

Commission on Disability Meeting
Minutes from April 21, 2015, 4:30PM
Worcester City Hall, Levi Lincoln Chamber 3rd Flr.

Attendance:

Members Present: Francesca Abbey, Rachel Shannon Brown, Susan Fahlbeck, Nancy Garr-Colzie, Paul Keister, Elizabeth Myska, Joseph Prochilo, Stephen Stolberg, Susan Swanson

Members Absent: Herbert Cremer

Staff: Jayna Turchek; Sundar Layalu; Dawn E. Clark

Guests: Kathleen Hylka and Brian Duffy, Representatives from UMass Memorial Medical Center

Members of the Public: Michael Kennedy; Paul Krister; K. McGuniess; Scott Ricker; Tom Shields; J. Sosnowich

Welcome, Call to Order & Introductions

The Chairperson Steven Stolberg welcomed commission members and the members of the public present. He invited members of the public to sign in. After the meeting was called to order, the commissioners introduced themselves. Associate Commissioners Abbey and Prochilo were elevated as Commissioners for this meeting. [Associate Prochilo was elevated temporarily until Sue Swanson arrived].

Moment of Reflection on the life of Jacqueline Norton (1964 – 2015) former member of the Commission on Disability

Michael Kennedy, Access Coordinator from CLW, offered a short eulogy on Jackie's life. He knew Jackie since 2000 when she was the secretary of the Commission. She was a fierce advocate with a hidden disability herself. She always had something to say that was related to disability issues. She was almost always in the audience for the Commission on Disability. Mike concluded with a request for a moment of silence.

Approval of March 17th, 2015 Minutes

Unanimously approved as written

Presentation of Union Station bathroom updates (John O'Dell)

Mr. O'Dell had a conflict and item tabled. Ms. Turchek distributed material related to the construction and renovation of the restrooms at Union Station for the Commission's information.

Local Commission input: UMass Memorial – University Campus, AAB Parking Variance (Continued from January 2015)

Representative from UMass thanked the Commission for the input received in January. They learned their request for variance to use valet was not universally considered a benefit by users.

As a result of the feedback, a revised plan was presented in an effort to bring the parking at UMass Memorial – University Campus into full compliance. Brian Duffy, Senior Architectural Engineer, Project Manager for the Medical School (property owner) working with the Medical Center presented the following information. He will be handling the design and construction of the project.

Referring to the handout, he explained the preliminary report. They would be adding 45 accessible parking spaces serving the hospital's patients and visitors. This will bring the site to 84 HP spaces. This will negate the request for the variance requested.

These spaces will be distributed in three areas: the Benedict Building Lot closest to the main entrance with a target total of 27 HP spots with most of the van accessible spaces for the campus, the Emergency Room Lot with 5 HP spaces, and the South Garage serving the Ambulatory Care building with 52 HP spots. Fifth floor is for employee parking. Most of the work will be done at the Benedict Lot because of the need to regrade the surface to meet the slope code. They will need to regrade at the ER Lot as well. A civil engineer has been hired to develop these plans.

The work inside the garage will be predominantly restriping. There will be an accessible path going from the Benedict parking lot to the main entrance of the Hospital and Benedict Building.

They are working with security so that only HP spaces are used by vehicles with appropriate identification. The work is to be completed this summer.

Responses to questions from Commissioners and public:

- The percentage of HP spaces compared with the total number of spaces was calculated on square footage (suggested by AAB) since no lot is specifically designated for a particular building. The consultant offered to provide this rather complicated figuring which was not immediately available. The 84 four spaces do not represent the entire campus, only those serving the three buildings. There are other parking areas on the campus.
- Medical students park on an off-site location. Fourth year students have the option of applying for on-site parking. There are multiple lots for students and employees. These are ID Badge access and parking enforcement. There are dedicated people who spend the day writing tickets. Sometimes this can get complicated when a student or employee might be parking as a patient; HIPPA then may come into play and maintain the person's privacy.

The UMass Representative hopes the Commission will support the Center in withdrawing the variance. They would like to come back with their updated policy to see if there may be adjustment as needed.

- If an employee is found to have parked in a patient's space, Representative believes there is a \$50 fine and repeated offenses get a boot. They are working on a more stringent penalty.
- Commissioner Brown appreciated that comments given were considered. She hesitates to give full endorsement because not sure if 84 HP spaces meets the minimum requirement and would certainly encourage going beyond the requirement.

The Center's Representative appreciated the encouragement and indicated a willingness to consider based on the monitoring that takes place to indicate such a decision. The calculation numbers for how the 84 spaces were determined will be submitted to the Commission for review.

- HP spots at the original hospital entrance are no longer there, where are they? There is a new entrance now and was replaced by the valet service. Center representatives could not speak to the original parking situation, but said that given the present situation the Center is working to meet the code for accessible parking.
- The 11 designated HP spaces in the South Parking Garage are not currently compliance. The Center Rep indicated past of the work that is planned is to restripe these spaces for compliance.
- Valet parking (staging area is closest to the door) trumpets accessible parking by putting HP spaces in the Benedict Lot. The Center Rep indicated all campus users needed to be served.
- Requested full report of the January and April meetings be sent to the AAB.
- More HP spaces can fit into the lots. The Center Rep assures that they would put as many HP spots in these lots as possible, but that there are underground utilities that may prevent putting spaces where the surface area would indicate this was possible.

The Center Reps want to be as accessible as possible. They are working with consultants to determine what is possible related to their plan presented at this meeting.

- A conversation needs to take place with the AAB to see if the variance can be withdrawn and a time extension can be granted.

Chairman Stolberg thanked the UMass Reps for the work they have done to address the issues raised at the January meeting.

Informational Communications: T&G article March 30, 2015, Update of Changes to polling locations

Ms. Turchek wanted to formally bring this to the Commission's attention. The Elections Commission is looking at the Polling Study recently done by the Center for Human-Centered Design, Inc. and will be making recommendation for changes in the future.

Presentation of Accessible Housing Map (Sundar Layalu)

Ms. Turchek introduced the project. Sundar is presenting a draft Accessible Housing Map based on identified and verified accessible housing (rentals) in Worcester. The Commission was asked to identify the same if the housing did not appear. This is the first step of many to promote accessible housing in Worcester. The map was presented informally at last Saturday's Fair Housing Conference.

The map shows hospitals and other enmities. There are three accessible housing projects on Front Street, two with parking. Using the ADA and HUD guidelines for accessible hosing, he contacted HUD, Steve Stolberg at CLW, Inc. and others to identify accessible housing in the city. Fifty-eight building have accessible housing units. These include Worcester Housing Authority Projects.

Using technology and location of public entities only it is calculated that these 58 (530 units) accessible housing buildings (not including two and three deckers) are located 250 feet within the nearest bus stop except for one building. Most of the accessible housing is in district 4.

Responses from the Commission:

- Could the one building not within the 250 feet from a bus stop be shared with the WRTA.

Review of draft orientation and accessibility guide to city hall (Sundar Layalu)

The guide shows where the various offices are located including accessible restrooms and parking.

Ms. Turchek shared the City Hall guide comes out of a suggestion made by the Institute for Human Centered Design to provide programmatic access for people with disabilities. This would be available on-line or at various locations in City Hall to give people who may have never been to City Hall an orientation to parking and other amenities and offices at City Hall. Hopefully this will be a model for other City owned public buildings and is intended to include more than accessibility features.

Response from the Commission:

- The colors of red and green seem to blend perhaps using other colors would be easy to read
- There is an open-air garage on Elm Street that might be included on the map.

The Commissioners thanked Sundar for a great job and wished him well as his last day is Friday.

Review of AAB notices and applications: No City facilities reviewed

First and Second Notices:

- 65 Milton Street, Docket #C15 078
- 51 Myrtle Street, Docket #C15 082
- 22 Front Street, Docket #C15 081

Responses:

- 102 Russell Street, Docket #C14 069 and V14 237
- 315 Grove Street, Docket #C14 155
- 65 Milton Street, Docket #C15 078 (2)
- 222 Harrington Way, Docket #C14 131

Decisions and Resolutions:

- 93 Grand Street, Docket #V13 303

- 64 Beacon Street, Docket #V 13 049

Announcements

The following announcements appeared on the agenda for information:

- WRTA Transportation Planning Advisory Meeting
June 17th, 1-2:30pm, WRTA Building, 287 Grove St.
- REDD (Rights, Equality and Dignity for the Disabled)
Tuesday May 5th, 5-6:30pm, Worcester Public Library- Saxe Room
- Audio Journal, Accent on Ability Radio Program: May
12 <http://www.audiojournal.net/> th, 2015, 5-6pm.
- Next Commission on Disability meeting: May 19th, 2015 4:30pm.
- Local Emergency Planning Committee Meeting, Tuesday May 12th, 2015 8:30
AM, 50 Skyline Dr.

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

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00PM.