

**COMMISSION ON ACCESSIBILITY
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 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

PROPOSED TRAIL ON RICH STATE FOREST

The Commission reviewed the draft letter to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) supporting the proposed loop trail and observation area at the Rich State Forest as part of the DCR grant awarded in January 2022.

The motion was made by Tom Pistorino, seconded by Judy Anderson, to approve the letter to DCR as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMENTS TO THE ZBA - GROTON FARMS COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT, 500 MAIN STREET

The Commission reviewed the draft letter to the Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) on the proposed Groton Farms Comprehensive Permit housing project. The letter states:

“At its meetings on March 15 and March 22, 2023, the Commission on Accessibility reviewed the plans and supporting documents submitted by 500 MG, LLC for a Comprehensive Permit to construct 200 residential rental units on property located at 500 Main Street. The Committee voted to offer the following comments:

1. The project must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board Regulations (AAB), 521 CMR. The Building Commissioner is responsible for interpretation and enforcement of the AAB regulations at the local level. Any variances or appeals must be submitted to the Architectural Access Board in accordance with the Provisions of 521 CMR 4.00.
2. The General Project Overview states that 5% of the project or 10 units will be universally accessible and that those units will be in the multifamily buildings. All garden style units are “handicapped adaptable” (see Page 4). Will all units in the multifamily buildings be “adaptable?” Please ask the applicant to explain what the process will be to “adapt” a unit to be “accessible.” What modifications will be necessary to convert such units?
3. The Project Overview also states that there will be additional “hearing-impaired units.” Where will such units be located and are they being counted as part of the required 5% accessible units? Please ask the applicant to describe what provisions will be made for people who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (Page 4).
4. Are there any plans to create accessible units for people who are Blind or have Low Vision?

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5. The Architectural Drawings section describes a proposed club house with a variety of amenities including a private swimming pool and fitness center (Page 14). Will those amenities be universally accessible for all residents?"

The motion was made by Tom Pistorino, seconded by Judy Anderson, to approve the letter to the ZBA as drafted. The motion passed unanimously.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The Committee decided to meet every two months on Wednesday at 2 PM on the following dates, unless there is a reason to reschedule:

May 10, 2023

July 12, 2023

September 13, 2023

November 8, 2023

LOCK-BOXES UPDATE

Member Tom Pistorino reported that he has been working with Deputy Fire Chief Arthur Cheeks on the purchase and installation of lock boxes. To date 10-12 boxes have been purchased. He suggested that the Fire Department and Commission on Accessibility do presentations on the voluntary program at the Senior Center and the Groton Public Library. Information could also be included in the Groton Electric Light Department's monthly bills.

Meeting adjourned at 3 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
ADA Coordinator