



# City of New Bedford Commission for Citizens with Disabilities

## Minutes

**Commission for Citizens with Disabilities  
Buttonwood Senior Center  
September 14, 2022  
6:00 PM**

### Present

Esperanza Alejandro-Berube  
Kim Bettencourt  
Pam Cole  
Audra DePina  
Marsha Fernandes  
Linda Haskins  
John Lobo  
George Smith

### Excused

Dennis Demarinis

### Others in Attendance

Justin Chicca, DPI  
Councillor Brian Gomes  
Councillor Linda Morad  
George O'Neill, Gorman Richardson Lewis  
Architects  
BG Shanklin, Architect  
Jen Vieira, DFFM  
Cynthia Wallquist, Exec. Director

### Welcome & Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair George Smith at 6:01.

### Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the August minutes was made by Linda, seconded by Pam. Motion passed 8:0.

### Guests

#### • **DFFM/Hillman St. Ramp**

Jen Vieira and George O'Neill informed members of their site plan and timeframe for ramp work and other project components. There was lengthy discussion about those particulars, including the ramp location, canopy, entrance threshold, railing for stairwell by the "new" entrance, etc. Members had the opportunity to join in the discussion and ask questions. Per DFFM's request to the MAAB that did not include the Commission's input, they are refusing to make the existing front door accessible. To comply with MAAB's ruling, the public will have to be barred from using that entrance. It will only be used as a means of public egress in case of an emergency or by staff who have keys. The members then reviewed the

recommendations made by BG Shanklin and shared with Ms. Vieira and Mr. O'Neill. After more discussion, the members reluctantly voted unanimously to support what they were given *provided their recommendations are included in the final plans*. Those stipulations will be sent to Jen Vieira.

## **DPI**

**Brock Avenue Sidewalk Complaint.** The Commission filed with MOD after having contacted DPI twice about this. Justin Chicca addressed questions about sidewalks at Union St. as well. Members also had the opportunity to discuss City concerns that fall under DPI and Mr. Chicca made note of several issues for follow up. He also agreed to share construction updates with Cynthia Wallquist each week so she can share with members and constituents. Mr. Chicca also listened to audible signals concerns in reference to timing, volume, etc. and will look into the issues presented.

- **Counselor Gomes Follow-up (Melville and Tripp Towers Letter).** Councillor Gomes reported that he had placed a motion on the City Council agenda to have a follow-up meeting with management.

## **Old Business**

- **Polling Locations signage (lack thereof)** issues were plentiful on primary day: Several concerns were raised and Manny DeBrito will be invited to the October meeting.
- **Team George/ADA Update:** Tabled to next meeting
- **Wheelchair Flag** installation. John reported on where he and Geovanny had met with wheelchair users to install flags. Discussion on new sits needed was tabled to next meeting

## **Chairperson's Report**

Nothing to report this month in Dennis' absence.

## **Executive Director's Report**

Nothing to report other than the Clear Path enrollment period is October 3-31.

## **Architect's Report**

- Elm St. Garage: No update
- Family Dollar Store Complaint: No update
- Kilburn Mills: Sprinkler, fire egress, electrical, and other areas of concern are moving forward.

- Lund's Corner Congregational Church: There are various ways to the back door, so discussions are ongoing;
- Transition Plan Update (DFFM Meeting/City Buildings): No update;
- Transition Plan Update (Schools): No update;
- New Bedford Credit Union Complaint. The Commission will send a letter to them and cc: the Building Department once BG submits his formal findings to Dennis and Cynthia.

### **New Business**

- Roosevelt Apartments Fire (Elevator complaint): No answer from the State re: elevators being down since the fire.

### **Other Business**

- Pam shared her update on the VAX Team's efforts.

### **Announcements**

- Next Meeting: October 20<sup>th</sup> at Buttonwood

### **Adjourn**

- Motion to adjourn made by John; seconded by Marsha. Motion passed 8:0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kimberli A. Bettencourt*

Kimberli Bettencourt  
Clerk