Human Service/Public Service

Access Improvements

Program Administration

FY15-FY20 Goals & Objectives

Goal 1: Production of Affordable Housing

Goal 2: Rehabilitation of Housing

Goal 3: Provision of Supportive Services to the Homeless and At-risk of Homelessness

Goal 4: Assistance to Transition Homeless Individuals and Families to Permanent Housing

Goal 5: Creation of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for the Homeless

Goal 6: Increase Awareness of Fair Housing Policies & Practices

Goal 7: Provision of Human Services

Goal 8: Implementation of Architectural Improvements for Persons with Disabilities

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Increase access throughout the City, to public thoroughfares, public buildings, public parks and recreational facilities and nonprofit agencies

•

Improvements to pedestrian safety

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

The COD informs project priorities and provides recommendations for use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds in projects that remove architectural barriers and increase accessibility throughout the City of Newton.

Eligibility:

Removal of material and architectural barriers that restrict the mobility and accessibility of elderly or severely disabled persons to public facilities and improvements

- **Architectural access projects can be completed Citywide**
- **By City, Public or Private nonprofit agencies**
- **Nonprofit agencies must operate during normal business hours**
- **Activities must benefit severely disabled adults**

THE CARROLL CENTER

Project: Modernization & removal of architectural barriers to main building elevator, including installation of call buttons, visual and braille signals, audible signals, lighting and emergency communications.

Cost: \$111,745.92 (CDBG) Contractor: ThyssenKrupp Elevator Corp

NEWTON CORNER CURBCUTS

Project: Install of 23 curb cuts in Newton Corner along the following intersections-

- o **Centre St/Jefferson St**
- o **Washington St/Bacon St**
- o **Washington St/Channing St**
- o **Washington St/Peabody St**
- o **Washington St/Charlesbank Rd/Centre St**

Cost: \$140,119.06 (CDBG) Contractor: A.R. Belli/ DPW

NEWTON HIGHLAND PLAYGROUND PATHWAYS

Project: CDBG funds supported the construction of the park's 3/4 mile long bituminous concrete walkway.

Cost: \$117,562.50 to date (CDBG) Contractor: David White & Son/ Parks and Recreation

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

Rachel concluded her presentation by requesting that the COD recommends access projects tonight for the last year of the 5 year Consolidated Plan, FY20, in order to include it in the report due March 1 and approved by the Planning & Development Board on April 1. Rob asked if she is interested in any particular access project for the FY20 CDBG funding. Rachel said that the Pathways to Playgrounds is one, can always use a curb cut funding pool, and recently suggested, accessible Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) which flash when activated by a pedestrian about to cross on a crosswalk, where there is no other signal.

5. Conversation with Parks & Recreation (7:00-7:15)

Stephanie Lapham, from the Parks & Recreation Department was invited to answer questions brought up in last month's meeting as well as speak about possible parks projects to consider for CDBG funding. The Newton Highlands Park where the COD recommended CDBG funds for all the pathways within this renovated park, will open this spring. The amenity of accessible toilet rooms (along with a concession stand) will be installed in the fall of 2020. In the meantime, there will be portable toilets provided and there will be the required number of accessible portable toilet(s). A question as to whether the building that will enclose the toilet rooms will be open 24/7 or just when large groups are planned to use the park. She said usually these buildings are not open all the time. She will check on that, and also if the portable toilets will be open 24-7. As for Waban Commons, she and Carol Schein (working part time until an Open Space Coordinator can be hired) will be going out there and will get back to Jini once they have some answers. As for the pathways to playgrounds, about 12 asphalt paths in about 7 parks would be great to accomplish, that she and Jini have been working on this for a couple of years, and would make access to these amenities compliant. She said that the Parks & Recreation Department want to provide more access and ADA-compliance throughout the parks but finding funding has been the obstacle. She mentioned that recently she has found a special mat that will provide an accessible route within a playstructure to retrofit playgrounds with a wood fiber surface, that doesn't cost too much and was inspected by the AAB. Anne Marie asked if, at the end of a slide, does this mat produce a lot of friction, as that can be an issue for a child with Cochlea implants. Stephanie will look into that. When Jini asked if they had any plans for parks or playgrounds to improve access, Stephanie said not for this coming year. However, the department is

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

very willing if the COD had ideas. Jini brought up Barbara’s suggestion for a perimeter path within a park, one that you can get to on public transportation, and she mentioned that they are looking at possibly at Hyde, and Rachel said this might be a good project for FY21, possibly. Jini also suggested a perimeter around Weeks Park/fields. Another idea Stephanie and Jini talked about is developing an “All Person Trail” maybe over at the Cove. And Lucie suggested looking at the possibility to connect a pathway from the Barry Price Center down across the Charles River over to the Needham network of trails nearby.

6. FY2020 CDBG-Funded Access Projects (7:15-7:30)

Jini explained the possibility of RRFBs at certain locations that would benefit people with disabilities to cross more safely, especially on busy streets where a traffic signal is a distance away. She said that Matt’s comment about the crosswalk at Pleasant at Centre St. was dangerous, especially at dusk and in the evening. An example of an RRFB is on Homer Street, crossing between City Hall and the Library, among other locations in the city. Jason Sobol, the city’s Transportation Director provided other locations his division has been considering. Lucie suggested another location, at the crosswalk across from the Barry Price Center crossing Christina St. The approximate cost to purchase and install an RRFB is \$20,000. After much discussion about how to divide up approximately \$120,000, which is the FY20 allocation of about \$86,000 and approximately \$34,000 remaining from the toilet room project. Matt, Rachel, Rob, and Lucie and others worked on the breakdown of the funding. A motion was made by Lucie to divide the CDBG funding into the following 3 projects: \$60,000 for RRFBs (locations at Centre at Pleasant, Christina St. at Price Center, and Lincoln St. at Chester St., in that order), \$30,000 for the Pathways to Playgrounds (priorities to be determined by Parks & Recreation Department and Jini), and \$30,000 for a Curb Cut pool. Rosemary seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 9-0.

7. Accessible (HP) Fines Reports (7:30-7:40)

Sgt. Lee gave the following accessible fines reports:

PARKING TICKET AND FINES REPORT

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

JANUARY 2019

TOTAL NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	27
TOTAL VALUE OF TICKETS ISSUED	\$ 5,600.00
REDUCTION AMOUNT	\$ 600.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 1,600.00
TOTAL OUTSTANDING	\$ 3,400.00

CODE # 26 ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	17
TOTAL VALUE (15 @ \$200) (2 @ \$300)	\$ 3,600.00
REDUCTION AMOUNT	\$ 600.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 2,000.00

CODE # 27 CURB CUTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	10
TOTAL VALUE (10 @ \$200)	\$ 2,000.00
REDUCTION AMOUNT	\$ 0
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$ 600.00
TOTAL DUE	\$ 1,400.00

PARKING TICKET AND FINES REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2019

As of February 1st, 2019
FY 2019 Year-to-date Parking Ticket Totals

TOTAL NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	299
TOTAL VALUE OF TICKETS ISSUED	\$61,100.00
REDUCTION AMOUNT	\$21,415.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$28,640.00
TOTAL OUTSTANDING	\$12,655.00

CODE # 26 ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	214
TOTAL VALUE	\$43,800.00
REDUCTION AMOUNT	\$20,410.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$16,480.00
TOTAL DUE	\$8,000.00

CODE # 27 CURB CUTS

NUMBER OF TICKETS ISSUED	85
TOTAL VALUE	\$17,300.00
REDUCTION AMOUNT	\$1,005.00
TOTAL AMOUNT PAID	\$12,160.00
TOTAL DUE	\$4,655.00

There was a question about how to notify the Police if a car is parked in an accessible parking space without a disability placard/plate, what's the best number to call to report. Sgt. Lee said to call the Traffic Bureau of the Police Department or Dispatch (617-796-2100). Also one can use 311 but that may not get to the Police in time for a Police Officer or Parking Control Officer to ticket.

8. Operation Access Update (7:40-7:45)

Jini gave an update for Operating Access. There were 51 tickets issued, and of those issued, 15 (\$3000) have paid, 8 remain unpaid and 28 were dismissed. For the first time since starting Operation Access, the cost of the enforcement will be more than the revenue taken in. Members can decide with the Police if they want to continue Operation Access for specific weekends in the spring to use up the balance in that account, or have it roll over to next fiscal year. There was no vote on this.

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

Jane gave the following Treasurer's report:

As of February 7, 2019, the balances of the COD accounts are as follows:

Account #14-3314M3 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: **\$59,883**

Account # C108006-513001 Operation Access – Disability Commission

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

Type: Special Appropriations

Balance: **\$7,160.97**

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

Type: Special Appropriations

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

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: \$**940.00**

Account# 29B22001 Disability Commission Gift

Type: Gift/Donation Account

Balance: \$**0.00**

In answer to questions from members as to where the gift to the Commission that Jason Rosenberg is holding onto, Girard and Rob will send an email to him to find out the status of this donation.

10. ADA Coordinator's Report (7:50-8:00)

Jini gave the following ADA Coordinator's report:

Site Visits:

- Commonwealth Ave & Walnut St. Intersection – Checked out 8 upgraded/installed APS units

Trainings:

- US Access Webinar- Accessible Sidewalks, Shared Use Paths, & Street Crossings
- 3Play Media Webinar- Audio Description for websites

Meeting/Events/Conference Calls:

- Land Use- Re: Northland Development-Transportation
- 2 Pre-construction Meetings with contractors for accessible toilet room on first floor of City Hall
- Walnut St. & Austin paver selections
- Austin Street Housing - every other week meetings
- Fair Housing Committee- I attend this monthly- Save the Date for Fair Housing Training- April 25 from 6:30-8:30!
- Complete Streets Committee & Road Paving- I attend, every other week
- CODA- monthly meeting- on phone with other CODs and ADA Coordinators

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

Jini made a couple of announcements of postponements of events. The presentation on the history of disability by Gann Academy students at the Durant Kenrick House has been changed from Feb. 12 (storm predicted) to March 5, at 6:30PM. Another meeting, the Better Bus Project, the Feb. 12 meeting in Watertown has been postponed, due to same storm, and no check the MBTA website for new date. Jini mentioned that the T is considering eliminating one of the routes of Bus 52 in Newton, where the bus would not go by the JCC and other streets. Although this affects those who rely on those bus stops being proposed to be eliminated, it also affects those who take The Ride if they are no longer within $\frac{3}{4}$ miles of a fixed route bus stop or T line. Most likely those Ride passengers will have to pay the premium rate. If you have concerns about the proposed changes in the bus routes in Newton, check out this project on the MBTA website. Rob asked about Jini's attendance at the Northland Transportation presentation to the City Council. She explained that it was a very long meeting with several presentations, by Northland and the Planning Department and their peer review consultants. This was also an opportunity for the public to hear their plans and to comment. There will be accessible shuttles taking passengers on several different routes to access public transportation, etc. Lucie was also in attendance.

11. Accessible (HP) Parking Request (8:00-8:15)

Mr. Reza Hadipanah applied for an accessible parking space in front of his home at Sutcliffe Park. His reason was that vehicles from an in-home day care around on Winchester St., daily from 8am-6PM, park so close to his driveway that he cannot see when he backs out of his driveway. Even though his driveway is more level than out front of his house, he thought if there was an accessible parking space there, it would mostly remain vacant and would prevent a vehicle parking so close to his driveway. Rob reminded Mr. Hadipanah that anyone with a disability placard or plate can park there, it not reserved for him, just because it is out front of his house. This is not a reason for an accessible parking space, as it doesn't make it easier for him to get in and out of his vehicle from his home, and this type of parking space cannot be installed on a slope greater than 2%. Sgt. Lee volunteered to speak with the in-home daycare nearby to tell them they will be ticketed if they park within 5 feet of Mr. Hadipanah's driveway. In addition, Sgt. Lee encouraged Mr. Hadipanah to call the Police (617-796-2100) whenever someone is parking too close to his driveway (within 5 feet),

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

so that the Police can come out and ticket. Rob asked Mr. Hadipanah to be in touch with Jini if these efforts by the Police don't solve his issue.

Although it is not routine to put signs that say do not park within 5 feet of a driveway, it may be necessary in this situation if the vehicles keep Parking too close, even after ticketing efforts. Matt made a motion not to support Mr. Hadipanah's request for an accessible parking space. Lakshmi seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 9-0.

12.MAAB Amended Application-Suzuki School (8:15-8:20)

The Suzuki School of Newton applied to the MAAB for a 2 month time extension on their Phase 1 of their renovations at 1615 Beacon St. Due to construction delays, out of their control, the School needs to inform the MAAB of this delay. This 2-month extension will also apply to some future dates that were part of the original decision by the MAAB. The COD is notified of any MAAB application or amendment for properties in Newton. Lucie made a motion to support this 2-month time extension as an amendment to the original variance request. Lakshmi seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 9-0.

13.Old/New Business (8:15-8:30)

There was no old or new business taken up.

14.Adjournment (8:30)

Jane made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rosemary seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 9-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:30.

Respectfully submitted by
Jini Fairley

NEXT MEETING DATE: March 11, 2019

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.