

**COMMISSION ON ACCESSIBILITY
MONDAY, MAY 13, 2013, 3:00 PM
MINUTES**

Chairman Fleischer called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM

Members present: Fleischer, Baxendale, Harker & Rechsteiner

Members absent: Taylor, Shack & Vega

Also present: ADA Coordinator Michelle Collette

GROTON DUNSTABLE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

The Commission received a letter dated May 7, 2013 from resident Paul Funch regarding his experience with his son and others at the Performing Arts Center. Mr. Funch, who was present at the meeting, described how his son and other students from Seven Hills group home were going to attend a performance of "The Hobbit." When he called and was informed that they would have to sit in the rear of the auditorium, Seven Hills decided to cancel the trip. Mr. Funch asked why accessible seating is not distributed throughout the auditorium.

Ms. Collette said the issue about lack of accessible seating was raised by former Building Commissioner Mark Dupell in 2011 in response to Mr. Harker's complaint regarding lack of compliance with universal accessibility requirements at Town Meeting. The Town has designated accessible seating the middle aisle as a temporary solution. The Architectural Access Board Regulations, Section 521 CMR 14.00 Places of Assembly, requires that 10% of the seats be designated as accessible and that such seats be distributed throughout the auditorium.

The motion was made by Harker, seconded by Rechsteiner, to send a letter to the Groton Dunstable Regional School District requesting resolution of the accessible seating matter that was identified in 2011. The Commission will copy Building Commissioner Ed Cataldo on the letter. The motion passed unanimously.

GELD TEMPORARY OFFICE

Attorney Robert Collins met with the Commission to discuss the Groton Electric Light Department's (GELD) plans to use the house located at 11 Station Avenue as its temporary office during construction of its new operational facilities on Station Avenue. GELD does not plan to make any structural changes to the existing building at 11 Station Avenue. A temporary ramp will be installed, but there will be no structural changes inside the building. People will be able to use the drop box behind Town Hall for payments or will be able to ask Town Hall staff if they need additional assistance. A member of GELD's staff will come to Town Hall to provide assistance.

Member Ellen Baxendale asked if the door at the entrance is accessible. Mr. Collins said that door is problematic. Public meetings will be held at the Town Hall or another accessible building.

The Commission agreed that GELD's proposal would work as a temporary measure during building construction. The Commission thanked Mr. Collins for attending the meeting.

May 13, 2013

Page 2

TOWN MEETING REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr. Collins, Chairman of the Town Meeting Review Committee, said the Committee is looking at Town Meeting procedures including universal accessibility. Commission Members Ellen Baxendale and Scott Harker both serve on the Town Review Committee. Mr. Collins said a survey will be mailed out with the next GELD bills and encouraged everyone to return the survey. The Town Meeting Review Committee will do a presentation to the Board of Selectmen on June 3, 2013.

The next meeting will be held on June 10, 2013 at 3:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
ADA Coordinator