

Marblehead Disabilities Commission - Meeting Minutes – October 8, 2020

Members Present: Laurie Blaisdell, Andrea Mountain, Preston Ford, Cheryl LaLonde, Samantha Marino, Katie Farrell, Amy Hirschcron, Ed Lang, Sue Harris

Guests Present: Nancy Powell, Tim Shotmeyer, Rob Dever

Laurie called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. She introduced and welcomed Amy Hirschcron, a new member of the Commission.

Minutes of the January 23, 2020 meeting were approved.

Marblehead Streets & Sidewalks. Laurie introduced Rob Dever, new Marblehead Director of Public Works. Rob described his views on planning for and implementing street and sidewalk improvements. He advocates a long-term plan that would implement improvements starting with streets most in need of repair and would incorporate related sidewalk improvements, ADA ramps, and any needed underground utility upgrades. The plan would avoid redoing improved streets to address underground utility issues. He has worked, and will continue to work, with the Town Administrator and the Engineering and Tree departments on the plan and its implementation. Dever advocated a public education process to achieve citizen buy-in to the long-term plan. He agreed to work with the Commission as plans move forward, and the Commission agreed to provide any needed support to development, advocacy for, and development of the plan. Meanwhile, Dever said that any street repairs will include ADA accessible sidewalk improvements, including trying to deal with tree root issues.

Village, Pleasant and Vine Streets Upgrades. This intersection is being completely redone, funded by \$800,000 from the Mass DOT. Laurie asked Commission members to review the plan, available on the Mass DOT website, and send her comments/recommendations on missing curb cuts and other accessibility issues, if any.

ADA Transition Plan Update. As Becky Curran is on vacation, this agenda item will be discussed at next month's meeting.

Tree Planting Update. Pursuant to the 2019 approval designating \$50,000 (funds via override) at the 2019 Town Meeting, Jon Fobert put out a bid request, with responses due 9/3/2020. Bidders were invited to a review of locations in October, but none attended. There have no additional responses to the bid request. The Town Meeting vote specified locations for new trees, most of which are not feasible due to space restrictions. Fobert is working on a plan for new trees in town and will update the Town accordingly.

Rail Trail Improvements Update. Laurie reported that Marblehead has received a \$41,000 grant to redesign the Rail Trail. Once the design is complete, Marblehead will apply to the Complete Streets program for funds to implement recommended changes. ADA access is included in the improvements plan.

Member attendance update. Laurie talked with Jason Silva about how to address member attendance issues. Jason said that there are no bylaws relating to this issue and suggested that the Commission write to the Board of Selectman about any concerns and request a resolution.

Update on Fort Sewall. Ed reported that out of a \$1 million budget for Fort Sewall improvements, \$270,000 is dedicated to making the area accessible.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 12, 2020 at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Harris, Member