

COMMISSION ON ACCESSIBILITY
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2021, 3:00 PM
MINUTES

Acting Chairman Robert Fleisher called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM at the Groton Center, 163 West Main Street

Members present: Bob Fleischer, Lynne Pistorino, Tom Pistorino, and Alan Taylor(late)

Others present: ADA Coordinator Michelle Collette, Judy Anderson

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY CENTER CPC APPLICATION

ADA Coordinator Michelle Collette reported that the Friends of Prescott are planning to submit an application to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for funds for architectural and engineering plans to install an elevator in the Prescott Community Center. The elevator will provide access to the three floors in the building. The request will be voted on at the 2022 Spring Town Meeting. The Friends of Prescott will submit an application to the Massachusetts Office on Disabilities in the fall of 2022 to fund construction of the elevator. The need for the elevator was cited in the 2019 Self Evaluation/Transition Plan for town-owned buildings prepared for the Town by the Northeast Independent Living Program (NILP).

FIRE DEPARTMENT LOCK BOXES

Member Tom Pistorino reported on research he had done with the towns of Weston and Wayland on the installation of lock boxes to be used by the Fire Department to enter houses in an emergency. Only the Fire Department has the master key to access the lock box. Grants are available to help cover the cost of the program. The Commission could work with the Fire Department, the Council on Aging, the Groton Electric Light Department and others to implement the project. Contacting seniors to provide information on the program is an important step in the process. Member Pistorino will continue to research what other communities are doing.

NEW MEMBER

Former Commission Chairman Mark Shack recently moved from Groton Commons to new housing in Fitchburg and is no longer on the Commission. Jane Fry can no longer be a member because she is on the Board of Registrars.

The motion was made by Lynne Pistorino, seconded by Tom Pistorino, to recommend that the Town Manager appoint Judy Anderson to fill the vacancy on the Commission. The motion passed unanimously.

REORGANIZATION

The motion was made by Tom Pistorino, seconded by Lynne Pistorino, to elect Bob Fleischer as chairman of the Commission. The motion passed unanimously.

The motion was made by Lynne Pistorino, seconded by Bob Fleischer, to elect Tom Pistorino as Vice Chairman. The motion passed unanimously.

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

The Commission discussed the on-going issue regarding lack of handrails at the steps to the front door at the Prescott Community Center. Several residents have complained about the lack of handrails at this entrance. Past Building Commissioners have ruled that the handrails are not required in the Building Code unless there are more than four risers.

Unfortunately, resident Judy Anderson was injured when she fell at the top of the stairs. She sent an email to the Town Manager describing what happened to her. The Town Manager and Building Commissioner submitted an application to the Historic Districts Commission (HDC) for approval of the new hand rails to be installed. The present Building Commissioner cited compliance with the Architectural Access Board Regulations in this letter to the HDC.

Judy Anderson was present for the discussion and described the incident. She also noted that the signage regarding access in the front area of the building is very confusing and should be improved.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
ADA Coordinator