

Marblehead Disabilities Commission
Meeting Minutes – October 14, 2021

Members Present: Laurie Blaisdell, Andrea Mountain, Amy Hirschkron, Katie Farrell, Samantha Marino, Sue Harris

Members Absent: Cheryl LaLonde, Ed Lang

Guests: Nancy Powell, James Ashton, Jocelyn Cook, Rich Ramos

Laurie called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

1. The Commission approved the minutes of the September 9, 2021 by unanimous vote.
2. 139 Pleasant Street Update. Laurie received a copy of a Stipulated Order issued by the Architectural Access Board to the owners of 139 Pleasant Street. The Order grants the owners 60 days, until December 6, 2021, to submit a request for a variance of the requirements of 521 CMR 25.1 to have an accessible entrance to a commercial space. The Commission discussed options and agreed to wait until notice of compliance or non-compliance before deciding on next steps, if any.
3. Harbor Access. The Commission reviewed the report prepared by Sue and Amy reviewing harbor accessibility at Village, Stramski's, and Tucker's Wharf, and agreed that Sue, Amy and Laurie will arrange a meeting with Mark Souza to discuss these findings and plans for accessibility improvement and installing a Hoyer lift at Tucker's Wharf and perhaps at one of the two piers/docks on the Salem Harbor side of Marblehead. Also on the agenda will be the need for and lack of ADA compliance at other town piers/docks. James Ashton reported that the town has hired a consultant to create a Harbor Improvement Plan. The Board of Selectmen will announce a request for letters of interest from parties who wish to participate on a committee to work with the consultant on the plan. Amy has been in touch with Jason Silva about this issue and will contact him again expressing the Commission's strong desire to be included on this committee. Jocelyn Cook mentioned that, based on meetings of a municipal boot camp being conducted by Jason Silva that she has attended, both the police chief and the fire chief have expressed interest in the town purchasing a Hoyer lift to be used in facilitating water rescues.
4. Brown School. Laurie, Katie, and Cheryl took a tour of Brown School on October with Jeff Dougan and Ashley Santana of the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD). Also attending were Brian Johnson, Owner & Project Manager, John Roche of Gilbane Construction, and Todd Bloodgood, Marblehead Schools Facilities Director, and Paula Donnelly - Associate Director of Student Services. Laurie described the initial report of the MOD, which found relatively minor violations of the AAB, except for the ramp leading to the stage in the cafeteria/auditorium, which has too steep a slope and must be rebuilt. The construction company has agreed to correct all violations.
5. Sidewalk Repairs. Laurie shared that the town has received a \$25,000 grant to hire a consultant to lead the development of a new ADA Transition Plan. The Commission has talked about sponsoring an override to fund sidewalk repairs generally, but after the Commission, the consensus was that we should wait for the results of the new Transition Plan before moving forward. Laurie will keep in touch with Jason Silva about plans for the Transition Plan to insure that the Commission is involved in its creation.
6. Other Town Compliance Issues. The Commission discussed the need for sign language interpreters at Town Meeting and generally how to insure better attention to accessibility issues in Marblehead. One idea is to

appear regularly at Board of Selectmen meetings to provide updates on issues and request assistance as needed.

Upon motion by Sue and seconded by Amy, the Commission unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 17, at 4:15 p.m.

Documents used at meeting:

Stipulated Order of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board, dated 10/6/21, re 139 Pleasant Street
Disabilities Commission Report on Accessibility of Village Street, Stramski's and Tucker's Wharf Water Access
Massachusetts Office on Disability Memo on Site Visit of Brown School, October 6, 2021

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Harris, Commission Member