



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission On Disability

Meeting date: June 13, 2016
Room 204
Time: 6:30 pm

MINUTES

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Barney Heath,
Director, Planning &
Development

Lydia Scott
Senior Planner
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
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Commission Members Present:

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

Commission Members Absent:

Rosemary Larking

City Staff Present:

Joe Mulvey, Chief Information Officer
Jini Fairley, ADA Coordinator
Sgt. John Babcock, Police
Barney Heath, Director of Planning & Development

Guests:

Sandra Lingley
Kathleen Eutsler

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

Before introductions, Joe Mulvey, CIO, described the new conference phone which is connected to the data network, not the phone line. Up to three people can be conferenced into the meeting by calling each one from this phone. Joe will prepare a one-page instruction sheet for our reference. Rob welcomed Barney Heath, the new Director of Planning and Development, to the meeting, which he was able to stay until he had to attend another meeting.

2. Approval of April 11, 2016 meeting Minutes (6:35-6:45)

Rob asked if everyone received and read the minutes of the April 11 meeting, and if there were any corrections, additions, deletions to them. Hearing none, Jane made a motion to accept the minutes as read and distributed. Barbara seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0.

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3. CDBG Report (6:45-7:00)

Lydia is no longer employed by the city. In her absence, the following report was read by Rob:

CDBG Access Projects Report

June 13, 2016

FY17 Curb Cuts Funding Pool – (CD17-xxx. Budget: \$87,125; Balance; \$87,125). Funding pool for new curb cuts projects. Funds will be available after July 2016.

FY15 Audible Pedestrian Signals – (CD15-03Z. Budget: \$20,800; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$20,800). This new project budget has been set up and funded. CD staff will work with DPW to place the orders for the 32 units so the equipment is on hand once intersections for installation are selected. The COD needs to vote on intersections to receive the units before the units can be purchased and an MOU executed with DPW. Suggested intersections for vote include:

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

FY16 Access Projects Funding Pool – (CD16-03A. Budget: \$88,431; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$88,431). Full project amount is available for allocation towards any new access projects.

Highlands Playground Access – (CD15-032). Budget: \$99,000; Expended: \$0; Balance: \$99,000). CDBG component of this project is fully-funded.

FY15 Curb Cuts (Project CD15-03Y. Budget \$106,809; Balance: \$106,809). Funds available for new curb cuts projects.

1. **Potential project:** Christina Street Curb Cuts (located at Barry Price Center). Work would be done in house by DPW Highway Division, and, if approved, could be constructed during this summer's construction season. Tentative cost estimate is \$11,883. Set up of this project would require a vote from the COD.

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FY15 Parks Curb Cuts – (CD15-031. Budget: \$29,490; Expended: \$8,498; Balance: \$20,992). Work is complete at Stearns Park on Jasset Street and at Wellington Park on Kilburn Street. Awaiting DPW transfer bills.

Newton Centre Playground Pathway Phases IV-VI – (CD15-03X. Budget: \$130,000; Expended: \$165.10; Balance: \$129,834.90). Work is underway and scheduled to be completed during the week of May 25.

Jini answered questions about the 2 votes requested in this report, one for approval of intersections to receive APS, and the second vote for the construction of new curb cuts and crosswalk, crossing Christina St. near the Price Center parking lot.

A motion was made by Lucie to recommend all the intersections in the above report for the installation of APS. The motion was seconded by Barbara. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 5-0.

There were several questions regarding the next vote suggested by Lydia in the above report concerning the construction of 2 new curb cuts on Christina St. near the Barry Price Center in order for a safer crossing until the intersection of Needham/Oak/Christina is redesigned and constructed next year. There are many individuals with physical disabilities who attend the Price Center and use wheelchairs who have requested the city to consider a temporary solution to this issue. Jini and 2 city staffers met with the Director of the Price Center along with other staff and consumers there. In this site visit and one before that by Jini and Greg, it was determined that there was the possibility of a midblock crossing Christina, enabling folks to cross and access many of the stores along Needham St, where some of the Center's consumers work. Barbara was concerned about the placement of this crossing as Christina St. is a hill that vehicles ascend when coming from the neighborhood and approaching the light at Needham St. She asked Sargent Babcock what he thought of the placement of this midblock crossing. He said that he had a chance to go out there himself as well and feels that there is good visibility of the pedestrians by the vehicles. The sidewalk on the opposite side of the street from the Price Center is not very wide but adequate for a wheelchair to traverse. Barbara wanted to know if there was a schematic or drawing for this project. Jini did not have one but will ask Engineering to provide one and she will email to COD members. Lucie made a motion to recommend the use of CDBG funds

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from the FY15 Curb Cut Funding Pool for the construction of 2 curb cuts on Christina St. for a midblock crosswalk. Jane seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 5-0

Lucie asked who owns the land between the Price Center parking lot and the Charles River, looks like an old railroad bed. If it could be paved, it could connect to a bridge over the river to the Needham side where there is a nice pathway. Jini will ask around to figure out who owns the land.

. In addition, a third vote was recommended for curb cuts in Newton Corner to be funded out of the FY15 CD15-03Y account but since Lydia did not have the cost estimates from Engineering, she did not include it in her report. Jini, in advance, distributed the following:

Newton Corner Curb Cuts Project

Before Lydia left, she was working with DPW staff and Councilor Leary and the Newton Corner Advisory Group on a project that would address some of the immediate safety and access issues in Newton Corner. Councilor Leary led 3 Walkthroughs, first with Girard and Alicia Bowman (August 2015), next with DPW Commissioner and Director of Operations (November 2015), and lastly with Jini, Lydia, DPW staff, including Commissioner, Director of Operations, and Engineering, in December 2015.

Subsequently, the Newton Corner Advisory Group has had several meetings with their Councilors and DPW and Planning staff, and has submitted a priority list of immediate safety and access issues to be addressed in the 2016 construction season. Since these improvements are not currently in DPW's budget for 2016, Lydia had put together CDBG Community funding in the amount of \$200,000. These improvements will actually cost more than that amount, she was going to propose that the COD contribute some of the FY15 Curb Cut Funding Pool funds to insure that more can be done this season. The village of Newton Corner is on the DPW's schedule for the 2019 construction season, for signalization improvements and sidewalk and curb cut/accessibility upgrades.

After Lydia left the city, I received the list of curb cuts and cost estimates that she would have recommended for a vote from the COD, as follows:

Washington Street at Bacon Street: 2 Ramps \$15,000
Washington Street at Peabody Street: 2 Ramps \$10,000
Washington Street at Channing Street: 2 Ramps \$10,000
Mid-Block Crossing on Washington Street: 1 Ramp \$7500
Washington Street at Thornton Street: 2 Ramps \$20,000
Centre Street and Centre Street (@ Hotel): 2 Ramps \$10,000
Grand Total: \$72,500

With the combined Community and Access CDBG funds, all of the issues that Councilor Leary described when she visited the COD meeting in January will be fixed this construction season.

In Lydia's absence, I would suggest that the COD take a vote as to whether or not to recommend the expenditure of \$72,500 (or a different amount) from the FY15 Curb Cut Funding Pool for the above listed curb cuts/ramps in Newton Corner.

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Jini explained that making Newton Corner more pedestrian safe along with some beautification is a joint effort, by DPW, Parks & Rec, and also funding from CDBG community funds. The Newton Corner Advisory Group submitted a list of priorities for improvements in Newton Corner, and much of the items will be addressed this construction season. Lucie asked if the crossing at Centre St. and Centre Ave was improved. Jini said that the crossing does have an old APS system making it more accessible but the redesign of the island and that crossing will be part of the more extensive improvements in Newton Corner in 2019. Lucie asked if the CDBG funds will all be used for this project and Barney answered yes, that even with the neighborhood funding and other contributions for city departments, some access and safety improvements might not get done, but more will get done if the COD recommends CDBG access funds. A motion was made by Barbara to recommend/approve the use of CDBG Access funds for the construction of the above list of curb cuts in Newton Corner, in the amount of \$72,500. Jane seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 5-0.

Taken out of order, due to a member needing to leave early:

4. New Member (7:25-7:40)

Rob introduced Kathleen Eutsler, who has attended the Commission meetings since March and is interested in joining the COD and has applied to become a member of the Commission. Kat, as she prefers to be called, introduced herself, a resident of Newton for the past year. Her interest in joining the Commission stems from her desire to become more active in her city government and more from a personal perspective, she recently received a diagnosis where she now needs to take the elevator instead of stairs and may eventually need to use a wheelchair to get around. Initially, she said she wanted to educate herself by attending the COD meetings. By doing so, she has broaden her perspective beyond her personal reasons and wants to advocate for the ADA through being a Commission member. She is originally from Pennsylvania and came to Massachusetts for graduate school. She has a Masters in Food Policy and works at Harvard Law School in their Food Policy and Law clinic, advocating on a local, state, and federal level with Food Policy Councils and legislation, including poverty issues, with regard to food and nutrition. She is a grant writer. Rob and Jini have shared disability resources with Kat and she is looking into the CAM training in the fall. Kat has already been interviewed by the Coordinator of Boards and Commissions, Amalia and Jini (a relevant city staff person), and Amalia will be passing on their

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recommendation to Mayor Warren. Rob said that the process would be even faster if the COD votes whether to recommend a potential new member. Jini explained that Amalia is also updating all the Commission members terms, if they desire to continue on the COD, which might take a little extra time for the process to finish. The COD wishes to vote tonight and to send the results of their vote onto Mayor Warren and Amalia. Barbara made a motion to welcome Kat and to accept her as a new member of the Commission On Disability. Jane seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 5-0.

5. HP Fines Report (7:00-7:10)

Sargent Babcock gave the following report:

HP FINES

CODE #26 & CODE #27

JULY 1, 2015 – MAY 31, 2016

(11 MONTHS)

CODE #26 (TOTAL PAID) HP SPOTS

.....\$21,420.00

CODE #26 (OUTSTANDING)

.....\$ 4,570.00

TOTAL

.....\$25,990.00

CODE #27 (TOTAL PAID) CURB CUTS

.....\$17,225.00

CODE #27 (OUTSTANDING)

.....\$3,410.00

TOTAL

.....\$20,635.00

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COMBINED TOTALS

TOTAL PAID {COLLECTED}.....\$38,645.00

TOTAL OUTSTANDING.....\$7,980.00

TOTAL.....\$46,625.00

Sargent Babcock said that the Police Department sent a letter out to the Driving Schools that participate in Newton to inform/remind their students about the regulations regarding HP parking and not to block curb cuts. Residents and students who are ticketed don't seem to know what the curb cut is for and why they shouldn't block it. They want a sign at every curb cut, like a No Parking or HP sign. Lucie asked if more PR would help and Sargent Babcock said there was some publicity in the newspaper last year on this. The issue of many metered and accessible HP parking spaces being used all day on Comm Ave near the T. Some days it is worse than others. Sargent Babcock that the Auburndale Square project is underway, both paving, curb cuts, and new signals and mast arms. The gas station on the corner of Lexington and Comm Ave has been sold and will become a Starbucks.

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

Jane, Treasurer, gave the following Treasurer's Report:

As of June 8, there are no changes to the accounts reported at the April 11, 2016 meeting, as follows:

The Newton Commission On Disability has three accounts.

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 = \$17,227

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 = To be Determined

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7. ADA Coordinator's Report (7:15-7:25)

Jini presented the following report of her ADA activities:

Time Period: April 12- June 3, 2016

Site Visits:

- Auburndale Square project- curb cuts and APS
- Needham St. at Oak and Christina- temporary measures
- Chestnut at Ellis- curb cuts
- Centre St. at Clark and Cushing- crosswalk striping and signage
- Beacon & Manitoba- adjustment of volume of locator tones
- Beacon at Waban Square- Hawk signal control box moved away from pushbutton/APS pole
- War Memorial – 2 signs are installed outside indicating accessible entrance
- Adams St., Pearl St., and Capital St. at Watertown
- West Newton Square

Issues:

- Online Bill Pay- Resolved Accessibility issue with scheduling payments for screen reader users
- TTY/TDD tested and back online
- State 9-1-1 Disability Indicator Form needs more accessibility

Training:

- Solutions in Sight Summit
- US Access Board Webinar on APS
- US ACCESS Board Webinar on Section 508
- US Access Board Webinar on Vertical Access

Meetings/Events/Conference Calls:

- Weekly Construction project meeting
- Fair Housing Committee
- Massachusetts Alliance of CODs
- Complete Streets- monthly

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- Emergency Preparedness for City Hall
- May 3-On Fox 6PM News about APS
- Restriping Initiative
- Follow up meetings to April 7 Prejudice/Discrimination meeting
- Mayer's Prayer Breakfast

Jini fielded questions regarding her activities for the past month, including resolving an issue with the city's website with respect to the feature of scheduling online payments that wasn't accessible for blind residents who are screen reader users. Lucie observed that the control/utility boxes for other hawk signals are also in the way of pedestrians pushing the button to cross. Jini said she will mention it to DPW to have those boxes moved, like they did in Waban Square. Rob asked about the webinars presented by the US Access Board Jini has attended and listed on her report. She described how educational and informative they have been and Rob requested for her to alert Commission members of any upcoming webinars and how to sign up for the notices.

8. Old/New Business (7:40-8:00)

Rob and Jini went over the notices that the COD received from the MAAB. For the Newton Fire HQ, some of the materials submitted seemed contradictory as to whether an elevator was going to be installed. Jini had spoken to Tom Hopkins after receiving the notice and assured that the plans do call for an elevator.

9. Adjournment (8:00)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30PM.

NEXT MEETING DATE: July 11, 2016

The location of this meeting is 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 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.