



Roxann Wedegartner
Mayor

City of
GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS

City Hall • 14 Court Square • Greenfield, MA 01301
Phone 413-772-1548 • www.greenfield-ma.gov

Members:

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

Greenfield Commission on Disability Access (CDA)

Thursday, February 10, 2022, at 1:00 pm

Via WebEx

Members present:

Lynne Kelley, Chair
Douglas Mayo
Bob Williford
L'aura Jordan
Virginia “Ginny” DeSorgher

Members absent:

N/A

Also present:

Lindsay Rowe, Greenfield ADA Coordinator
Pamela McBride, Greenfield Public Library
Sarah Nechame, Disabled Persons Protection Commission

LK called the meeting to order at 1:03PM

Approval of the minutes from January 13, 2022

DM motion to approve, second VD. Unanimous

Treasurer's report

The handicap parking fund has \$3421.05. The general fund has \$300.

Guest Speaker – Sarah Nechame, Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC)

Sarah Nechamen, Outreach and Training Specialist with the Disabled Persons Protection Commission.

Sarah.Nechamen@mass.gov. 617-727-6465, x286

- DPPC Hotline: 1-800-426-9009
- Department of Children and Families hotline: 1-800-792-5200
- Executive Office of Elder Affairs hotline: 1-800-922-2275

Disables Persons Protection Commission - 18-59 with disabilities by caregivers. Website mass.gov/dccp. Abuse reporting hotline - 800.426.9009, which is a 24/7 365 hotline. With a live person on the other line. Report what you can and they'll investigate/fill in the rest. Reasonable cause to believe that abuse is happening. The best case scenario is reporting and the investigation finds that no abuse is happening.

The State Police Detective Unit provides a criminal review screen too. The Sexual Assault Response team reviews to help victims. If it belongs to a different agency, they'll refer (under 18, DCF; 60 and over, Executive Office of Elder Affairs). Then they review the case and perform an investigation. They can provide protective services to support the victim and to prevent future abuse.

Mandated reporters include medical professionals, social workers, foster parents, police officers, teachers, educational administrators, psychologists, etc. call the hotline and DCCP offers free mandated reporter training.

LK wondered about the training of the investigators. SN - most are from other agencies many have backgrounds as police.

DM mentioned that his prior work at DMR has experience with these investigations. Notes that these investigations can be quite involved and often results in firing if it involves a paid caregiver.

BW asked about the abuser registry. What does the view for Franklin County look like? During the pandemic has it gotten worse? SN - new registry for people who have been found to commit abuse against people with disabilities; this blocks them from getting a job working with people with disabilities. This is so new that it only has 7 people. During the pandemic, the reports dropped, as fewer people were around to notice and report abuse. Now that things are reopening, reports are increasing, as people return to more normal reporting patterns.

SN will forward powerpoint.

DM are commissioners mandated reporters? SN - commissioners are not codified in the law, but under the spirit of the law, you should still report abuse if you see it.

BW we should adopt the moral position of reporting if we see it.

Ongoing

Mass match assistive technology roadshow

LK is moving along with scheduling for roadshow at the senior center in May from 1-3:30. CDA will co-host with the Senior Center. They'll bring the truck, but set up items in the senior center. Because they have thousands of items, what are some that people would like them to bring?



LJ would like to see things for hearing impaired people. Particularly telephone access. How are we planning on publicizing this? LK replied that MassMatch will produce a flier and we can do some additional advertising. LK would like to do something on the radio too. Particularly like to include GCC.

LJ asked will there be difficulty with accessing the senior center? Will they have to register at the counter when they come in? LK will check and it's a good point.

DM has worked with Mass Rehab for voice activation and dictation software. May want to bring devices to make dictation easier.

LK stated many of the things they bring, they have a loan program so people can borrow and try them out!

LJ asked if this event going to be open to people beyond Greenfield? LK thinks it will be open.

Building accessibility

Has there been any movement on the handrail or ramp at the Garage or City Hall?

BW - what about the actuator at City Hall, is it working?

VD - the actuator is not a capital project. This should just be repaired.

VD - Can Lindsay follow up with Mayor's office on status of these repairs?

Library

There are now 4 free 15-minute parking spots in front of the Library. The Curbside pickup program is happening and will be available until the new building is built. LK says it works great. DM is now liaison with the City Council to the Library Building Committee, which gives him the ability to sit in on the meetings and he's very pleased about what he's heard.

COVID-19 information/Mask mandates

LK does not have a lot on this, but it will be changing soon.

Transition plan update

LK touched base with Jeff Dougan from MOD. They're offering a virtual training for ADA overview and access for department heads. He sent her an example of the training. Would be good to get this piece of the transition plan checked off.

MOD is also setting up a virtual Community Access Monitor Training Program - June/September/November. Let Lynne know if you'd like to be signed up.

Jeff Dougan would be happy to come and be a guest speaker at one of our meetings (hasn't been here since 2015). Lots of changes - particularly post-COVID.

BW stated this is a selling point for virtual meetings. It's much easier to get Boston to come to our meetings remotely. No longer have the commute time associated with in-person meetings.

LK stated Jeff is available in April or June.

CDA email address/ Business cards

LK asked if Lindsay can follow up on decision on email for CDA?

Sidewalk repair

LJ sent a memo to the Committee with her reflections on “ugly sidewalk contest” and how it may not fit. There is a lot of value in calling for input from the public and particularly to try to identify particular areas that are challenging for individuals. Wants to understand how to communicate this to the DPW.

BW advocated for going beyond just visually impaired people. If we go back to the contest, do we put something online with pictures that show different images of bad sidewalks so people know what’s really bad?

LR recapped conversation with Marlo re: sidewalks.

VD stated the capital budget every year has a dollar figure - \$50-\$100k a year to repair sidewalks. She once asked what it would cost to fix all the sidewalks in the City and it’s a multi-million dollar figure. The Committee and as citizens need to be lobbying for increasing this. The Community Relations subcommittee at the Council is open to raising this for public comment.

LJ asked is our group in a position to reach out to visually impaired and mobility impaired people to identify problem areas for them?

LK stated there is no centralized area for contact information on people with disabilities in the community. There is an attorney with low vision and a runner who lives in Greenfield, and LK will contact him to see if he has connections.

BW noted the problem is people don't know the CDA exists or that the 311 system exists. It's not intuitive to know that this is where you can report potholes and other issues. The City needs to chat it up. Maybe t-shirts that say "I'm with the CDA, ask me about access."

LJ added the City website may be hard for people who are visually impaired. Need some way to publicize and promote ways for people to report problems to the City.

VD stated that it is a repetitive theme that there are things people are not aware of. People we have not yet reached. People who don't know what it's for. Reached out about advertising on local radio stations. There are 4 radio stations, including WHAI, Bear Country. You can buy time on the stations and they would match. Might be a good way to reach people and help them know we exist.

LJ replied 30 seconds would be a great way to remind them about CDA and city services.

BW thinks GCTV is also a good way to do public announcements and could be an easy way to promote. Also the Garden Cinema has some spots for the public before the movies.

LJ thinks for a public service announcement, the radio just takes the text and the announcer reads and records it.

LK - lots of good ideas about how to get information out there. Do we need to work on making a finished product?



LJ is willing to draft an announcement. And want to make sure they check with DPW on this. Will send this out prior to the next meeting.

Elm Terrace bus stop

LK stated Bob has a letter that he wrote. Who should be included in this? BW replied because the RFP comes out of FRCOG, it should be the main addressee. All the rest is that things changed without consultation. Would like MOD to get an info copy. Also the Housing Authority, FRTA.

LK - Do we have names for this? Beth Giannini, Thomas Guerino, Michael Perault, Dani Letourneau, Mayor and ADA coordinator to make a paper trail.

Community Preservation Act

LK stated the Committee needs to get back to Christian in the next month with anything the committee may want to know. Housing is probably one of the main priorities for this committee. Rehabilitation of properties to ADA guidelines increases the costs, but we have a major lack of accessible housing.

BW spoke with Susan Worgafnik on the housing issues. A prefab house can be $\frac{1}{3}$ of the cost of rehabbing a historic home.

LK will respond with concerns around housing and also recreation sites.

BW would like to get the swimming area fixed. There's not a great connection from the sidewalks. The area does flood, which makes it complicated.

LK - They can open the gates, as there are spaces behind the gates that are ADA. Which makes it much easier to access the mat to get down to the water.

VD asked how do we get into the capital planning process? The capital plans don't take into account ADA and these plans shouldn't be approved without ADA compliance. Maybe it's time to invite the Mayor to our meetings and talk about the issues. What are the things that need to be fixed.

LR - may want to look at the transition plan and how it can inform the capital process.

New Business

BW - downtown parking 5:30 meeting tonight from the Greenfield Business Association about parking and how it can be improved. On the list is where there should be diagonal parking vs parallel parking. The MassDOT plans really want it to be parallel and that can be difficult for handicap. Standards for the % of spaces in each block that need to be ADA.

LR - there are standards for ADA spaces and parallel parking. <https://streetsillustrated.seattle.gov/design-standards/access-criteria/> has a diagram about how it can work with bike lanes too.

Announcements

US access board webinars

Next meeting: March 10, 2022

Adjournment

BW moved, and DM seconded. Adjourned at 2:37 p.m.