

Town of Dedham Commission on Disability Meeting
February 10, 2020 Town Hall First Floor Conference Room – 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: John Tocci, Mac Sterling, Vicky Berg, Bernie Chirokas, Ellen Conway, Ken Cimeno, Lee Jensen

Absent: Diane Loud, Bob Winston

John Tocci chaired the meeting.

Committee approved November and December 2019 meeting minutes.

Welcome to New Member: The COD welcomed new member Lee Jensen.

Dedham Heritage Rail Trail Presentation: Paquita Bass and Howard Ostroff presented information regarding the Dedham Heritage Rail Trail proposal which is the subject of a ballot question in upcoming town elections. The DHRT is directed by a steering committee on which both Ms. Bass and Mr. Ostroff serve. The speakers provided historical information regarding the DHRT and details regarding the proposal. The trail property is owned by the Town with the exception of a segment that will be leased for 99 years at \$1 per year.

Ken Cimeno also added historical perspective on the capping of the trail, drainage issues and certain challenges such as access points and Mt. Vernon bridge. Mr. Ostroff addressed questions raised regarding the same.

The trail will be 50 feet wide and will include a 10-12 foot wide paved ADA-compliant surface appropriate for users with accessibility challenges. The ballot question received 2300 signatures and the election is on April 11. COD members were provided with printed materials for consideration.

The DHRT steering committee is asking for the COD's endorsement. Ms. Bass and Mr. Ostroff indicated that, because there is not a design yet, a design committee would need to be constructed and would include a member of the COD.

John Tocci indicated that there is much to consider and an endorsement vote would wait until the next COD meeting on March 9. In discussing further, Mac Sterling raised questions about service dog accessibility. Ken Cimeno raised concerns regarding control of the property and maintenance after construction. John Tocci and Mac Sterling raised concerns regarding the divisiveness of the issue and the role of the DHRT steering committee and leadership in defeating the Striar proposal.

Treasurer's Report: Deferred until March meeting.

Scholarship Report: The COD considered the current scholarship application and decided to create its own separate question for the application. The COD discussed wording and Vicky will include.

Handicapped Parking Violation Information: John Tocci reported that he had a telephone conference with Jimmy Heald of the *Dedham Times* and Officer Sullivan from the Dedham PD regarding a possible public service announcement about handicapped parking regulations and common violations. Jimmy Heald is going to work on a draft for publication and run by John before publishing.

Striar Development Town Meeting Vote: Mac reported that he spoke at Town Meeting in favor of the Striar development. He departed from the prepared COD text and spoke from a personal level regarding what the development would mean for one in a wheelchair. The proposal needed 2/3 of the TM vote but was seven votes short.

Handicap Violation Appeal Process: The town has been holding parking violation hearings by rotating committee in the aftermath of Bill Aitken's retirement. The Town is in the process of hiring a designated hearings officer.

Cart Technology Transfer: Tabled, Mac to follow up with school department officials.

Posting of Meeting Minutes: Tabled.

Accessibility Issue at Veterinary Office: Tabled

New Business:

- John Tocci reported that he recently discussed with Joe Flanagan the COD taking on a role in the approval of renewals for on-street handicapped parking spaces in front of residence. Will discuss more fully at next meeting.
- Ken reported handicapped parking issues behind the high school. There is non-conforming handicapped parking signage (a movable sign in a cement bucket). The sign is often moved or turned around and permanent signage is needed. Bernie also indicated that she has encountered problems with the signage in back of the school. Accessibility issues with HS rest room as well.
- Ellen Conway reported that she long complained of Ash Street tree fell over in a recent storm. John Tocci subsequently spoke with Joe Flanagan who indicated the sidewalk will be repaired and made accessible

Future Meetings:

March 9

Respectfully submitted,
John Tocci