

Concord Commission on Disabilities
September 9, 2021
Via Zoom

Present:

Jean Goldberry, chair; Marybeth Barker, Jennifer Brook, Bonnie Albright, Meryl Schwartz, Lloyd Price, Janet Beyer
Guests Debra Stark, Phillip Posner, Dorrie Kehoe, , Aiyanna Currie, Richard Fahlander

Meeting called to order 5 p.m.

June and August minutes approved as amended.

Debra Stark, owner Natural Gourmet

Debra was invited to discuss changes to her store in light of expansion. The target date for reopening into expanded store, which will be in the former West Concord Five and Ten, is late December. The expansion will have two handicapped accessible bathrooms, a sidewalk-level front entrance, wider aisles, a ramp on the side of the building that will face the alley between the current store and the expanded store. The original store will be renovated with wider aisles. Debra asked Marybeth to check with Debra for accessibility.

Green Thumbs and West Concord park

Dorrie Kehoe spoke about the West Concord pocket park and the difficulties the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) presented. Green Thumbs is the organization that tends to that park. The concern is when the Route 2 overpass is finished bicyclists will be at full speed as they get to West Concord and will not slow down going through the park. Dorrie said there were supposed to be "Walk Your Bike" signs in the area, but they have not been put up. Dorrie and Green Thumbs have spoken to the selectboard about the concern. She pointed out that people with children and residents of Concord Park walk through that pocket park and speeding bicyclists pose a risk. She requested that the Commission write to the Selectboard expressing concern. She would like the letter to say this park was not meant to be part of the BFRT and urge a solution to the problem. After people offered various possible solutions. Jennifer said that this problem was not going to be solved during this meeting and suggested we should work to separate different modes of transportation.

Meryl moved we empower Jennifer to write a letter to the selectboard on our behalf concerning the bike and foot traffic in the Junction and ensuring there is safe access for everyone.

Mary Beth Seconded

The motion was approved unanimously

Regarding the Transportation Advisory Committee

Susan: There was a discussion at the Selectboard meeting Monday night. They decided to dismantle and then reestablish the Transportation Advisory Committee. There will be seven members and it will be a citizen's committee.

Bikes on bike path

Marybeth: Not everyone can lift their bike and put it on the other side of the sign. Richard Fahlander, Philip Posner and Marybeth will discuss this issue.

Handicapped parking

Jean: Jeff Doogan at the Mass. Office on Disability told her that anyone with a handicap sticker can park in any handicap spot. Large car, small car, van, motorcycle. This follows a discussion of an incident at 54 Baker Ave. when Janet was scolded for parking in a van accessible spot.

Jean announcements:

Next week is chair's breakfast. Meryl will go
The Minuteman ARC march is Sept. 25, 10 a.m.

Other business:

Concord Library

Janet:: I would like to have us write a strong letter to the Historic District Commission pointing out that the ancient and honorable bush is no longer an issue because it was destroyed in a storm. Without it as an obstacle there is no reason handicapped parking could not be put off the road on the area leading to the rear entrance of the library. This would make parking for people with e.g. wheelchairs more accessible. Jean agreed to write the letter.

Richard: the letter should be CCd to the corporation. And the town manager.

Concord Bike

Phil: I am here today as a part of Concord Bike. The reason I wanted to come to the meeting was as a bicycling advocate and to present that we bikers and you who have disabilities have a lot in common, safety and design for example. It is the same issue to Concord Bike. As a group of citizens we have tried to make things safer: Like a bike-to-school program. Issues like this have to do with action rather than talk. The park is a microcosm of this. At the end of the day we are all about safety and taking action.

Next meeting Oct. 14, 5 p.m. Zoom

Meeting adjourned 6:45

Submitted Janet Beyer, clerk