

**Marblehead Disabilities Commission
Meeting Minutes of Thursday, October 8, 2015**

Members Present: Laurie Blaisdell, Ron Grenier, Andrea Mountain, Caroline Curtis, Ed Lang and Katie Farrell. Also attending Lloyd Caswell.

Approve Minutes of September 10, 2015 Meeting: Lang moved to approve minutes; motion seconded by Mountain. **VOTE: 6-0.**

Vote: A motion was made and seconded to have all correspondence go before the board and signed by the chair. Vote: 6-0

Farrell Court: Curtis brought to our attention several accessibility issues at this public housing campus. She distributed copies of pictures she took to illustrate the problems tenants were facing. Among these is limited access to the complex's back deck and ramps that tenants have been unable to use since July 16th. This pathway is also the route for tenants to access the community room a primary gathering spot for meetings and other tenant activities. Instead, tenants are left to use a less accessible way into the complex. In another picture Curtis showed how the laundry room is also difficult to access. The board agreed that collectively the pictures show firsthand the physical challenges posed at Farrell Court and that appropriate officials should be alerted to our concerns about these on-going matters.

In a motion by Grenier seconded by Lang the Board approved sending a letter citing these conditions to the local housing board, the Dept of Housing which oversees municipal authorities and our the office of our state representative.
Vote 6-0

Redd's Pond Accident: Blaisdell reported on some of the circumstances around this terrible accident. Blaisdell using her cell phone showed how the pathway's condition along the pond was repaired to make the surface more level. However, it was agreed that a more permanent repair solution should probably be planned and funded in the near future as this location is very popular.

Quorum: Blaisdell advised she spoke with Mary Levine about whether the Town had a specific by-law related to the Commission's launch or adopted the state's

sample operating by-law where the number on a commission had a range instead of a specific number. Grenier reported that since the last meeting he received further clarification that we should go by is nine since that is the number actually

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appointed. Farrell said that if vacancies occur from resignations she would like membership to remain at nine. However, she would like to see members appointed with disabilities other than physical ones to broaden the Commission's perspective on disabilities.

Fort Sewall: Lang gave an overview of Phase I and Phase II plans and funding status for this project. According to him the focus of Phase I will be strictly on rehabilitation of the Fort's structure. He said the emphasis of Phase II will be on masonry repairs. The Town is searching for funds to address the accessibility of walkways.

Sample Letters: Members gave Grenier feedback and recommended certain edits for two sample letters he prepared for their review. These letters would be used to get in touch with town officials as a method for the Commission to get their points across on the proposed project's feasibility for access by persons with disabilities. Grenier shared how such a letter was used in the case of the proposed plans for Miller Plaza. Grenier asked for suggestions as to how these letters can be forwarded in a timely manner to various town officials when notice of impending public hearings or meetings around award of permits are not commensurate with the Commission's monthly meeting schedule.

In a motion by Mountain and seconded by Grenier the Commission voted to have notice of such proceedings and proposed letters from the Commission passed on to the Chairperson who will circulate to membership for consensus and agreement. **Vote 6-0**

Adjourn: Curtis motioned to conclude the meeting; motion seconded by Mountain **VOTE: 6-0.**

Next Meeting: 4:15 pm, Thursday, November 10th

Respectfully,

Laurie Blaisdel