

Minutes

Brookline Commission on Disability Regular Monthly Meeting

Thursday, October 17, 2019

6:00 to 7:45 PM

Town Hall, Room 308

Meeting commenced at 6:00 PM; led by Chair, Saralynn Allaire

Identification of Note Taker – Sarah E. Kaplan, ADA Coordinator, Ex. Officio

Members present: Saralynn Allaire, Jim Miczek, Henry Winkelman; Joan Mahone; Elaine Ober; Ben Franco; Cindy Lee, Transportation Board Liaison

Members unable to attend: Ann Kamensky, Rob Heist

Introductions/Public comments

Guest names: Andrew Jonic, William Rawn Associates – Project Architect for the Brookline High School Expansion; Nancy Heller, Select Board; Ray Masak, Building Department – Project Manager BHS Expansion; Caitlin Starr, Assistant Director of Office of Diversity, Inclusion, & Community Relations; Sue Tina Kurys; Deb Klein

Key points of any comments:

New Business

Presentation on Access Routes Planned for the New High School Building:

Mr. Jonic led a presentation to the Commission on what is happening with the BHS Expansion. Talked about five key areas of the expansion:

The Science Wing: The old science wing has been torn down. A new entrance with sloped walk and new wide accessible entrance to the building to help facilitate movement throughout the building. New accessible path to the high school quad. Three new accessible parking spaces near Cypress and Greenough for a total of five spaces. Widening of slopes in building to encourage use by all students. New elevator will connect levels 1-3 – large elevator sized to hold a stretcher. No classrooms or student use in the basement, so elevator does not go to the basement.

Tappan Pool: New accessible locker rooms. New accessible mixed seating around the pool and any accessible deficiencies will be upgraded throughout the building.

Tappan Streetscape: Widen the sidewalk to 10 feet wide. Two raised crosswalks. Sidewalk will be level with any driveways. Three accessible parking spaces. Parking lots have accessible spots. 20 feet wide crosswalk with linear tactile warning strips on each side of the crosswalk.

MBTA Plaza @ Brookline Hills T-Stop: Discussion of new parking lot, which will be a mirror image of the one that is there now. 8 additional spaces, one HP parking space. Raised platforms for the train.

New Green Line cars will require additional rising of platform 6 inches which will make the station fully accessible. Fair collection/selling tickets on the platform. Six inch steps on plaza, with slope nearby for access. Steps do not have handrails and they are very wide steps. There was some discussion about adding tactile strips that could guide people who are blind or low vision to safely use the steps. Also discussed pathway along new Cypress Building. Brington Road to the MBTA Brookline Hills station is level, lighted, and partially covered. There is an elevator from the plaza into new Cypress Building for people who need to access the school. Elevator is not open to the general public due to security issues.

New Cypress Building: Looked at accessible routes from all areas of Brookline. Front door faces Cypress Field. Sloped walkway leads up to the porch entrance. Discussed outside elevator entrance from Brookline Hills T-Stop. Discussed accessible pathway through Cypress Field. Two elevators serve the inside of the building to all levels. Talked about safe egress options.

Action: The design team will take a look at the tactile path on the stairs and continue to work with Parks & Open Space re path across Cypress Field.

Review Minutes of September 2019: Minutes were edited by Saralynn. ADA Coordinator asked to use title rather than name in minutes. Motion: Approved as amended. Elaine motioned to approve. Henry seconded. Approved unanimously.

Presentation on results of the ADA self-evaluation:

Caitlin Starr presented to the Commission the Town's ADA Transition Plan. Completed by all Town Departments except Human Resources. Select Board Office's evaluation was added as an addendum. New ADA Coordinator was present for evaluation of Select Board Office as training. We can reach out to them again now that the new HR Director has been brought on board. If we get a response the new ADA Coordinator will complete this evaluation. There is a summary of each assessment done for each department and list of action items. All Town Departments requested written policy on how to handle reasonable accommodation requests – completed December 2018. Some departments asked for information on how to make accommodations for service animals and mobility devices – completed January 2019. Fact sheets were created on these topics and sent to all departments. All buildings in Town were evaluated and are ADA compliant, except for the Schools and Parks. Chart of each of the parks' evaluation is an additional appendix that Caitlin will send out upon request. The head of Parks and Open Space was with Caitlin for evaluation of each park and is aware of needs for each park. Assessment of each of the Schools is in the Transition Plan. All action items listed at the end of the document.

Action: Follow-up by the ADA Coordinator needs to be completed within three years of completion of ADA Transition Plan (November 2018). ADA Transition Plan needs to be redone every five years. Saralynn showed article by IHCD about issues that towns have issues meeting Title II requirements – Brookline is in compliance now that the Transition Plan is complete.

Variations - None

Old Business

Update of Development of Sighted Guide Video - Tina Kurys

Discussion: Corbin from BIG reached out to Tina regarding needing more time to complete the edits and a rough draft of the transcript. No date for a first viewing has been set. The ADA Coordinator asked to be looped into emails with Corbin and Tina to help them figure out a date.

Action to be taken: Tina will reach out to Corbin.

Update on addition of HP spaces to Brookline Parking Map:

Discussion: The parking map HP parking layer has been completed. Concerns about finding and accessing the map were raised. Commission asked that the link be added to their website.

Action: The ADA Coordinator will do so and report back next month.

Accommodation at Nov Special Town Meeting:

Discussion: BIG is capable of captioning the Town Meeting Broadcast, but is not capable of real-time captioning. The ADA Coordinator brought information from the Mass.gov website to the Commission re CART fee range. The first 2 hours: \$225-\$300; \$75-100 for each additional hour. Other fees related to production equipment, provision of the file, and travel. Elaine talked about not having access to the source files for the Combined Reports and the Budget document. Ben offered to help get access to those files. Saralynn talked about sending out an email as a Town Meeting member regarding how to make more readable slides.

Vote on disposable earbuds to be used with the Assisted Listening Devices: Saralynn made a motion to approve the purchase of 5 sets earbuds from WB Mason paid for from the HP Parking Fine Fund. Joan seconds the motion. Approved unanimously.

Action: Subcommittee still needs to meet.

ADA Coordinator Update:

Addressing a reasonable accommodation request for an accessible changing room for a young man who wants to use the Tappan Pool. The pool currently has an accessible changing bench in the women's locker room but there is no space for one in the men's locker room as it is 1/3 the size. The ADA Coordinator met with staff at the Tappan Pool and determined the best course of action is to add a changing bench to one of the accessible bathrooms in front of the locker rooms – the changing room will be a unisex changing room. Until that room is constructed, the pool staff would clear out the women's locker room so that he could use the accessible bench.

Also received complaints about broken APS' in Town and access of Brook-on-Line. The complaints were sent to DPW and IT respectively.

New business

Membership:

Discussion: Myra Berloff resigned for personal reasons. We thank her for her service and she will be missed. The Commission is currently looking for one new member. Tina Kurys stated she is not interested in becoming a member at this time. Deb Klein will think about it.

Action: The Commission encourages all interested parties to apply.

Articles at Town Meeting:

Discussion: Accessory Dwelling Units – Discussed how ADUs would be good for people with disabilities for both living purposes and live-in assistance. BCOD is not taking a position on the issue; matter tabled.

Discussion: Revision of ODICR complaint process – Does not pertain to the ADA, as the ADA has a separate grievance procedure. BCOD is not taking a position on the issue; matter tabled.

Other:

Possible CDBG project with Parks and Rec – Parks and Open Space are very busy right now, maybe next year.

Report on Sep 27 Disability Summit – Saralynn thought it was worthwhile. Tabled until next meeting.

Announcements:

Mary Mahon McCauley, former Mass Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) vocational rehabilitation Counselor and Boston Area MRC office director, appointed Director of Mass Office on Disability (MOD; office is at One Ashburton

Architectural Access Board (AAB) executive director position remains open; Office moved to 1000 Wash. St. from One Ashburton

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

Thursday, November 14, 2019

Thursday, December 12, 2019

Meeting ended at 7:45 PM.