

**City of Worcester  
Commission on Disabilities  
July 14, 2010 Meeting Summary**

Type of Meeting: Regular Monthly Meeting

Date and Time Convened: July 14, 2010 - 4:00 p.m.

Place Where Convened: Worcester City Hall, Esther Howland City Council Chamber

Members Present: Rachel S. Brown, John Cronin, Grace Clark

Members Absent: David Perry

Associates Present: Deborah Malone, Mary Healey, Herbert Cremer

Associates Absent: None

Staff Present: Fran Manocchio

Public Present: Mike Kennedy, Center for Living & Working and Jacqueline Norton

1. Meeting called to order at 4:03 pm by Rachel S. Brown, Chairperson. Rachel Brown elevated all associates to full status for the duration of the meeting for the purposes of voting.
2. Approval of May and June meeting summaries: Deborah Malone made a motion to accept the meeting summaries (May revised) as submitted. John Cronin offered a second and the meeting summaries were approved unanimously.
3. Communications and Reports:  
Fran Manocchio reported:
  - Move to City Hall: The Office officially moved on Friday, July 9, 2010. We are awaiting activation of some phone lines and our fax line.
  - Annual Statistical Report: Fran will complete an annual report for the Office of Human Rights and Disabilities, and the respective Commissions, by the end of August. This report, along with performance measures for FY2011 will be shared with Commissioners, City Manager and City Council.
  - Freddy Munoz, a student at Worcester Technical High School, will serve as our summer youth employment person. Freddy will be in the office Monday – Friday, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm, until August 20. He will answer phones, assist with organizing the offices, copy and collate.
  - Deborah Malone offered to draft letter to City Manager and Council, expressing gratitude for the move back to City Hall.

Rachel Brown, Chair, did not have a report.

4. Transition Plan, Accessibility and Access Board Issues:
  - A. ADA Transition Plan Work Group: Debbie Malone reported on recent work group meeting. The Work Group is proposing a mandatory training session for all city Department and Division heads. This will include an overview of the city's obligations under the ADA, sensitivity and awareness about people with disabilities, and orientation to use of checklists. The next Work Group meeting will be held on August 3, 2010 at 10:00 AM; Pam Callahan, the city's Training Coordinator, will attend.

B. AAB Updates Mike Kennedy from Center for Living & Working provided the following updates:

- Community Healthlink, 26 Queen Street: Variance Request for Homeless Assessment Center and Shelter; variance granted.
- Ichabod Washburn Hospice Residence, 1183 Main Street. Received approval by AAB for installation of two vertical lifts; accepted on condition they are inspected by a State elevator inspector.
- Social Security Office, Madison Place, 51 Myrtle Street. AAB scheduled a hearing on 8/23/2010. There are outstanding issues with 4 handicapped parking spaces – none have compliant access aisle stripping and only 1 space has an above-ground sign covered by shrubbery and no spaces are designated as “van accessible.”

C. Accessibility Issues

- Lake Park: Mike Kennedy and Fran Manocchio reported on Lake Park. Mike conducted a site visit to analyze the current handicapped parking on 6/15/2010. On 6/21/2010 both Mike and Fran met with a Worcester resident who contacted State Senator Michael O. Moore’s office. The complaint centers on a small parking lot by the beach which previously was open to the public and provided for a short level walk to the beach. However, this year, the road approaching the lot has been chained off with a sign to the effect, “Emergency Vehicles Only.” Mike and Fran are recommending that the small lot be re-opened to the public and 1 or 2 of the spaces be designated as handicapped parking. Mike also noted that the park has a relatively new, accessible tennis court. However, there is not accessibility from the parking lot near the tennis court.
- City Hall Parking Garage: Fran reported that City Hall parking garage has 52 marked spaces; one space is not utilized due to equipment. According to state regulations, there should be 3 designated handicapped spaces for a parking lot with 51 spaces. Currently, the garage has 2 HP spaces. Commission will send a letter to the City Manager’s office with the recommendation to add 1 space in order to comply with state regulation, to accommodate for the Office of Human Rights and Disabilities re-location to City Hall and Commission on Disabilities meetings, and the fact that 20% of Worcester residents or family members are people with disabilities. Mary Healey offered a motion that the Commission send the City Manager a letter and Grace Clark seconded the motion. Motion to send the City Manager a letter detailing the reasons for adding one HP space to the City Hall Garage passed unanimously. Mike Kennedy will forward Rachel Brown the formula used to determining number of designated HP spaces in parking lots.

D. Landfill Fund/Quinsigamond Village: No further update. Fran awaiting response from Law Department.

5. Communication with DPW&P: Commissioner Moylan and Deputy Chiefs of Police Steve Sargent and Sean Fleming will attend the August 11, 2010 Commission on

Disabilities meeting to address the Sidewalk Snow Removal Ordinance. Fran will request that Ellen Dalbeck, manager of Customer Service, also attend. We have asked DPW&P to explain the policies and procedures regarding the snow removal ordinance and concerns Commissioners have regarding enforcement.

Other DPW&P issues: Mike Kennedy noted that it appears there is no drop off area for the DCU Center. Foster Street work seems complete, but HP designated parking has not been restored. Debbie Malone commented that she received phone calls today about the lack of HP parking on Foster Street.

6. Updates:

- ADA Complaint against Elections Commission: Fran reported that we will conduct one hour training sessions with Wardens and Clerks on August 23 from 1:00 – 2:00 pm and August 24 from 10:00 – 11:00 am. Rachel Brown and Debbie Malone would like to participate.
- Friends of the Senior Center: Rachel Brown reported that she and Fran met with the Friends of the Senior Center board of directors, staff and volunteers on June 23, 2010. We reviewed the ADA obligations and the Mass. Office on Disability pamphlet on “People First” language. We clarified that they cannot use any criteria that would exclude individuals. Rachel commented that we are hoping to bring on a culture change and develop more inclusive trips. By the end of the meeting, those present understood their responsibilities. The board will develop language to include in all trip announcements, such as, “If you need accommodations, please contact the office 30 days in advance of the trip.”

7. Transportation and TPAG: Rachel Brown and Debbie Malone recused themselves. Jackie Norton attended the recent TPAG meeting. She reported that the WRTA announced that the terminal was moving to Union Station. Jackie also commented that cabs will have GPS systems and she thinks there will be cuts in ADA services. There was discussion regarding the WRTA ADA application form and how important it is for residents to have all of the medical information completed by healthcare professionals. Herb Cremer noted that his experience on the North Shore was that Senior Outreach Workers would complete the form and then have physicians sign. Rachel Brown inquired if Center for Living & Working staff would assist individuals with the application form; Mike Kennedy replied in the affirmative. Debbie Malone requested that the Commission review the application form which seems to be creating problems for people with disabilities.

7. New Business:

- CSX: Jackie Norton attended a recent hearing. This is a complex project. Jackie noted that there was discussion about trucks carrying toxic chemicals. She raised concerns about the lack of an emergency preparedness plan for people with disabilities. Mike Kennedy questioned the role of the Commission; could the Commission share concerns about the CSX projects with constituents? Debbie Malone noted that there are opportunities for discussion regarding pedestrian cross walks and audible signals along the major routes that are undergoing re-surfacing in

light of this project. Fran noted that DPW&P has not requested input from the Commission regarding this project.

8. Old Business:

- Rachel Brown inquired about follow-up on the report Fran submitted to Christina Andreoli, City Manager's Office, regarding emergency preparedness. Fran responded that there has not been communication yet.
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Meeting adjourned at 5:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Manocchio