

Commission on Disability Meeting  
Minutes from November 17th, 2015, 4:30PM  
Worcester City Hall, Levi Lincoln Chamber 3<sup>rd</sup> Flr.

**Attendance:**

**Members Present:** Francesca Abbey, Robert Bilotta, Robert Bureau, Herbert Cremer, Nancy Garr-Colzie, Paul Keister, Elizabeth Myska, Joseph Prochilo, Douglas Russell, Jr., Stephen Stolberg, Susan Swanson (via remote participation– late)

**Staff:** Jayna Turchek, Dawn E. Clark

**Guests:** Michael Gerhardt, CitySquare II Development Co. LLC; John Michalak, Nitsch Engineering; Eric Batista, City Manager’s Office

**Members of the Public:**

Michael Kennedy, Scott Ricker

**Welcome, Call to Order & Introductions**

Chairperson Paul Keister welcomed commission members and the members of the public present.

**Approval of October 20th, 2015 Minutes**

Commissioner Colzie - Garr moved to approve the minutes as written. Commissioner Stolberg seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Presentation on winter sidewalk snow removal**

Eric Batista, City Manager’s Project Manager, provided an overview of the city’s plans for snow removal for the upcoming 2015-2016 winter season. Last year, Worcester had a record snowfall of 10 feet of snow which made snow removal on streets and sidewalks a challenge for all including the city. One of these challenges was of the city’s procured

contractor's equipment failure for clearing streets. When seeking other contractors including ones used by the city to clear the streets, equipment failure and other resources left the city without adequate ability to clear the snow as expected. A second contractor was hired to clear sidewalks.

This year the city is putting out 2 Request for Proposals (RFP) for clearing the streets. (It was one RFP that gave us an opportunity to add 2 contractors on it, option A and option B.) One, Plan A, is the regular street cleaning contract and the second, Plan B, would be a backup contact in the event such is needed.

A snow removal council item will be going to City Council on November 24<sup>th</sup> for review. To date, the snow removal ordinance, as follows, has not changed.

- Sidewalks must be cleared with a four (4) feet wide path for safe pedestrian travel within ten (10) hours snow ceases to fall.
- There is a \$75 fine for those who do not adhere to the city ordinance for snow and ice removal.

The list of agencies willing to shovel snow for elderly and disabled residents is being updated. There has been indication that some of the agencies who have done this in the past are not able to continue this service. The updated list will be published on the city website and will be sent to Director Turchek for distribution to the commission members for their information.

### **Presentation: Update on CitySquare redesign of the plaza level area**

Michael Gerhardt of CitySquare II Development Co. LLC and John Michalak of Nitsch Engineering gave the following update regarding the redesign of the plaza level area.

Due to the built conditions of the underground parking garage structure, a portion of Front Street (including sidewalks) will need to be re-graded to meet Architectural Access Board (building code) requirements. The portion of Front Street to be reworked spans from the intersection of Mercantile and Front Streets to the intersection of Trumbull Street (not yet opened) and Front Street. Drainage will not be impacted. The cross slope will not exceed 1.5% and one active sidewalk will remain open at all times during construction.

### **Discussion on Charlie card for persons with disabilities (Liz Myska)**

The Charlie Card is a state-wide public transportation pass issued through the Metropolitan Boston Transportation Authority (MBTA) for access to all public modes of transportation. The fee for the pass can vary depending on eligibility.

The issue brought forth by Commissioner Myska was related to the location where the pass could be obtained. She indicated one had to go to Boston to secure the Charlie Card to provide eligibility documents for certain disabled riders. While some riders might be able to secure the card in Worcester she requested the commission advocate that all local riders be able to secure the Charlie Card in Worcester. Based on this request, Director Turchek agreed to reach out to MBTA and WTRA to bring information about securing a card in Worcester.

### **Discussion and vote on Commission's priorities for emergency preparedness strategies for the coming year**

The Commission agreed to submit their priorities for emergency preparedness strategies for 2015 to Director Turchek and will take a vote on its top five priorities in December.

### **Discussion on earlier Commission meeting start times for the winter months**

The Commission voted to continue meeting beginning at 4:30PM.

### **Review of AAB notices and applications**

Decisions: 64 Beacon Street, Docket # V15 049

### **Suggestions for upcoming agenda items**

- Training on making buildings accessible

### **Announcements:**

- **WRTA Transportation Planning Advisory Meeting**  
November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015, 1-2:30pm, WRTA Building, 287 Grove St.
- **REDD (Rights, Equality and Dignity for the Disabled)**  
December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015, Public Library: Banx Room, Salem Sq.
- **Audio Journal, Accent on Ability Radio Program:** December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015, 5-6pm, <http://www.audiojournal.net/>
- **Next Commission on Disability meeting:** December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015 4:30pm.
- **Emergency Preparedness Meeting:** May (date TBA) 2016 at 8:30 am, Parks Department, 50 Skyline Drive

**Emergency Preparedness Tip:** People with disabilities may want to consider having several gallon containers of water per person at home for emergencies.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned.