

Westwood Disability Commission
January 10, 2020 9:15 A.M.

Senior Center

Minutes

Attendees:

Commission Members: Anne Berry Goodfellow, Jette Meglan, Lina Arena-DeRosa, MaryAnne Carty, Michelle Fiola-Reidy, Rania Kelly, Marianne LeBlanc, Fran MacQueen, Connie Rizoli, Hillary Ryan

Guests: Chris Coleman – Town Administrator
Joyce Levine

Agenda item: New Business –

Anne introduced the new Town Administrator, Chris Coleman to Commission members and described the work of the Commission to him.

Jette described the lack of attention to architectural access requirements illustrated by the absence of grab bars in the handicapped bathroom that was recently added to the transition program classroom at Westwood High School. Connie emphasized that the Commission is a partner with the Town in achieving universal access.

Anne reported that a major issue of concern is the continuing lack of access at Town Hall, which seems to keep slipping down the list of priorities, despite the fact that Town Hall is the gateway to the community. Chris reported that to Town is focused on that issue and is looking into new space for voter registration and developing a long-term plan to address access issues.

We also discussed Assistive Listening Devices which will be made available to residents upon request. It was emphasized that effective communication is at the core of the ADA.

It was suggested that the availability of the listening devices be highlighted in the Westwood Wire, so that residents know they are available. Also discussed was the need to alert first responders to the presence of individuals with disabilities

who self identify. It was reported that dispatch has not been conveying the information to EMTs.

Anne stated that universal access needs to guide all town planning. The Commission participated in the development of the Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) and the Town-wide Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed new school building project was also discussed. The Commission learned that an ADA consultant will be hired to assist in the project.

In addition, fines for handicapped parking spaces was discussed. It was proposed that fines collected for handicapped parking violations be made available to help fund playground access improvements.

MaryAnne stated that she could be the liaison as to Town Hall issues.

The Council on Aging was encouraged to appear before the Finance and Warrant Commission provide an overview of recent activity and to discuss the needs of senior citizens.

Agenda item: New Business – Approval of Minutes

Minutes of November 2019 meeting approved unanimously.

Agenda item: For your information

1. MaryAnne reported that the Town Website has been updated and will go online 2/1/20. The Website is ADA complaint with respect to screen readers used by individuals with visual impairments.
2. SEPAC - upcoming events were announced.

Agenda item: Adjournment and Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on February 14, 2020 at 9:15 AM.

Meeting dates for year: 2/14, 3/13, 5/8, 6/12