



City of New Bedford Commission for Citizens with Disabilities

**Commission for Citizens with Disabilities Meeting
Buttonwood Senior Center
March 31, 2022
6:00 PM**

Present

Esperanza Alejandro-Berube
John Lobo
Den DeMarinis, Jr.
Linda Haskins
Marsha Fernandes
Audra DePina
Pam Cole

Absent without notice

Others in Attendance

BG Shanklin, Architect
Cynthia Wallquist, Exec. Director
Jennifer Vieira, Interim Director DFFM
Mark Champagne, Former Director DFFM,
Facilities/Project Coordinator, NBPS

Present Remotely

George Smith
Kim Bettencourt

Welcome & Introductions:

Dennis called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

- Motion to accept minutes made by George, seconded by Marsha. Passed 9:0

Guest

- **Jennifer Vieira, Interim Director DFFM/Mark Champagne, Former Director DFFM, current Facilities Project Coordinator NBPS**

Jen Vieira deferred to Mark Champagne since she has not been involved fully with the projects in question and has not met with BG Shanklin yet. Discussion of incomplete projects included:

Buttonwood restroom remodels

George asked for an update. Men's room complete except for a mirror that still needs to be installed. Jen reports that she received an email from Deb Lee stating project is complete and waiting for inspector. Women's room seems to be complete except for sink installation.

Hillman St. entrance

There was lengthy discussion of this situation and members shared opinions on lift versus ramp and entrance #1 versus entrance #2. The MAAB approved variance (submitted by DFFM with no CCWD input) is for a lift at entrance #1. City agrees that entrance #1 is not preferred and rather entrance #2 should have the lift so that visitors enter into the main hallway and not have to go through COA. Entrance #1 opens into the Council on Aging. The City can't change the lift to entrance #2 without a change to the current MAAB variance (pending MAAB). George requested a meeting with Mark, Jen, Kim, BG and himself and the other people who Mark said initially decided to put in a lift (Building and Fire) before the next CCWD meeting to get CCWD's input and preference. Mark agreed and asked that Jen set it up.

Transition Plan Update

This was tabled until Jen Vieira and BG have the opportunity to meet; updates to be completed by 6/30 and filed with the State.

Invited guests Councillors Brian Gomes and Maria Giesta did not attend.

Old Business

- Sixth St. Parking complaint/recommended solutions referred to Traffic Commission since no one from the Committee attended the meeting
- International Wheelchair Day: "Team George Wheelchair Challenge": tabled to subcommittee/planning group.
- Fobs at Tripp Towers are supposed to be activated today. Esperanza reported that existing fobs will be reprogrammed to access bathrooms.

Chairperson's Report

- Den had nothing to report this month

Executive Director's Report

- Clear Path Storm Issues; all funds used for this year
- Dunkin Donuts complaint: issue fixed
- Broken bricks on Pleasant St: DPI informed but nothing done as of this meeting. DPI reports that it will be completed this week
- Exercise program: the Commission will fund a program at Brooklawn Adult Social Day starting in April. Larry Bigos will continue to provide the programming.
- Reappointments: reviewed reappointments for May

Motion to accept Executive Director's report made by George, second by Marsha.
Passed 9:0.

Architect's Report

- Carney Academy. No information received re: the community room complaint. BG to follow up with Al Oliveira
- Hillman St. Variance; See above
- Lund's Corner Congregational Church; no new information. BG left message to meet and then finish drawings

- 127 W. Rodney French Blvd Variance (Dough Company); Owner needs to install a lift. No other activity to report at this time
- DOT variance for curb cuts off Rte. 140 approved by MAAB
- Transition Plan in Schools: not completed – waiting to reconnect with Al Oliveira

Motion to accept Architect's report made by Marsha, seconded by Linda. Passed 9:0.

New Business; No new business

Other Business

- Audra discussed a recent issue with a van driver. She will be sending a letter and will follow up with Commission if no response. Commission will follow up if needed.
- Audra also reported getting complaints about the light signals at certain corners not being long enough or loud enough. She will send a formal letter to Commission for action.
- George requested that the Commission send a letter to the Mayor Mitchell and City Council regarding lack of funding for elderly and disabled reflected in funding at recent City Council meeting.
- Pam mentioned the recent press around parking at Noah's Playground. Commission will continue to monitor this situation and send letter if no resolution.
- Pam reminded members that at home vaccination program available; just call the 800 number.

Announcements

- Next Meeting: April 21st @ Buttonwood

Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn made by John, seconded by Audra. Motion passed 9:0. Meeting was adjourned @7:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberli A. Bettencourt

Kimberli Bettencourt
Clerk