



# TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

## COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

NOTICE OF MEETING

May 1, 2023 | 7:00 p.m.

Via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86049406433?pwd=TTk1TDVIUENmNmJwUUloaVJDbytrUT09>

*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 860 4940 6433 Passcode 294055. 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.*

### Meeting Agenda

**Call to Order:** 7:02 pm

#### **Present:**

Commission members: Paula Thompson, Lorna Davidson-Connelly, Katharine Staiti, Judy Tanner, Lois Benjamin, Daniel Benjamin, Paul Paglierani, Kristin Bardol, Janice Mirabassi. Absent: Marie Rej

Guest: Bill Renault, Town Engineer and ADA Coordinator

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

**Reading of the Commission's Mission Statement** – "Our mission is to address the needs and concerns of our disabled residents and provide their full participation in the activities and services of Wakefield."

### **Old/New Business**

- Welcome to new Commission members Paul Paglierani and Dan Benjamin; congrats and thank to Lois Benjamin who has been part of the Commission for 34 years.
- Intro of Bill Renault who serves as a key resource for the Commission.
- News from Bill:
  - Update on the purchase of an accessible playground swing: \$25K of ARPA funding has been secured. Bill is working on this project with Dennis Fazio; they have determined that the best location for the swing is at the Dolbeare School. The cost of the swing plus the ramp to access the swing is about \$37K. Bill can send a rendering of the swing to the Commission.
  - Next phase: request to put an accessible swing at the Lake. We do have some capital funds for ADA accommodations.



- A comment memo from the Commission was included in the ZBA notes. The ZBA closed on the NE MetroTech proposal, including the requested 'landing zone' on the ramp.
- Received a request on how to handle an MOD memo on the 200 Quannapowitt Parkway project to change the height of some of the sinks. Bill will follow up to see what these changes mean.
- Q: How many accessible units will be built as part of the 200 QP project?
- Q: Can we have a dedication of the new swing at Dolbeare when it has been installed?
- Yes.
  
- Introduction of current Commission members: sitting members introduced themselves to the new members.
- No approval of past minutes – as they were not completed in time for this meeting.
- The April 3, 2023 Commission meeting was cancelled due to a lack of a quorum.
- Financial Report: No change in the amount. Note: The Commission receives funds from tickets that are issued when people park illegally in a space designated/marked/reserved as Disability Accessible.
- **Update on the Community Health Inclusion Grant from Judy Tanner:**
  - Four local towns are part of this small grant – Melrose, Wakefield, Stoneham, and Lynnfield.
  - The goal of the grant is to develop an action plan addressing access for people with mobility limitations in community locations in these 4 cities/towns.
  - Q: Who funds this grant? (Judy will ask about this.)
  - A community assessment is part of the grant process using the “Community Health Assessment Index”. The assessment will create an opportunity to learn about existing access issues and bring partners together to take action. Access issues might include a lack of accessible transportation or physical obstacles that prevent access to community buildings such as senior centers, food pantries, or any community location. The group will assess such elements as doorways, thresholds, rest rooms, and availability of large-print informational materials.
  - In Wakefield, the grant conveners from Health & Human Services will assess the Most Blessed Sacrament church, the senior center, and the Farmer’s Market.
  - There is a small pot of funds for remediation – e.g., portable ramps, accessible chairs, and the like.
  - Janice Mirabassi mentioned another useful way to assess disability access: the Massachusetts Facility Assessment Tool developed by the MA Dept of Public Health in partnership with the Institute for Human Centered Design. This is an interactive document that includes both Massachusetts Architectural Access Board and federal ADA requirements. The tool can be used to assess parking lots, building access, and internal program access for any location that houses any human services program.  
<http://dph.humancentereddesign.org/> (See below)

**The Massachusetts Facility Assessment Tool** compiles the ADA Standards for Accessible Design, the regulations of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board and Massachusetts Department of Public Health requirements. The Massachusetts Facility Assessment Tool guides state and local governments, surveyors, service providers, ADA coordinators, and others responsible for meeting these standards. The Tool serves as a guide to identify and rectify common architectural barriers for people with disabilities. The Tool includes relevant illustrations and measurement guidelines to clarify what to assess and how it should be assessed. Those using the tool should conduct the assessment from the perspective of a person traveling from site arrival points into the building, then into service areas, and into other public areas such as rest rooms. The Tool includes graphic depictions, examples, measurements, and instructions for documenting findings. The Tool does not encompass the entirety of the ADA Standards for Accessible Design or the regulations of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board, but covers the following priorities:

- Priority 1 - Accessible Approach and Entrance
  - Priority 2 - Access to Goods and Services
  - Priority 3 - Accessible Restrooms and Bathrooms
  - Priority 4 - Additional Access
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- **Closing of Biddy & Beau's coffee shop in Melrose:**
    - A brief discussion about the ability of Wakefield to open a similar business in our town. Perhaps at the site of the former Molise restaurant? Lorna mentioned that family members of former employees are working on ideas for similar business plans to help bring people with disabilities into the workforce.
  - **Outdoor dining:**
    - As outdoor tables are set up at local restaurants, Commission members are asked to observe that portable ramps are simultaneously set up to allow access to the outdoor tables.
  - **Q:** Are either of our state reps working on the issue of Wakefield's two inaccessible MBTA train stations?

**Next Meeting: June 5, 2023**

**Motion to Adjourn: 7:57pm**

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