



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

Meeting date: February 21, 2017
Room 211
Time: 7:00 pm

DRAFT MINUTES

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Commission Members Present:

Rob Caruso, Co-chair

Girard Plante, Co-chair

Jane Brown, Treasurer, participating remotely

Barbara Lischinsky

Barney Heath,
Director, Planning &
Development

Commission Members Absent:

Lucie Chansky

Rosemary Larking

Rachel Powers
Manager
Community Development

City Staff Present:

Jini Fairley, ADA Coordinator

Sgt. John J. Babcock, Police

Barney Heath, Director of Planning

Rachel Powers, Planning

Jayne Colino, Director of Senior Services

Members
Rob Caruso, Co-Chair
Girard Plante, Co-Chair
Jane Brown
Lucie Chansky
Rosemary Larking
Barbara Lischinsky

Guests:

Marian Knapp, Chair, Council on Aging

Sandra Lingley

Jason Rosenberg
Chairman Emeritus

1. Introductions (7:00-7:05)

This meeting was rescheduled from the regular COD meeting, which was to be held on February 13, but City Hall was closed due to a snowstorm. Rob and Girard checked in with David Olson regarding whether guests are required to identify themselves and sign in on the COD Guest Sign-In Sheet. Unfortunately, since the COD meetings are public and fall under the Open Meeting Law, the public attending are not required to identify themselves when asked, nor have to sign in. Rob thought there might be a provision for this since members, staff, and guests who are blind or visually impaired, are not aware of who is in the meeting room at any given time. Going forward, Rob or Girard will announce the names of anyone joining the meeting after the start of the meeting,

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CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

and if unknown to them, they will ask the guest to identify themselves and sign in on the COD sheet.

2. Approval of January 9, 2017 Meeting Minutes (7:05-7:10)

Rob asked if there were any corrections to be made to the minutes for the January 9, 2017 meeting, as read and distributed. Hearing none, Jane made a motion to accept the minutes as read and distributed. Barbara seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4-0.

3. CDBG Report (7:10-7:15)

Rachel gave the following CDBG Access Project Report:

★ **FY17 Curb Cuts Funding Pool** – (CD17-03A Budget: \$87,125 Committed: \$0; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$87,125). Funding pool for new curb cuts projects. CD staff asks that the COD develop a plan for these funds as soon as possible and for projects that can be done in a relatively short time frame. The annual CDBG Timeliness test approaches in early May 2017.

FY15 Accessible Pedestrian Signals – (CD15-03Z Budget: \$20,800; Committed: \$20,800 Expended: \$0; Balance: \$20,800). The MOU for the installation of 32 APS units has been executed. The Department of Public Works received bids 2/2/17 and are currently reviewing bidder responses. Contract to be prepared and executed thereafter.

Currently, signals are planned at the following intersections:

- Beacon @ Chestnut (units to be determined)
- Commonwealth @ Centre (8 units)
- Centre @ Walnut (4-8 units)
- 1600 Washington Street @ Warren House (2 units)

★ **FY15 Curb Cuts** (Project CD15-03Y). Budget \$43,417.92; Committed: \$0; Expended: \$0; Uncommitted Balance: \$43,417.92). A majority of the remaining funds are anticipated to be allocated toward the Carroll Center Accessibility Project.

★ **FY16 Access Projects Funding Pool** – (CD16-03A Budget: \$88,431; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$88,431). The Carroll Center Accessibility Project was approved by the

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

Planning and Development Board January 11, 2017. CD staff working with purchasing on bidding for spring 2017.

Highlands Playground Access – (CD15-032 Budget: \$99,000; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$99,000). The contract with David White & Son has been executed. The accessible pathways component will begin in spring 2017.

Newton Corner Curb Cuts (Project CD15-034 Budget: \$72,500; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$72,500). The project will include 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. Engineering will be put out the remaining for public bid this winter for construction in spring 2017.

Girard and Rob asked questions to clarify what the COD needs to identify for projects, to spend older funds, such as the \$87,000 in FY17 Curb Cut Funding Pool. In addition, tonight the COD needs to vote on the next appropriation of CDBG funds, FY18, in order for Jini to meet the deadline for the RFP application, which is March 1, 2017 (originally February 22, 2017, but extended due to lost business days due to snowstorms).

4. FY18 Access Projects for CDBG Funds Application(7:15-7:30)

The discussion moved into what the COD members would like to consider for the expenditure of FY18 CDBG funds, approximately \$87,126. Barbara mentioned that she would like to see improved pedestrian access for people with disabilities to the parks and open space, especially a perimeter pathway, either around Cold Spring Park, or at least around the fields there, or the fields at Warren House, which is relatively flat. Another idea was to provide better access to the bleachers, field, and concession stand at Lyons Field from the road nearby, or to fill in the gaps of pathways from Lyons to the Cove. Barbara also mentioned that along a large stretch of Beacon Street, from Angier School to Washington St. there are many gaps in the concrete sidewalks, which should be looked at as well, if not with CDBG funds, perhaps by DPW. Jini mentioned that there is \$150,000 each year in the city’s Capital Investment Plan, for improvements to sidewalks. The suggestion by Rachel to have a funding pool with priorities and percentages for FY18 would be a good start and perhaps in November this year we can plan even more specific projects for the FY19 funds. Rob liked

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

the idea of this type of funding pool as it allows some flexibility in case something else comes along that needs our attention regarding access. After much discussion, in the interest of time, Rob suggested to apply for an Accessibility Projects Funding Pool for the FY18 CDBG funds, and prioritized 3 areas to spend these funds: 1) Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS), 20% to be spent on the purchase and installation of APS, 2) Curb ramps, 25% for new ones and 10% for retrofitted ones for a total of 35%, and 3) Pathways in parks/open space, 45% to create pathways to facilities and fields and/or perimeter path around a park or open space. Barbara made a motion to recommend applying for an Accessibility Projects Funding Pool for FY18, for the 5% of the city's total allocation of CDBG funds, approximately \$87,126, for APS (20%), Curb Ramps (35%), and Park Pathways (45%). Jane seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 4-0. Jini will complete the RFP proposal application on behalf of the Commission On Disability and will submit it to the Planning Department/Rachel Powers, no later than 4PM on Wednesday, March 1, 2017.

5. HP Fines Report (7:30-7:40)

Sargent Babcock gave the following Accessible Parking (HP) Fines Reports:

FINES

CODE #26 & CODE #27

JANUARY 2017 (1 month)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| CODE #26 (TOTAL PAID) ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS | |
| | \$1,000.00 |
| 5 TICKETS @ \$200.00 | |
| CODE #26 (OUTSTANDING) | |
| | \$4,600.00 |
| 17 TICKETS @ \$200.00 | |
| 4 TICKETS @ \$300.00 | |
| TOTAL | |
| | \$5,600.00 |

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

CODE #27 (TOTAL PAID) CURB CUTS
.....\$600.00
3 TICKETS @ \$200

CODE #27 (OUTSTANDING)
.....\$2,400.00
12 TICKETS @\$200.00

TOTAL
.....\$3,000.00

COMBINED TOTALS

TOTAL PAID {COLLECTED}.....\$1,600.00
TOTAL OUTSTANDING.....\$7,000.00
TOTAL FINES ISSUED.....\$8,600.00

The second report was for the past 7 months:

FINES

CODE #26 & CODE #27

JULY 1, 2016 - JANUARY 31, 2017
(7 MONTHS)

CODE #26 (TOTAL PAID) ACCESSIBILITY SPOTS
.....\$7,600.00
CODE #26 (OUTSTANDING)
.....\$17,000.00
TOTAL
.....\$24,600.00

CODE #27 (TOTAL PAID) CURB CUTS
.....\$8,700.00
CODE #27 (OUTSTANDING)
.....\$13,000.00

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

TOTAL
.....\$21,700.00

COMBINED TOTALS

TOTAL PAID {COLLECTED}.....\$16,300.00
TOTAL OUTSTANDING.....\$30,000.00
TOTAL.....\$46,300.00

THESE AMOUNTS DO NOT INCLUDE TICKETS
ISSUED DURING THE STING DATES

Sargent Babcock also gave an update on the final numbers for Operation Access. The number of tickets issued was 107, not 114, now that the system has checked for duplicates. The total amount of fines for these tickets, all were \$200 each, is \$21,400. There was one overtime period missed for additional cost of \$191.64. The final total cost for enforcement was \$6869.60, however only \$6677.04 has been billed to the Operation Access account. The remainder will be included in a subsequent billing from the Police Department. Next month Sargent Babcock will let us know what has been paid/collected, and the amount outstanding for these 107 tickets. There is still a balance of \$2130.40 in the Operation Access account and Sargent Babcock said that this enforcement will continue on selected weekends for the next 4 months or so, until June 30. Jayne Colino, Director of Senior Services said that have been some recent installation of curb ramps near the Senior Center and some of the seniors have received tickets for blocking these curb ramps. There can't be a sign for each of the over 5,000 curb ramps in the city and she has been explaining this violation is just as serious as parking in an accessible parking (HP) space without a placard and she suggest there needs to be more education to the general public about not blocking these curb ramps. Sargent Babcock said that the Transportation Division of DPW will be temporarily putting out some barrels with a sign that alerts vehicle owners that it is a \$200 fine for blocking curbs ramps.

6. Treasurer's Report (7:40-7:45)

Jane gave the following Treasurer's Report:

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

As of February 8, 2017, 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 = \$8,809

Account # C108006-513001 Operation Access – Disability Commission

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

Type: Special Appropriations

Balance = \$2322.04

Note: The cost from the Police Department of Operation Access was \$6677.96 and was paid out of this account in January, 2017

Account #13D10901 Set up in Fall 2015 to receive Community Access Monitor Program fees and pay expenses)

Type: Revolving Account

Balance = \$1114.65

Account# 29B22001 Disability Commission Gift

Type: Gift/Donation Account

Balance = \$0.00

Jini added that the Balance of the Operation Access account does not reflect the additional overtime Police cost of \$191.64, which will be deducted from this account once the Police submit a Transfer Bill. Thus the true balance of Operation Access account is \$2130.40.

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

Jini gave the following ADA activity report:

Self-Evaluation:

- Police Headquarters
- Emerson Community Center
- Lower Falls Community Center
- Assistive Technology at Library

Site Visits:

- Homer ST & City Hall Drive Crossings- 2 visits
- Auburndale Square

Resident Issues:

- Removal of Bench at Starbucks in Waban Square
- Snow Removal in Newton Centre & Highlands

Training:

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

- Accessible Parking Regulations by MOD for Police & DPW
- Section 508 Refresh- US Access
- Why Housing Messages Backfire and What We Can Do- National Housing Conference
- Webinar on the Affordable Care Act

Meetings/Events/Conference Calls:

- MBTA Meeting on Commuter Rail Schedule
- One Newton- Mayor's Initiative
- Fair Housing Committee
- Massachusetts Alliance of CODs (MACOD) Call

In the interest of time, Jini did not describe her activities above. She did mention going to another MBTA meeting, this one on the Accessibility Project of the Auburndale Commuter Rail Station last week, which she will give more details in March.

8. AP2-16 Request for Accessible Parking Space (7:50-8:00)

Since the COD meeting was rescheduled after the February 16 Traffic Council meeting, there was No Action Necessary, as the Traffic Council voted to approved this request for an accessible parking space in front of 35 Brookdale Rd. Below is an excerpt of an email from the Chair of the Traffic Council to the COD regarding action taken by the Traffic Council on 2/16/17:

AP2-16 JULIE ROBINSON, on behalf of Elizabeth Nichols, 35 Brookdale Road, requesting an accessible parking space in front of 35 Brookdale Road. (Ward 2) [12/12/16 @ 10:56 AM]
The Newton Commission on Disability voted to **HOLD** on 01/09/17 pending additional information.

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0. Approved language of TPR Number 284. This item may be appealed through the close of business March 8, 2017.

9. AP3-16 Request for Accessible Parking Space (8:00-8:10)

Again, since the COD's rescheduled meeting (tonight) was after the February 16 Traffic Council meeting, there was No Action Necessary, as the Traffic Council approved the placement of an accessible parking space in front of 68 Lincoln Rd. Below is an excerpt of an email from the Chair of the Traffic Council to the COD regarding the Traffic Council's action at their 2/16/17 meeting:

AP3-16 MARGARET TRAMONTOZZI, 68 Lincoln Road, requesting an accessible parking space in front of 68 Lincoln Road. (Ward 1) [12/13/16 @ 12:51 PM]

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

The Newton Commission on Disability voted to HOLD on 01/09/17 pending additional information.

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0. Approved language of TPR Number 285. This item may be appealed through the close of business March 8, 2017.

10. Council On Aging (8:10-8:40)

Marian Knapp, Chair of the Council on Aging (COA), and Jayne Colino, Director of the Newton Department of Senior Services (NDSS) presented the following information as a foundation for future collaboration with the Commission On disability, since many of their goals involve accessibility to facilities, programs, activities, and services:

Newton Department of Senior Services & Newton Council on Aging Planning for a Livable All Age-friendly Newton (PLAAN)

Background: By 2030, close to one-third of Newton's population will be age 60 & over. The Newton Department of Senior Services & the Newton Council on Aging have been responding to seniors' needs & wishes for more than 25 years. It is imperative that we continue to plan for the future in order to maintain and enhance this tradition.

In 2016, the City of Newton applied & was designated as a member of the World Health Organization/AARP Livable/Age-friendly Community Network.

Livable/Age-Friendly Definition (WHO/AARP)

"A livable & age-friendly community adapts structures & services to be accessible & inclusive of older people with varying needs & capacities."

The Department of Senior Services & Council on Aging Vision Guides Us

Provide sustained leadership that helps Newton be a Livable and Age-friendly Community for all who choose to live here.

Our Mission Defines our Actions:

Optimize quality of life for older adults and those who support them through welcoming, respectful, and meaningful opportunities that engage and value older people, and empower them to remain independent and to be important assets in our community.

Our Goals are essential strategies to achieve our Vision & Mission for Newton as Livable & Age-friendly:

- Financial Sustainability
- Identify Population Needs, Skills & Diversity
- Build Partnerships & Bridges
- Advocate for Seniors & Those Who Support Them
- Improve Community Awareness
- Ensure & Improve Access to Resources
- Effective Marketing Strategies
- Maintain, Strengthen, Create Programs & Services

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

NDSS & NCOA Working Collaboratively in the Community

| Key Domains for Improvement | |
|---|---|
| Arts and Culture Buildings and Outdoor Spaces Civic Engagement and Employment Community & Health Services Communication and Information | Educational Opportunities Housing Respect and Social Inclusion Social Engagement Transportation |

Girard reminded the members about the advocacy it took from both the COD and the Senior Center, to provide a vestibule at the entrance of the Senior Center by the elevator, so that the receptionist, staff, and seniors waiting for their ride would not be cold as the door opened to the outside regularly, even the second floor felt a draft each time the door opened in the winter. It was a real collaborative effort with Mayor Warren’s help as well. Marian spoke about the strategic plan she and Jayne have worked on and now working on another plan as Newton was recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an age-friendly community. Jayne mentioned that the data collection and analysis that Marian refers to in the above information is on the webpage of the Department of Senior Services and encourage the COD members to take a look there to see if there would be areas where there might be overlap or could collaborate. Barbara commented that this sounds like helping seniors age in place in their community. Marian feels it has a broader meaning, not necessarily staying in the house you have lived for 40 years but living in the community of your choice where there are services as we age, and doesn’t necessarily mean staying in one place, it can also include seniors downsizing and wanting to stay in the same community. Barbara agrees that it has a broader definition. Jayne commented that the lack of diversity of housing in Newton is a challenge and members of the COD agreed, not only for seniors but for people with disabilities who need accessibility and affordability in housing. From listening to the issues the COD addresses in the course of this meeting, Marian referred to the 8 goals that WHO considers domains, in the table above, are also areas where the COD is concerned. Jayne added that being accepted in the age-friendly community network, they are charged with creating an action plan to work on priorities and report on the progress, with much input from seniors. To that end, Senior Services and the COA have had many public and scheduled listening sessions, with stakeholder organizations as well as many seniors. For example, Jayne mentioned having a listening session both with the administration of the Newton Housing Authority and several sessions with the residents. Girard

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

asked what exactly will they talk about and Jayne said , with the NHA, how are they experiencing this demographic shift where there will be more than 33% of residents over the age of 60 by 2030 and how are they planning and arranging for the services those seniors will need to stay in Newton and enjoy life here. Barbara raised the issue that only 13% of the subsidized housing that the Newton Housing Authority owns is set aside for people with disabilities under 60/62, and she is concerned that the new housing developments proposed in the near future will not necessarily be affordable for disabled resident with the services shifted to seniors. She was told that the waiting list for this small percentage of disabled housing is 30 years, so people with disabilities under 60 may never get off this list before they die. In Barbara also spoke of subsidized transportation services that are only for seniors and not for people with disabilities under 60, who also don't drive and can't get to the grocery store or the doctor. Some people with disabilities qualify for the state's paratransit services, but not always, and she wanted to just go on the senior bus to Stop & Shop with the seniors, and was denied. Jayne talked about the costly budget she has for transportation for seniors. The Senior Center does not own a bus but rather they have contracted with Veterans Taxi company to provide local rides for seniors who have purchased a voucher (donation of \$2-4). Barbara would like to see if the COD and Senior Services and possibly other Senior Living developments, to work on making subsidized transportation available to residents with disabilities who do not drive. Jini mentioned that the Transportation Strategy report is just being released and there is a proposed shuttle that the city and businesses would partner to provide on-demand/rideshare model to provide trips throughout Newton. This might alleviate some of the transportation needs people with disabilities have as well as seniors. Jayne mentioned that one of the tenets of the age-friendly communities is universal design, so that if you improve housing or other elements for seniors, you improve for many other populations, and for future generations, added Girard. The COA officially supported the Accessory Apartment by Right ordinance, now in front of the City Council, as it can provide for seniors to create some rental income, or create affordable housing, thus increasing the diversity of the housing stock in Newton. When Marian gave an example of speaking with the fire department, the issue of an increased number of falls, both inside and outside where seniors live, may lead to joining forces about his one issue. Barbara brought up that the disability indicator form, E911, is not widely

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Commission On Disability

advertised and many seniors and people with disabilities should know of this resource, so that the police and fire department are made aware of someone needing additional assistance if there was a fire or other dangerous situation. Jayne added that her newsletter does mention the E911 Disability Indicator form, but many seniors do not identify themselves as persons with a disability. But anyone can fill out this form if they feel they would like the Fire or Police Department to know they might need some help. Rob mentioned that he would love to have a senior with age-related impairments, from either the COA or Senior Center to become a COD member, as many of the issues are the same and we have 3 vacancies at the moment. Since the Veterans meet at the Senior Center once a month, it would be wonderful if a Veteran with a disability/impairment, would like to join the COD, too. Jayne said she has an email distribution list to send out their newsletter, and she thinks we would be accomplish quite a lot if we all just made folks aware of the resources that do exist. Safety and loneliness were 2 of the issues seniors are bringing up constantly, and also improving the accessibility of the T stations and the commuter rail stations, which has also been part of the COD's advocacy. Jayne said that more than a third of her transportation budget, and that doesn't even cover assisting all the seniors who need transportation. All agreed that transportation is an area where the COA and the COD can co-advocate. And also look into joint statements and Marian urge the COD to look at the Housing Criteria the COA has developed, which they will. Joint advocacy is definitely what we are both interested and discussed how both the COD and the COA could have representative at each monthly meeting, or at least periodically. And make a concerted effort to stay in contact with each group and come up with issues that we can advocate for, commented Rob, for example, housing.

11.Old/New Business (8:40-9:00)

Due to the late hour, there was no old or new business discussed.

12.Adjournment (9:00)

The meeting adjourned at 9:20PM.

NEXT MEETING DATE: March 13, 2017

The location of this meeting is wheelchair accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons 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.

