



TOWN OF CONCORD

COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY

P.O. BOX 535 "22 MONUMENT SQUARE" CONCORD, MA " 01742

Email address: disabilitycom@concordma.gov

September 28, 2017

Envision Concord (via email)

Dear Committee Members,

The Commission has discussed your request for input from our group at our last two committee meetings, and we are happy to provide our perspective.

1. What are the pressing issues for your board/commission?
We want to be a resource to the Town and its citizens by assisting with access issues as well as sensitivity and disability rights concerns. Our hope is that people with disabilities will be seen as equal and necessary members of the community.
2. Where are the tensions in your work? Conflicts?
Our main concern is connection with and communication with Town management. We have a Select Board representative who comes to most meetings and is a very good spokesperson for us with the Select Board. Unfortunately we do not have such a good connection with Town management. We meet monthly at 5:00 pm, but the Town's ADA Coordinator only attends about one meeting per year. We feel this is a crucial position to have regular attendance and a deep understanding of the concerns of people with disabilities in the Town of Concord. This does not seem to be a priority, and that perpetuates the sense that people with disabilities are less important than others.
3. Is there a particular project, program or goal that your board is proud to have accomplished in the past year or so?
We urged changes which improved access at local venues such as Bank of America, Heywood Meadows, Beede Center Pools, and Gaining Ground. We reviewed plans and offered suggestions concerning access at locations such as 51 Walden, CCHS fields, parking at visitor center at Walden Pond, First Parish renovations, working collaboratively with these entities. We have worked with the Trails Committee to improve access to trails and identify additional trails which could be made assessed or accessible, either in whole or in part. We also presented a Warrant at Town Meeting to change our status from a committee to a commission, and that was passed resoundingly. This allows the Commission to be able to apply for grants through the Massachusetts Office on Disabilities and other sources.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to Envision Concord.

Sincerely,
Jean A. Goldsberry, Chairperson