

## Meeting of the Wakefield Commission on Disabilities

June 6, 2022

Call to order: Meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by Marie Rej with the following people in attendance:

Marie Traniello Rej  
Lorna Davidson-Connelly  
Bill Renault, Town Engineer/ADA Coordinator  
Katie Staiti  
Paula Thompson  
Kristen Bardol  
Judy Tanner  
Lois Benjamin  
Janice Mirabassi

Members not in attendance:

Bella Schwartzberg  
Levonnie Coughlin

Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge was stated by the committee.

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.”

Public Participation:

Judy Tanner motioned to approve minutes of May 2, 2022 meeting. Kristen Bardol seconded. Meeting minutes approved.

- Accessible parking requests: Marie Rej has received 3 requests from residents on this topic.
- 1. Chestnut Street: Request for accessible parking spot in front of a private residential building from a resident of the adjacent condo association. The rear of the building is inaccessible to the resident due to curbing and 5 steps. The Commission can say ‘yay’ or ‘nay’ to move this forward to the Traffic Advisory Board. The Traffic Advisory Board will meeting in June, and then again in September. The spot would be available to the public; the Commission noted that snow emergency situations would make the spot unavailable. There is currently a “No Parking” sign in front of the building. Bill Renault will look into the reason for the “No Parking” sign. Judy Tanner suggested looking into a stable walkway built from the rear to the front of the building. If the condo association is not willing to work with the family, they can complain to the State. Generally, there is a requirement for “one spot per block” for on-street accessible spaces. Bill will report back on this situation after investigating further.

**Motion:** In order to expediate the request, the Commission recommends that the issue of establishing an accessible parking spot in front of 26 Chestnut Street, be moved to the Traffic Advisory Board for their June meeting with input from Bill Renault. Judy Tanner seconded. All in favor.

Note: Lois Benjamin left the meeting to attend to another town commitment.

2. Vista Apartments: 107-109 Hopkins Street, a residential building on the Wakefield/Reading line. The complaint came from a nearby Reading resident. There are 4 accessible spaces at this complex; the parking plan on file indicates that 4 accessible spaces are to be provided. Bill Renault explained that leased property is considered public, which requires accessible parking. Complainant's letter stated that he "often sees vehicles without placards using those spaces – sometimes for extensive periods of time." Bill Renault: Vista will be updating the parking plan. TAC had a no-parking area on the street; attorney will be submitting an updated plan. If there is a need for a loading area, this should be established. Motion: Commission on Disability will send a letter to the to the leasing company advising them on the use of the accessible parking spots – and the fact that they need to remain vacant for that purpose to vehicles displaying an applicable placard. All in favor. The letter will be copied to the Zoning Board of Appeals and to Bill Renault. Seconded: Kristen.
3. Bill Renault received an inquiry from a resident of a condo on Foundry Street. The resident inquired about the parking plan submitted to the town and wanted to know which spaces had been designated as accessible. The resident wants to get a notice out to building residents RE: this matter. The resident wanted to know if there is a requirement for a parking lot. Bill Renault: the parking plan was developed by a condo traffic committee; they will likely require that a parking spot to be designated as accessible if there is a need. Bill noted that the Commission has the opportunity to write a standard condition that goes to the ZBA that has to be written into condo association contracts for all condo projects. Motion: to draft a letter stating that accessible parking be made available to any resident with a disability upon request. This would be applied to general residential development. Seconded: Judy Tanner. All in favor.
4. The RIDE listening session: Judy Tanner provided a recap of the session. Anyone who takes the ride can attend these MBTA listening sessions. There was positive feedback about the addition of Uber and Lyft access; users want to expand this service. Website: [www.https://www.mbta.com/customersupport](https://www.mbta.com/customersupport) ; the phone number is on the Commission's website.
5. Letter to the Human Resources Office as requested by Levonne Coughlin: RE: employment of an individual with a disability advising the employer to be aware of requirements RE: employing people with disabilities. For the future: back-up information that is being discussed at meetings would be made available to the public in advance of the meeting The information would be included with the packet of materials that goes out with the meeting notice.

6. Brainstorming how to replenish, add to, and utilize the funds in the Commission's treasury. Are there any available grants? The Commission's treasury receives some funds based on fines from violations of accessible parking regulations. How do we want to spend these and other funds in the Commission's treasury? We could decide to roll funds in excess of \$10,000 into the town's capital budget going forward. We could consider pulling from the treasury for certain town improvements. We would need to make a presentation to the town's Capital Planning Committee. This would be a good way to get funds for town projects.
7. Suggestions for plans for upcoming year: we will forward this list to Bill Renault:
  - a. Equipment for hard-of-hearing participants who are attending Town Meeting
  - b. ASL/Cart services for Town Meeting
  - c. Building assessment – for any town buildings (anything that is maintained by the town)
  - d. Mass Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)- CAD services: perhaps a permanent large monitor could be purchased for use in public meetings. We should reach out to Jonathan O'Dell - the MCDHH tech coordinator to ask about this - [Jonathan.ODell@mass.gov](mailto:Jonathan.ODell@mass.gov)
  - e. Have someone make suggestions for accessibility improvements for the Galvin auditorium, and get an estimate of the cost.
  - f. What will the new high school have for access in the large meeting spaces?
  - g. Swings for children with disabilities at local parks and pave the pathways leading to the play spaces at JJ Round and Mapleway
  - h. Remove curbs by the post office (request came to Bill Renault in the late fall)
  - i. Continuing budget for the Commission that could be used for ongoing needs
  - j. Marie will follow up on the Post Office door issue
  - k. Connect with Rotary in follow-up to the "Intelligent Lives" event RE: employment of people with disabilities
  - l. Housing: the development at 200 Quannapowitt; ask the developers to make a presentation about accessibility plans for the proposed buildings
  - m. Creative options for housing: educate ourselves on the options available in other towns
  - n. Bill Renault: the Town's Zoning bylaws are going to be revised; the master plan that talks about housing; Zoning code has an impact on adding more accessible housing units in the community
  - o. Invite other Commissions from other towns to talk about the framework of what they are doing
8. Youth Council Liaison: the Commission needs to request to have another student as a liaison. Need to contact Katherine Dingha to request another liaison for 22-23 calendar year. Might Levonne follow up on this?
9. Lorna and Bill connected RE: the ramps for outdoor dining at Wakefield restaurants; the ramps are now in place

10. There will be no meetings in July or August. When we return in September, we will need to vote in new officers. If you are interested in holding an office, please send an email to Marie Rej either volunteering or nominating someone else. The offices include: Two co-chairs, one secretary, one treasurer. The meeting will be September 12<sup>th</sup>.
11. Commission members are welcome to email pertinent announcements and resources to Jen McDonald: [jmcdonald@wakefield.ma.us](mailto:jmcdonald@wakefield.ma.us)
12. The Festival by the Lake is happening this weekend – let's think about attending future events like these next year. Wakefield 411 night is a good event to attend. Refer to the Town calendar.
13. Motion to adjourn: 8:39; seconded by Kristen. Meeting adjourned.