



Roxann Wedegartner
Mayor

City of
GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS

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Members:

Lynne Kelley – Chair
Douglas Mayo
L'aura Jordan
Virginia DeSorgher
Robert Williford

GREENFIELD COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS (CDA)

Remote Via WebEx

DRAFT Minutes of Wednesday, November 10, 2021

1:00 p.m.

Members present:

Lynne Kelley

Douglas Mayo

L'aura Jordan

Virginia DeSorgher

Robert Williford

Members absent:

N/A

Also present:

Lindsay Rowe – ADA Coordinator

Pamela McBride – Greenfield Public Library

Christian LaPlante – Grant Program Assistant

Meeting called to order at 1:06PM by LK

Approval of the minutes from September 9, 2021 and October 1, 2021

One tiny edit - draft of Minutes says FRIDAY should be THURSDAY October 14.

Typo should say library “sidewalk was never used” (says “ever used”)

Doug could not review the minutes.

VD move to approve the minutes as amended, Mayo second
Approved unanimously

Treasurers Report

Balance in handicap parking fund: starting \$3,221.05. ending:
\$3,421.05

General Fund Budget: \$300 - unchanged

Motion to accept - LK, second DM,
Approved unanimously

Ongoing

MassMatch Assistive Technology Roadshow

Was very good presentation last month. Bob touched base with Hope Macary to have them come to the senior center. They are booked up for November and December, and she felt they should wait for the spring for better weather conditions.

Possibility do something sooner at Greenfield Community College because MassMatch has an on-site presence at Berkshire Community College. They did mention that they were looking for a more permanent space, and if anyone knows of a space, it would be great.

VD did reach out to GCC, but didn't hear back. She tried to connect to the MassMatch website, but she couldn't get on. PM starting in the January term, everyone going into GCC buildings must be vaccinated or prove they're tested weekly.

Building accessibility:

Library

City has given the Library two 15 minute parking spots. They're currently doing construction on the water, but once that's done, the demolition will probably start next week.

They still have the back door and the side doors. Soon you will have to enter the back door through the greenfield savings bank. BW - maybe there could be a handout explaining how to park for the library

VD - had talked to Ed Berlin about parking for handicap spaces. PM will take these suggestions back.

VD - should we have a notice in the paper that certain sidewalks would not be available?

VD - heard that they were closing sidewalks due to snow removal. How can the City convey this information?

PM - Library has heard today about these plans, so they're working on providing additional information about this.

Town Hall Access Ramp

Bob looked at the ramp, and it seems to him that the standards say there needs to be an additional handrail on the building side. While there, he wondered about the slope. VD recorded the slope and it's ok.

Bob notes that there is another ramp in town (parking garage) that only has one handrail.

LK - Motion that the Commission request the Mayor's attention for a second handrail on Town Hall Ramp. Mayo second. Passed Unanimous

VD requested LR send an email to the Mayor on this.

BW notes that the Health Department wrote up the Dollar General for ADA violations in the aisles.

COVID-19 information/Mask Mandates

LK - the Mayor lifted the Mask Mandate as of the 8th. Of course, different businesses can have different rules.

New ADA standards for website

LK - An interesting observation that RiteAid was fined for ADA violations because their website was not in compliance.

BW - not sure which standards were violated and not sure when the standards were put in place. The City's current website is being changed and a new company will be doing it.

VD - close captioning is so important because you lose so much without it.

LK - glad to see there's a real movement to make sure that websites are accessible.

ARP Listening Session

LK - attended the APRA listening session which talked about the Court Square Pilot Project and the Rapid Recovery program.

Lynne could not figure out how to participate during the meeting, on her ipad. Bob is willing to help.



The Mayor did mention that she'd had lots of feedback on the Court Square project. It was really just a listening session. She did mention the Portland Loo.

BW - did sit in on the Capital Committee session and the Health Director was asking for 2 Portland Loos. The Mayor mentioned that she had already budgeted for 1 using ARPA.

LK - did not get a chance to mention the electric charging station at City Hall. Would like to make sure this gets included in the Downtown Plans.

BW - where would we want the charging station? Inside? Outside?

VD - how about the new fire station? LK - that feels far. VD - how about the new library?

LJ - in terms of a compromise for indoor/outdoor space - the Olver Transit facility has a sizeable overhang. LK - the slope of Bank Row is significant and makes that hard.

DM - could we reach out to a store like RiteAid, which has an overhang and space for charging? Then you could get out of the rain and snow.

BW - Bakers Office supply also has an awning. It's closer to the Town Common, which seems to have plenty of events. With RiteAid having health supplies and pharmacy, they may be amenable to this.

LK - concern is having it in a private commercial space. If they close, it would become unavailable.

VD - thinking about two new municipal buildings, we may want to think about this. We also rent the Veterans' Office. And the bank for GCET/Community Development, so we'd have a little leverage with those places.

BW - do we want to say “somewhere” in downtown?

LK - wants to contact the disability commission to see how many people use it. If you’re in a chair, you’re probably not out in bad weather. Running out of charge can happen anywhere.

DM - maybe for the City itself - “strongly suggest charging unit or two” - put a bug in the ear of the City. The City can decide this for suitability and electric services.

DM motion to “request the Mayor and the City find locations and install one or two wheelchair charging stations in downtown City buildings.” LK second. Unanimous.

VD - disability access concerns at the meetings that people can’t access the chat. As we move to hybrid meetings, people can’t be forced to use the chat to speak. VD motion “to not require the chat function be used in order to speak.”

BW - concern is Robert's Rules of Order - during public comment periods is only the time for speaking. Typically this requires a sign-in using the chat. They do request that they not put questions in chats, as not everyone can see the chat. Sometimes boards will let people speak even if there is no public comment on the agenda.

VD - I understand that some meetings entail public comment. Sometimes I’ve been to public meetings where people can’t find the chat to put their name in. If it’s an IT issue, the City needs to think about it.

BW - we could ask, but for those with no public comment scheduled, it’s not required.

PM - we've had patrons with different devices that have different interfaces and ability to connect. Especially with older technology that may not upgrade.

DM - sometimes upgrades are happening weekly. It's hard to have the technology update as often as needed.

LR - attended open meeting webinar on accessibility from MOD. Providing time for others to be able to unmute and speak if they can't type in chat may help.

VD change motion to "Request the Mayor implement a best practice that during virtual meetings at the end of public comments from people who have signed up in the chat to then ask anyone else who is unable to type to unmute themselves and speak." DM second. Unanimous.

Court Square Pilot Project

LR had received letter from concerned citizen. Mayor seems to have received the information.

VD notes that this is an important issue. People need to be able to get to city hall. People have regularly paid their bills for years, making it any more difficult is absurd.

LK to work on letter that will be sent.

VD notes that it was a mistake to remove handicap near church.

ADA Transition Plan Update

LK will contact Jeff at MOD

BW was interested in working on streets section

New Business

Site Plan Review for 45-49 Bank Row

LK thanked BW for work before meeting.

BW - there is a monitoring well that goes down to water level. Pointing it out because it will have to be taken into account if the parking lot is regraded.

LJ - worthwhile to bring it to their attention

VD knows that the monitoring wells are important

Not sure how doable the parking lot is

BW parked there and it would be a very tough turn for people parking in the lot

LK - recommendation will be sent to zoning board

BW - handicap parking available in the parking garage but no automatic door opener

VD - owner of Karen's dance could pay for actuator on door

BW - people parking in those spots may not be going to the marijuana dispensary, seems unfair to ask for them to pay

VD agrees

VD - motion that CDA asks city to pay for and installs actuator on parking garage. BW second. Unanimous.

VD asks CL to remind Lindsay to send recommendations to zoning board

Announcements

US Access Board Webinars.

LK - suggests people take a look when BW forwards them

Next Meeting: December 9, 2021

LK - do people want to take a month off like in the past

BW - probably have to have special meetings anyway when tied into the planning process

VD - might not be available

LK might be away in January

Commission will still meet in December

Adjournment

LK motion to adjourn, VD second. Meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.

