



TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

NOTICE OF MEETING

December 5th, 2022 | 7:00 p.m.

Via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83511064708?pwd=Nk5NN2djOXhoanptT0l2MmVtajYzQT09>

Consistent with the Governor's orders extending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law every effort will be made to allow the public to view and/or listen to the meeting in real time. If you do not have a camera or microphone on your computer you may use the following dial in number: 1-301-715-8592 Meeting ID 835 1106 4708 Passcode 429617. Please only use dial in or computer and not both as feedback will distort the meeting. This meeting will be audio and video recorded. In compliance with the Americans with Disability Act, this location is accessible to people with disabilities, Wakefield provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request. If you are a person with a disability and require information or materials in an alternate format, or if you require any other accommodation, please contact the Town's Disability Coordinator, William Renault-Town Engineer at 781-246-6308 as far in advance of the event as possible. Every effort will be made to grant your request. Advance notification will enable the Town to make reasonable arrangements to remove an accessibility barrier for you.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83511064708?pwd=Nk5NN2djOXhoanptT0l2MmVtajYzQT09>

Present:

Commission members in attendance: Marie Rej, Paula Thompson, Judy Tanner, Janice Mirabassi, Katharine Staiti; Not present: Lorna Davidson-Connelly, Levonne Coughlin, Lois Benjamin, Kristen Bardol

Guest: Chris Carino, Albion Cultural Exchange

Meeting Agenda

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Marie Rej at 7:05 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Reading of the Commission's Mission Statement

Public Participation: No requests.

Approval of Minutes from November 7, 2022 – Postponed till next meeting. Two edits suggested.

Summary of meeting discussion: Old/New business

- **Update by Chris Carino from Albion Cultural Exchange (ACE):**
 - Chris provided an overview on ACE building improvements completed over the past year as well as options under consideration for additional accessibility features.
 - After the initial first floor renovations had been completed, ACE engaged a new architect for the project - KMA Architects. KMA, which specializes in disability access



and renovation of older buildings, conducted a thorough accessibility audit of the current state of the building.

- After two on-site visits, KMA issued a comprehensive report delineating minor errors that were made in the current renovations, an assessment of the entire building, potential options for entrance/egress, vertical circulation inside the building, and accessible parking.
 - Chris had emailed the report to the Commission members; Marie re-mailed it during the meeting.
 - The report offered 3 options for the entrance: two from the Chestnut Street side, and one option that involves building a sloped walkway leading to the Albion Street entrance.
 - After weighing the entrance options in the report, folks involved in the project recommended the Albion Street entrance option.
 - An accessible ground-level entrance will gain access to the first-floor program space and the two accessible first floor restrooms. Chris stated that access to the building's second-floor and basement levels, for additional program space and classes, will require an accessible elevator or other apparatus that can move patrons and staff safely to each level.
 - A Commission member asked about current use of the inaccessible space. Chris responded that **only** the first-floor space will be open to the public and used for public events until the next building phase (elevator) is funded and fully built.
 - Chris opened the floor to questions from Commission members and asked for input and/or objections RE: the creation of an Albion Street entrance. Commission members were pleased with the plan and expressed no objections.
 - A Commission member asked about the width of the sloped walkway (48") and the width of the remaining street-level sidewalk (48") and asked if there are any impediments alongside the designated accessible parking spaces. Chris responded that a light pole and mailbox were relocated and that the sidewalk area now has no impediments.
 - The Commission recommended that Bill Renault be consulted and invited on-site to view planned ACE improvements at each stage of development to help avoid building errors that have occurred in the past.
- **Wakefield Rotary employment presentation on Tuesday, Nov 22 by Triangle/POST/Commission on Disabilities/Meeting with Triangle/POST:**
 - Commission members Marie Rej and Lorna Davidson-Connelly attended the Rotary meeting on 11/22 and introduced the presenters from Triangle and POST (Purposeful Opportunities for Successful Transition – the 18-22-year-old program for Wakefield).
 - Triangle sent three representatives who described their programs as well as the supports they can offer to employees/employers.

- The information was well-received by Rotary members who commented that this was “one of the better presentations” they have heard. The Commission hopes that this will lead to more employment or internship opportunities for residents with disabilities.
 - A Rotary member from Brightview was very interested in meeting with the presenting programs and mentioned employment openings at her agency.
 - Marie will compose a follow-up thank you message to the Rotary and will send it to the Item.
- **Our yearly highlights:**
 - Town Bylaws call for an annual listing of Commission highlights. For calendar year 2022, the Commission cited the following activities:
 - Ten Commission Meetings, plus two additional meetings to plan for an event in April;
 - Town Council approval to change the name of the Commission to “Wakefield Commission on Disabilities”, dropping the word “Issues” from the Commission’s name;
 - Presentation of the film “Intelligent Lives”, focused on employment of individuals with disabilities, followed by a panel discussion including employees with disabilities and employers who have employees with disabilities on staff. The live event took place at the Galvin and was open to the public.
 - The Commission staffed tables at Wakefield Town Day and “Wakefield 101”;
 - Organized a presentation on employment of people with disabilities for the Wakefield Rotary featuring presenters from two local agencies - Triangle and POST;
 - Worked with the Town’s ADA Coordinator, Bill Renault, to address accessibility requests brought to the attention of the Commission by Wakefield residents (e.g., designation of accessible parking, driveway entrance ramps, building entrances, etc.);
 - Continued to add pertinent resources and information on upcoming events to the Commission’s website and began a discussion on current and potential housing options in Wakefield for people with disabilities.
- **Ideas for what we should focus on next:**
 - Continue to focus on employment and housing.
 - Contact the Chamber of Commerce to ask if they would be willing to schedule a presentation similar to the Rotary presentation for one of their upcoming Chamber meetings. The Chamber meets on Thursday mornings – Marie will make an initial contact.

- Ask if Triangle would be willing to film a presentation with WCAT so our message could reach a wider audience. Or ask if Triangle already has a 'canned' PR piece that would work for this purpose. Marie noted that 2 WCAT staff are on the Rotary Board.
- Expand our knowledge on housing options and find out where to begin and who to contact RE: housing projects proposed for Wakefield. Kathy Boyle at Autism Pathways has extensive knowledge on this topic; Marie mentioned the project at the head of the Lake to Kathy and wondered if there is a way to provide input on the housing needs of Wakefield residents with disabilities. Kathy will get back to Marie on this matter.
- Follow up with Brightview to see if we can support them in making employee connections.
- Reach out to Albion Cultural Exchange to see how people with disabilities can be specifically welcomed/included in ACE events.
- **Invitation to Linda [REDACTED] at Mass Rehab to increase our understanding of their services:**
 - Linda will be presenting at our January 9th meeting. We should advertise this to the wider public.
- **Kathy Boyle – Autism Housing Pathways**
 - See above.
- **Youth Council liaison update**
 - No update.

Next Meeting: January 9, 2023

Motion to Adjourn: 8:46 pm, seconded, all in favor

Respectfully Submitted by Marie Rej and Lorna J. Davidson-Connelly, Co-Chairs