



TOWN OF WESTWOOD

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14 September 2020

Ms. Abigail McCabe, Town Planner
2020 Comprehensive Planning Committee
Town of Westwood
50 Carby Street
Westwood, MA 02090

Dear Ms. McCabe and Members of the Westwood 2020 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee:

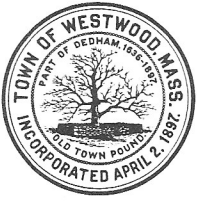
The Library Board of Trustees wishes to extend our sincere thanks to you and the members of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee for the work that you have accomplished in putting together a cohesive and informative plan for the Town of Westwood.

The Board of Library Trustees has been involved throughout the process, and Thomas Viti, as a member of the Committee and former Library Director, has kept the members of the Library Board of Trustees apprised and informed of all recommendations and has provided many updates for both the Trustees and Library staff as the Library facilities portion of the Comprehensive Plan has evolved.

The Board of Library Trustees supports the adoption of the proposed 2020 Comprehensive Plan.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Fitzgerald
Chair, Library Board of Trustees



TOWN OF WESTWOOD

(COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS)

COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

October 26, 2020

Jack Wiggin
Chair
Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee
Westwood Town Hall
Westwood, Massachusetts

Dear Jack,

During the last few years, Town officials, staff, and residents have been involved in revising our Comprehensive Plan and developing a detailed plan for the open space and recreation opportunities. The Commission on Disability has been an active partner with the Planning Board, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the Open Space and Recreation Committee in identifying and making recommendations that would improve universal access to Westwood community facilities and programs. The Commission is pleased to write in support of the final report of this multi year planning process.

Throughout the planning process, the Commission on Disability stressed the importance of using principles of Universal Design. These principles guide the creation of environments that are usable by all people, regardless of their age, size, ability or disability, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.¹ Adoption of universal design is important in light of prevalence data compiled by the Centers for Disease Control that one in four adults lives with a disability.² Thoughtful design ensures that all members of the community are able to participate in civic life.

The Commission on Disability provided specific input that has been incorporated into the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Housing Production Plan and the Community Facilities Section of the Town Comprehensive Plan.

Access to Open Space and Recreation

¹https://projects.ncsu.edu/design/cud/about_ud/udprinciplestext.htm

²<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2018/p0816-disability.html>

The Commission on Disability identified simple low cost measures that would increase access for families, senior citizens as well as for individuals with disabilities of all ages:

- ensure that the entry to recreation and conservation properties allow access for wheelchairs,
- provide at least one accessible portable bathroom at recreation sites,
- provide braille, high contrast and large print signage, and posts with guide ropes for individuals with visual impairments
- provide benches, or strategically placed boulders along trails to allow senior citizens and others to rest periodically
- provide a paved path around a pond and improve an existing conservation trail to provide access.

Housing Needs of People with Disabilities

The Housing Production Plan provides a coordinated vision and strategy for housing development within the community. The Plan contemplates adoption of goals such as encouraging single family home development and preservation for first time and low and moderate income homebuyers, developing supportive housing for people with disabilities, promoting housing stability for senior citizens, and increasing the number of affordable rental and ownership units for senior citizens.

The Commission supports these important goals for our community and stressed the importance of incorporating principles of universal design in housing. Universal design results in housing that is usable by all people, regardless of their age, size, ability or disability, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

Access to Community Facilities

State and federal laws have been enacted over the last 50 years to eliminate barriers that prevent citizens with disabilities from participating in full civic life, including: the Massachusetts Architectural Barriers Act (1968), the Massachusetts Special Education law (1972), Section 504 of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1973, the federal Education of the Handicapped Act (1975, later, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 1990), and the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. A generation of young adults has grown up, expecting to be able to fulfill their potential and to make a contribution to their community.

Since the prior Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2000, many of our community facilities have been either renovated or replaced. The new facilities comply with disability access requirements and allow individuals with disabilities the opportunity to participate fully in civic events. The Commission on Disability is pleased that so much progress has been made throughout the Town in providing disability access to municipal and school buildings throughout the community. Our historic Town Hall, built in 1910, continues to be in need of access improvements. This lack of access at Town Hall is a noticeable

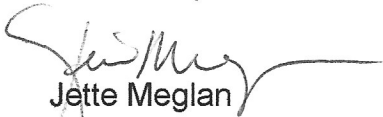
obstacle to full participation in civic life for disabled citizens and a barrier to Town employees who experience a temporary or permanent disability.

The Commission on Disability supports the goals of the revision of the Comprehensive Plan which will enable our town to eliminate the remaining physical impediments to full civic participation for all members of our community.

Respectfully,



Anne Berry Goodfellow



Jette Meglan

Co-chairs
Commission on Disability