

COMMISSION ON ACCESSIBILITY
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2015 at 4:00 PM
MINUTES

Vice Chairman Rechsteiner called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM

Members present: Baxendale, Harker, Rechsteiner, Taylor and Vega

Members absent: Fleischer and Shack

Also present: ADA Coordinator Michelle Collette, NEILP Consultants James Lyons and Sheila Radziewicz

ADA POLICY DISCUSSION

The Committee continued the discussion with James Lyons and Sheila Radziewicz of the Northeast Independent Living Program on the draft policy to be adopted by the Town in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as part of the Self-evaluation Transition Plan for parks, playgrounds, and open space. Paul Funch edited the document for the Committee's consideration. The draft policy covers the five administrative areas of ADA.

ADA Coordinator Michelle Collette recommended that the Commission take time to review the draft prior to taking any votes. After the Committee votes on the policy, it will be forwarded to the Board of Selectmen for adoption.

The motion was made by Harker, seconded by Baxendale, to postpone discussion on the draft ADA Policy until the October 5, 2015 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

ADA SELF-EVALUATION/TRANSITION PLAN

ADA Coordinator Michelle Collette expressed appreciation for all the work done by Jim Lyons and Sheila Radziewicz and by numerous Town volunteers on the ADA Self Evaluation/Transition plan. It has been a wonderful partnership and learning experience for all who participated.

Mr. Lyons said the final report is about 60% complete and has more than 100 photographs from the 25 sites that were evaluated. The Town has gone above and beyond on this project. Most recommendations involve accessible parking spaces, clearing vegetation and smoothing rough surfaces in trails. The goal is for everyone to have equal opportunity to participate in community events. Sargisson Beach is a beautiful area, and some hand rails should be installed. However, if the slopes are too steep and it is technically infeasible or too expensive, then the Town must decide what to do. Some, but not all, trails should be accessible. Mr. Lyons concluded that follow-up on the recommendations is critical. This is a dynamic, on-going process.

Ms. Radziewicz recommended that the Commission find a way to involve youth and other members of the community in the implementation phase of the project. For example, Eagles Scouts and high school students have been involved with the Lawrence Playground and Sargisson Beach improvements.

Members of the Commission thanked Mr. Lyons and Ms. Radziewicz for all their hard work and guidance.

ADA Coordinator Michelle Collette said the Committee must review the draft report, meet with the Park Commission, the Conservation Commission and others to receive their comments. The Commission on Accessibility will hold a public hearing prior to adopting the plan.

Ms. Radziewicz stressed the need for training and education moving forward. Commission members agreed.

COMPLAINTS OR CONCERNS

Member Baxendale and ADA Coordinator Michelle Collette reported that they met with the Cable TV Director to explore closed captioning for Town Meeting. The cost would be around \$500 per meeting and is technically difficult with the current system.

Ms. Radziewicz suggested looking into using a CART system through the Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing as an alternative.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, October 5, 2015 at 4:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
ADA Coordinator