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# CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## Commission On Disability

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Meeting date: November 13, 2017  
Room 204  
Time: 6:30 pm

MINUTES

Setti D. Warren  
Mayor

Barney Heath,  
Director, Planning &  
Development

Rachel Powers  
Manager  
Community Development

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

Jason Rosenberg  
Chairman Emeritus

**Advisor**  
Sergeant Jay Babcock  
Newton Police Department

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

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### Commission Members Present:

**Rob Caruso, Co-chair**  
**Girard Plante, Co-chair**  
**Jane Brown, Treasurer**  
**Lucie Chansky**  
**Barbara Lischinsky**  
**Rosemary Larking, participating remotely**

### City Staff Present:

Jini Fairley, ADA/Section 504 Coordinator  
Sgt. John J. Babcock, Police  
**Amanda Lipson, Planning**  
**Rachel Powers, Planning**  
**John Daghlian, Engineering**

### Guests:

**Sandra Lingley**  
**Anne Marie Killilea**  
**Frederick Dolan**  
**Matt Volpi**

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

### 2. Approval of October 16, 2017 Meeting Minutes (6:35-6:40)

**Rob asked if everyone received and read the minutes of the October COD meeting, and if there were any changes needed. Hearing none, Rosemary made a motion to approve the Minutes as read and distributed. Barbara seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 6-0.**

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

**Amanda gave the CDBG report, distributed in advance. The update since the last meeting was that a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at the renovated Newton Highlands Playground on November 3. Anne Marie was able to attend. The fields and some**



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of the pathways are not finished but of the hardscape amenities, such as the basketball court and the play structures will be open to the public at the end of the month. Anne Marie mentioned that it is important for a rubber bottom at the end of the slide to prevent shocking children with Cochlea implants, due to the built-up friction from going down a slide. These play structures were compliant in that regard.

#### 4. Self-Evaluation (6:50-7:00)

Rob and Girard asked Jini to describe what the Self-Evaluation is and what will be presented at the special meeting on this topic on Thursday, November 16. Jini explained that every city/town in the US must conduct a Self-Evaluation of the accessibility of the facilities owned by the city or town. It is basically a snapshot of the state of accessibility throughout the city, especially buildings, parks/playgrounds, public rights of way, etc. Jini said that she has created several maps, with corresponding Excel spreadsheets, which show whether a building, park, or Accessible Pedestrian Signal (APS) is fully accessible (green circle), accessible but needs more access improvements (yellow circle), or not accessible (red circle). Although the city conducted a similar Self-Evaluation in 1990-1991, it has been more than 25 years since, and is necessary in order to inform the updated ADA/504 Transition Plan. Public participation is required throughout this process, and the meeting on Thursday is one way to receive input from the community as to the direction to go with the multi-year updated Transition Plan. Jini will also upload these materials onto the city's website to gain more feedback.

#### Accessible (HP) Fines Reports (7:00-7:10)

Sargent Babcock reported on tickets issued for violations of the accessible parking regulations, where vehicles were parking in an accessible parking space without a disability placard or plate or they were blocking curb cuts. The combined totals for the month of October were:

**Total Paid=100%**

**Total Outstanding=\$6300**

**Total Issued=\$7300**

**Total Dismissed on Appeal=\$2000.**

**The Year-to-Date combined totals:**

**Total Paid=\$12,100**

**Total Outstanding=\$11,600**

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**Total Issued=\$23,800**

**Total Dismissed on Appeal= \$10,900**

**5. Treasurer's Report (7:10-7:15)**

**There were no changes to the balances of the COD's accounts. The city is still working on crediting the HP Fines account from the revenue collected from tickets issued from Operation Access.**

**Rob asked if anyone was going to the Ruderman Inclusion Summit on November 19-20. Lucie said she was but Girard and Barbara, both who had expressed interest in attending, are now not able to attend. Jini is going in her role as ADA Coordinator and Kat is also planning to go and may meet up with Lucie and Jini.**

**6. ADA Coordinator's Report (7:15-7:20)**

**Jini had distributed her report on her ADA activities in advance to the COD members and advisors. She highlighted her work this past month readying all the advertising and materials for the upcoming ADA Self-Evaluation meeting on Nov. 16. She is also very busy writing the MOD ADA Improvement grant, due this Friday. She also mentioned going to the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new Fire Station #3, new Emergency Operations Center, and the renovated Fire Headquarters. While there she received a tour and was very impressed and very accessible for the public areas.**

**7. MAAB Variance-DPW Parking Lot (7:20-7:50)**

**John Daghlian, from Newton's DPW Engineering division, explained why the city is seeking a variance to providing accessible spaces in a parking lot that serves two inaccessible DPW/non-public facing, employee-only buildings. John described the 2 buildings, one dating from the 1800s and one built around 1958, with inaccessible entrances and steep ramps used for the snow-clearing horses once housed in this barn building. Girard asked if an employee needed to work at one of those buildings and needed accessibility, what would happen. John answered that reasonable accommodations would be made to make the building entrance accessible, and the floor where the employee would be working. In that case, the parking lot would need to provide at least one van-accessible parking space that is ADA compliant. After much discussion and Q&A, a motion was made by Lucie to support the variance with the condition that a reasonable accommodation will be given to an employee who may need an assigned parking space to park close to the**

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entrance, who does not use a wheelchair. The motion was seconded by Rosemary. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 6-0.

**8. Applicant for Commission On Disability (7:50-8:05)**

Rob asked Sandra Lingley to introduce herself and tell the members why she would like to become a COD member. Sandra started coming to the COD meetings when she was giving her good friend, Barbara, a ride to the COD meetings. At that time she did not live in Newton, but was interested in becoming a COD member for several years now. When she lived in Medford, she did connect with the ADA Coordinator and managed to make some improvements to accessibility, such as getting snow out of accessible parking spaces. She moved to Needham almost 3 years ago, working on similar barriers. She has just moved into Newton this summer, so now that she is a Newton resident with a disability, she has begun the process of becoming a COD member. Sandra related to us that she has learned so much from attending the Newton COD meetings for the past 4 years, not only about her own disability but many other disabilities as well. She became a Community Access Monitor through the MOD program. She has a mobility impairment and told us some of the issues she has been going through with her new apartment that was supposed to be fully accessible. From what she has learned from the CAM training and all the COD meetings she has attended and her own research, she has successfully advocated for herself in order to make her apartment fully accessible. After a few comments and discussion, a motion was made by Lucie to invite Sandra as the next COD member. The motion was seconded by Barbara. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 5-0. Just before this vote, the phone connection with Rosemary was interrupted/disconnected and it took some time to get her back on the conference line. Since this apartment was developed by Newton Community Development Foundation, a motion was made by Lucie to write to NCDF to let them know that the COD is disappointed by all the issues of accessibility that Sandra and that apartment has had and to encourage them to come before the COD whenever they have future plans for housing development in Newton. The motion was seconded by Barbara. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 5-0.

**9. Old/New Business (8:05-8:30)**

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**While waiting to reconnect with Rosemary, another potential COD member, Matt Volpi, introduced himself to the members. His daughter, who is in middle school, has a physical impairment, uses a scooter and has a service dog. She was featured in the Tab a little while ago. We'll hear more from Matt in subsequent meetings.**

**Rosemary suggested the COD invite Ruthanne Fuller, Mayor-Elect, in January, in order to get to know the members and what the COD does. Rob said that he has a call into her. Rosemary also mentioned that there was going to be some repairs on the elevator in her building and she didn't think they were making any provisions for the tenants who live on upper floors and need the elevator for vertical access. Rob and Jini suggested she speaks with those tenants and recommend that they themselves ask for a reasonable accommodation.**

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

**Just before the meeting adjourned, Rosemary reminded us that we often have a holiday party, share refreshments at the December meeting. Everyone thought that was a good idea. Unfortunately, Rosemary might not be able to attend, but she will try.**

**NEXT MEETING DATE: December 11, 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](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.