

COMMISSION ON ACCESSIBILITY
MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2023, 1:00 PM
MINUTES

Chairman Fleischer called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM at the Town Hall

Members present: Judy Anderson, Bob Fleischer, Lynne Pistorino, and Tom Pistorino

Member absent: Alan Taylor

Others present: ADA Coordinator Michelle Collette, Trails Committee Chair Paul Funch,
Select Board Member Peter Cunningham

PROPOSED TRAIL ON RICH STATE FOREST

The Commission met with Trails Committee Chairman Paul Funch and Select Board Member Peter Cunningham who requested that the Commission write a letter of support to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) for the grant to construct a loop on the existing trail, and provide additional parking at the Rich State Forest. The DCR approved the grant application in January 2022, but objected to the portion of the trail and observation area to be constructed in the riverfront area, protected under the Wetlands Protection Act. The Trails Committee then reduced the observation area from 25' x 50' to 25' x 30' with a rest area bench that will be 10' x 20'.

Member Tom Pistorino asked why the DCR reduced the grant amount and disapproved of the observation area and bench. Mr. Funch said it is not a matter of funding, but the observation area and bench are not in compliance with the Wetlands Protection Act. The DCR also said maintenance would be a burden on the DCR.

Mr. Funch said the Trails Committee met with the Groton Conservation Commission, and the Commission felt the project meets performance standards of the Wetlands Protection Act.

Member Bob Fleischer asked if the observation area and bench would be on DCR land. Mr. Funch said it may be on DCR land or on the closed Nod Road dump, owned by the Town. It is the most feasible site for the loop trail.

ADA Coordinator Michelle Collette suggested that the Commission consider writing a letter to the DCR regarding the trail which is designed to be accessible to people with disabilities, noting that the existing trail is accessible and used frequently by many people who may not be able to access trails on other conservation properties.

The motion was made by Judy Anderson, seconded by Tom Pistorino, that the Commission send a letter of support for the proposed trail, as designed, to the DCR with a copy to the Massachusetts Office on Disabilities (MOD).

The Commission said it would like to review the letter and will meet again on March 22, 2023.

The motion was withdrawn.

March 13, 2023

Page 2

The motion was made by Judy Anderson, seconded by Tom Pistorino, to approve the minutes of November 30, 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 3 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
ADA Coordinator