

Commission on Disability Meeting
Minutes for June 20th, 2017, 4:30PM
Worcester City Hall, Levi Lincoln Chamber,
Room 309, 3rd Flr.

Attendance:

Members Present: Francesca Abbey, Paul Keister, Elizabeth Myska, Joseph Prochilo, Douglas Russell, Jr., Lindsey Silva

Members Absent: Robert Bilotta, Robert Bureau, Nancy Garr-Colzie

Staff: Jayna Turchek, Dawn E. Clark

Guests: **Stearns Tavern Variance** - Christopher L. Adcock,
Christina Kilday, Atty. John J. Spillane from Spillane Law;
Deborah Packard from Preservation Worcester; Phil Niddrie, Project
Manager, City Manager's Office

Street Resurfacing – Paul Moosey, DPW Commissioner

WHA Greenwood Apartment, Alex Corrales, Executive Director

Welcome, Call to Order & Introductions

Vice chairperson Abbey called meeting to order and Commissioners introduced themselves. Douglas Russell, Jr. was recognized as a full Commission member. Assistant Lindsay Silva was raised as a full Commissioner for the evening.

Approval of May 16th, 2017 Minutes

The Commission unanimously approved the May 16th minutes as written.

Review of Downtown Wheelchair Stroll (May 23rd) (Joseph Prochilo)

Taken out of order by executive privilege, Commissioner Prochilo reported that some 40 people participated in the five block wheelchair stroll on downtown sidewalks including Franklin, McGrath, Myrtle, Southbridge and Main Streets. NuMotion provided wheelchairs for the stroll. Some participants noted they were “out of shape”, operating a manual wheelchair was not easy. They also acknowledged what looked like smooth sidewalks became anything but being in a

wheelchair user perspective. One concrete result was a list of items which needed to be tended to by the City.

The Commission voted to forward the list to the Commissioner of Public Works via Director Turchek.

Review of FY18 sidewalks and street resurfacing list (DPW Commissioner Paul Moosey)

The list of FY18 sidewalks and street resurfacing presented by DPW Commissioner Paul Moosey are city owed streets and does not include Mass DOT (state owned). When a street is resurfaced sidewalks and curb cuts are repaired as well. DPW keeps a list of city streets and the condition of the streets. There is no list kept of sidewalks and their condition. A list of sidewalks is needed for the ADA Transition Plan. A list like this is extensive and was put out to bid in 2013. Because of the projected cost, the decision was made to meet the need by increments doing one street or section at a time.

The current process for getting city streets on the resurfacing list was explained as follows: Worcester residents petition City Council and a master list is created. Each year City Councilors are given a budget figure for how much money is available for resurfacing and the district Councilors each recommend streets on that list to be resurfaced. The Commission can also provide input for prioritization. There are many streets on this list that don't always get resurface in a timely fashion.

Worcester Housing Authority presentation of grant project for accessibility improvements to Greenwood Gardens apartment building

Requests for FY'17 Municipal Grants were made available in late April. The grants if awarded would need to be spent out by June 30, 2017. The City was unable to make use of this grant due to the short timeframe and therefore worked together with the Worcester Housing Authority to submit a grant proposal for a project for WHA as the subgrantee.

WHA Executive Director, Alex Corrales, shared that the proposal was for money to make ADA renovations to the Greenwood Gardens apartment building, specifically to make the community room accessible and to convert 2 apartments to handicapped accessible.

Presentation on Stearns Tavern Draft AAB variance application for vertical access relief

Attorney Spillane provided the Commission with a history of the Tavern.

Mr. Niddrie explained that there was no accessible access to the second floor and that there are no near future plans to use the second floor. However, for the building to be opened to the public a vertical access variance from the AAB would have to be granted. The variance for this vertical access has not been submitted to the AAB and he asked the Commission to support such a request when made. The Commission unanimously agreed with the future variance request.

Notice of Election of Officers (July 18th)

Election of Commission Officers will be held in July. The City Charter calls for three elected officers: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary.

Review of AAB notices and applications: *No city properties this month*

Notice of Hearing

525 Trapelo Rd.(RR Station), Belmont, Docket # V13 076

Suggestions for upcoming agenda items

WRTA prices will be increasing July 1st, 2017

Announcements:

- **WRTA Transportation Planning Advisory Meeting**
June 21st, 2017, 1-2:30pm, WRTA HUB, 60 Foster Street
- **REDD (Rights, Equality and Dignity for the Disabled)**
August 1st, 2017, 4:00 – 5:30PM, YWCA, Members Lounge
- **Audio Journal, Accent on Ability Radio Program: July 11th, 2017, 5-6pm, <http://www.audiojournal.net/>**
- **Next Commission on Disability meeting: July 18th, 2017 4:30pm.**

- **Emergency Preparedness Meeting:** November TBD 2017 at 8:30 am, at 2 Coppage Drive.

Emergency Preparedness Tip:

- Pack an emergency “Go Pack” with essential life-saving items and store several gallons of water/person at home. Click here for a list of items and other helpful tips: <https://www.ready.gov/>

For your reading to learn more about disabilities:

The Disability Studies Reader, edited by Lenard J. Davis; Routledge, New York, 2013. This book was donated by past Commission on Disability chairperson Herbert Cremer.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.