

Minutes of the Concord Commission on Disabilities  
August 12, 2021

Present

Jean Goldsberry, chair; Bonnie Albright, Meryl Schwartz, Susan Bates, Janet Beyer,

Justin Richardson, representing the engineering division of the town, Ned Perry, Kate Hodges

Minutes of prior meeting were approved

Kate Hodges, Deputy Town Manager and Concord's ADA Coordinator updated the Commission relieve to a number of complaints received via email from an individual who's address line reads "*Frances Frances.*" The person wrote a emails to staff within the Public Works Department (CPW) requesting that snow be removed from the new ADA path currently under construction at Emerson Field . The individual was told that snow removal in parks was determined on a time and materials basis and often not something that Town crews are able to get to as streets and major sidewalk areas take precedent during and after weather events. Frances Frances responded that CPW's answer was unacceptable and escalated the matter to the Town Manager's Office. Additionally, an email that alleged to be representing Frances Frances was received by the Town from an ADA advocate group threatening litigation if the matter of snow removal was not revisited. The email erroneously referred to an issue that Frances Frances had allegedly had with Fenway Park in Boston. Ms. Hodges responded to ask the group if they meant to send that exchange to the Town. An additional complaint from Frances Frances came to Ms. Hodges' inbox about a week later, copied to the Selectboard and this Commission, stating that the material the Town was using for the ADA pathway at Emerson was not acceptable. Ms. Hodges assured the Commission that the mixture is fully accessible and acceptable under both the ADA and the AAB. Ms. Hodges also told the Commission that she reached out to the Mass. Office on Disability to discuss the complaints and ensure that her reading of the statute, and the subsequent information she had sent to the complainant was accurate. The MOD told Ms. Hodges that her interpretation was accurate. The Town considers the matter closed at this time.

Justin Richardson, representing the Town engineering department, discussed accessibility along Commonwealth Ave., from Lawsbrook to Church St. He said that the curb cuts in this area are too steep and plans are being made to make them less so. He said that all sidewalks along Comm. Ave. are going to be rebuilt and made safer with bump outs so people can see traffic. Cross walks will be aligned with bump outs to make it safer. Handicapped parking is planned for both sides of the street. All the ramps along the roadway are being redone for accessibility from tracks to Beharrel St. The ramp to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail will be improved.

Bonnie: It seems there should be one in front of Deborah's because it is an essential-to-life store.

Accessible parking near Deborah's Natural Gourmet was discussed. It was found to be difficult given the current spaces. Jean suggested we ask Deborah to come to a meeting to discuss accessibility to her stores.

Library parking

A tree that some members of the Historic District Commission had wanted to be preserved was hurt during the storm and had to be taken down. The parking area is open for a relook at the driveway entrance. Jean called the Historic District Commission to see if they would reopen that discussion. They told her that project is already over budget and this would add to it. Meryl moved that the commission write a letter to the Library Corporation asking that they reconsider their previous proposal and that an additional handicapped parking spot be put on the site on the library rear entrance.

Second Susan bates

Bonnie suggests a multipronged approach in terms of our parking issue.

Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned