

**City of Worcester
Commission on Disabilities
February 17, 2010 Meeting Summary**

Type of Meeting: Regular Monthly Meeting

Date and Time Convened: February 17, 2010 - 4:00 p.m.

Place Where Convened: Worcester City Hall

Members Present: Rachael Brown, David Perry, John Cronin, Jacqueline Norton, Dawn Clark

Members Absent: Joseph Sinasky

Associates Present: Deborah Malone, Mary Healey, Herbert Cremer

Associates Absent: None

Staff Present: Fran Manocchio

Guest Present: Robert Antonelli – Worcester DPW, Parks and Recreation

Public Present: Scott Babbitt, Mike Kennedy, Dave Johnson

1. Meeting called to order by Rachel Brown, Vice Chair at 4:12 p.m.
2. Introductions – Introductions were made and special welcome to three new Associate Members – Mary Healey, Debbie Malone and Herb Cremer.
3. Acceptance of Minutes –
4. Communication of the Chair – None at this time.
5. Directors Report –
 - Fran reports that she took a tour of the Greendale Mall with Elvira Guardiola, Parking Administrator. The “Best Buy” entrance has handicap parking spaces, but they are marked by painting the cement, and are not visible during the winter months due to snow. Dave Johnson pointed out that unless a sign is visible, it’s not legal. Members reported that there are long standing issues with HP parking at the Greendale Mall, especially at the Best Buy section of the parking lot. Fran will follow-up with Elvira and the Mall.
 - Audio Journal – Fran was invited to take a tour of the Audio Journal, and participate as a way of raising public awareness toward disabilities. After asking for volunteers, Dave Johnson and Jackie will also attend.
 - Mass in Motion – A public forum will be held on February 23rd, 2010 at the Worcester Public Library, 3 Salem Sq. from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss health concerns for people with disabilities. The main discussion is focused on obesity, and what areas people feel the City of Worcester is overlooking to assist this concern, including nutrition, and safe accessible areas for physical activity and exercise.
 - Disability Policy Consortium – On Tuesday, March 9th, 2010 at meeting will be held at the Worcester Public Library from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. The DPC is working to bring the disabled community together to discuss existing issues and past resolutions to problems within this community. The DPC often holds meetings in the Boston area, which are hard for many to access. For this reason Fran asks that as many people as possible attend the Worcester meeting. She

feels that this would be a great opportunity for the Worcester Commission to speak out.

- Auto Mark System – Fran received one complaint regarding these voting machines and submitted her first ADA complaint last month.
6. Emergency Preparedness Update – none available
 7. Accessible Taxi Reports – none available
 8. T.P.A.G. Update –
 - Debbie Malone gave an update regarding her announcement at the recent TPAG meeting regarding the bus driver’s failure to announce the streets and bus stops. Refusing to be cut off at the meeting she clearly stated that “unless the situation is treated immediately and completely legal action will be taken.”
 - Mary stated that she had filed a complaint with the WRTA approximately 2 weeks ago. After questioning Mr. Carney regarding the failure to receive a notice of acknowledgement or the resolution of the situation, he checked the status to find that nothing had ever been done by the WRTA.
 - Rachel states that the best way to file a complaint is in writing. Although people fear retaliation for the WRTA, filing a written complaint show that “you mean business”. Fran added to this by describing the process used by the police department uses to address formal complaints.
 9. New Business – Crompton Park - Mr. Antonelli for the Worcester DPW, Parks and Recreation was invited to present the plans for the restoration and redesign of Crompton Park. The presentation was thorough. Issues addressed included but were not limited to the following:
 - The park would have a new pool and spray facility, family restaurants, ADA lift, first aide facility, control room, life guard area, shower location and 4 accessible restrooms.
 - The main entrance or control point will be located on 40 Canton St., with 4 ADA accessible gates. There would be a cement walkway through the park, and no bricks would be used for these walkways. The pool holds 220 people with staff for 225. There is an ADA lift that allows individuals to strap down and transfer into the pool area of 3-5 ft of water. The pool will shut down for 15 -30 minutes every few hours to reduce contamination and let the system rest to avoid damage. There will also be one accessible drinking fountain in this area.
 - Because the main building is designed especially for a flood zone, with all electricity located above 4 ft. The spray area used prior to entering the pool is open, and visible to lifeguards. One important feature was that the facility would have a family room as well as restrooms. All of which will have bars and accessible toilets and sinks.
 - One major concern was parking. Dave mentioned how difficult it is for trucks to get in and out of the QVCC Center on Greenwood St. and how narrow the roads are. The park design calls for 8 parking spaces, with 1 marked as handicap accessible.
 - There will be some green space at the park, but it will not be part of the fenced pool area. The pick nick area has been eliminated at this time, but if the budget allows for the area, all tables will be on concrete and 1 will be accessible.

- Mike Kennedy reviewed the plans regarding the landscaping. The area is mainly flat, but there will be some grading to allow for proper drainage.

10. Old Business – City Manager O’Brien or DPW Director Mr. Moylan have not responded to the letter sent parking situation at the DCU Center.

11. Snow Ordinance – Fran sent everyone a copy of the existing ordinance. She also sent a list of questions to Mr. Moore regarding private businesses and store situations. Fran reports that she had a hard time getting any straight answers. The DPW want specific addresses. They state that when complaints are received 2 detail officers on sent to investigate the situation, these officers are paid \$45.00 per hour to perform this service. Members questioned why the route officers are not contacted, or don’t make note of the situation while on patrol? With this in mind the best answer was to ask Mr. Moylan or another representative from the DPW to attend a commission meeting, and ask them ourselves.

Adjournment –The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m. after a motion by John Cronin and Jackie Norton, motion to adjourn was accepted unanimously.

Respectively Submitted,

Jacqueline Norton

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