



City of New Bedford Commission for Citizens with Disabilities

MINUTES

**Commission for Citizens with Disabilities Meeting
Buttonwood Senior Center
April 21, 2022
6:00 PM**

Present

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

Excused

Kim Bettencourt

Others in Attendance

BG Shanklin, Architect
Cynthia Wallquist, Exec. Director

Welcome & Introductions:

Dennis DeMarinis called the meeting to order at 6PM.

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

- Motion to accept minutes made by Esperanza Alejandro-Berube, seconded by Marsha Fernandes. Passed 8:0

Old Business/Architect's Report

- **Buttonwood Bathrooms**

Architect BG Shanklin checked both restrooms and it appears that they are both in compliance. He did say that the "slab porch" in the rear needs to be leveled when exterior work is done. John Lobo moved to request a permanent "CO"; Pam Cole seconded. Motion passed 8:0. (George also asked about a CO for Hillman Street and will ask COA).

- **Hillman St. Exterior ADA Issues: Report on follow-up Meeting with DFFM**

Despite several requests to DFFM asking for the date of the follow-up meeting (as discussed at the March 31st meeting), there has been no response from the department. In the meantime, BG reported that:

- The variance request to move the accessible entrance from "1" - the front door - to "2" – the first door in the alley – was denied by the MAAB.
- After providing the Building Department with his drawings ramp(s), he met with Danny Romanowicz and Inspector, Matt Silva on site. The consensus was that there IS room for the ramp(s). Danny pointed out that there's a step down from the Entrance 2 exit door to the newly rebuilt platform. This is not in compliance and should have been corrected when work was done on that stair and the ramps further into the alley. All exterior platforms must be flush to the level of the interior they serve.
- The MAAB does not approve of egress into active alleys
- The Mass. Office on Disability prefers ramps over lifts
- He also had conversations with the Boston Center for Independent Living whose staff (wheelchair-users) do not like lifts for many of the reasons discussed at the March meeting (maintenance, fire egress, caregiver access).
- **Sixth Street Parking Complaint**
George smith spoke to Councillor Markey about the materials that would be sent to the Traffic Commission, since no one invited attended the March meeting. George further asked that the Director of the Traffic Commission be invited to the May meeting.
- **ARPA Funds: Senior Center**
George reported that he had spoken with Councillor Maria Giesta about how disappointed he was that there doesn't seem to be any funds for a new Senior Center. She said that Bristol County has more funding and encouraged following up with that. George also expressed frustration that no funding was allocated for ADA improvements in City-owned buildings and suggested that City Council President Abreu be invited to a meeting that's not on the same night as the Council.
- **Carney Academy**
BG said the space has been cleared so that closed the complaint.
- **Transition Plan: City**
BG has not heard back from DFFM to schedule the meetings that was requested in January.
- **Transition Plan: Schools**
Al Oliveira is setting up the list of schools to be (re)visited.
- **Lund's Corner Congregational Church**
He has a meeting scheduled April 23.

- **St. Luke's Hospital Parking Complaint**

He reviewed the available spaces on the photos he brought. Legally, they are in compliance, but there was discussion about how the Valet Parking Hours are too short and that volunteers are using the spaces so there's little turnover. Dennis said he would give Cynthia the list of who to contact with the Commission's concerns.

- **Dough Company/Kilbourn Mills**

BG is following up with Danny on several issues of non-compliance.

Marsha moved to accept the Architect's Report; John seconded. Motion passed 8:0.

- Audra DePina heard back from SRTA about the complaint she filed about the van driver issue; it appears to have been resolved.

Executive Director's Report

- Cynthia distributed copies of the NBHA response about the 1st floor locked bathrooms.
- The broken bricks on Pleasant St. by the NBPD have been repaired.
- The Dunkin Donuts follow-up complaint was addressed by the Building Department and the franchise owner.
- Two members are up for reappointment in May; the attendance records will be sent to the Mayor's Office next week.

Motion to accept Executive Director's report made by George, second by Pam. Motion passed 8:0.

New Business

- George said that Buttonwood Senior Center staff asked that the Commission and COA Board contact SRTA about restoring a stop by the Center. He will raise at next month's COA meeting.
- George asked BG to check Market Basket to see if the men's room is adequate and compliant.
- George mentioned that the DA is hosting a Senior Resource event on June 17 @ White's and asked that Cynthia forward the flyer to the members.

Other Business

- Dennis appointed Kim Bettencourt to chair a subcommittee on the Team George event. Audra, John and Pam are included.

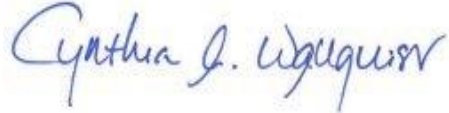
Announcements

- Next Meeting: May 12th

Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn made by John, seconded by Audra. Motion passed 8:0. Meeting was adjourned @7:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Cynthia Wallquist, Executive Director
on behalf of
Kimberli Bettencourt, Clerk