

Marblehead Disabilities Commission Meeting Minutes for April 12, 2018

Members Present: Laurie Blaisdell, Katie Farrell, Caroline Curtis, Andrea Mountain, Sue Harris

Meeting called to order at 4:15 p.m.

Last Meeting Minutes: Minutes from the January 11, 2018 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Letters to the Commission: The Board of Selectman received and forwarded to the Commission brochures about the Home Modification Loan Program, a program of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission in collaboration with the Community Economic Development Assistance Program. Members agreed to consider including information about this program on the Commission website.

Town Warrant Article 33, Public Access Over Railroad Right of Way: Katie described this warrant Article to be voted on at Town Meeting that would change the stewardship of the railroad right of way ("Trail") by making the Board of Selectman responsible for maintaining the top 12 inches of the Trail. If the Article passes, the top 12 inches would be Town property and subject to the ADA. Members voted unanimously to authorize Laurie to write a letter to the Board of Selectmen and Becky Curran to remind them that revisions to the Trail must be ADA compliant and to request involvement in the planning and implement process for the proposed changes to insure that the surfacing of and access to the Trail is optimal for those in wheelchairs and with other disabilities.

Complete Streets Program: Discussion of the Complete Streets Program policy, recently adopted by the Board of Selectman. Members agreed that Laurie will write a letter to Becky Curran, Town Planner, and the Board of Selectmen to request that wheelchairs be added to the list of "transportation modes" referenced in the policy and to encourage that accessibility for disabled individuals be included in any plans to implement this policy.

Celebrate Marblehead 2018: Andrea brought to our attention this program that the Chamber of Commerce is implementing to encourage street visibility for local businesses during the period April 15 through October 8. Materials sent to Chamber members specifically note that displays must be ADA compliant and that outdoor displays must leave a specified number of inches of sidewalk space for passerbys. Members noted that these instructions are a positive development and agreed that we should monitor compliance to the extent possible and respectfully bring to the attention of business owners sidewalk displays that block sidewalk accessibility.

Handicapped Parking Spaces at Senior Housing Locations: Caroline raised the issue of non-compliant parking at Marblehead's senior living facilities, including a lack of adequate handicapped parking spaces and assigned parking for residents in handicapped designated spaces to residents without handicapped parking placards. She will continue to investigate and bring her findings to the next meeting.

Old Business: Laurie reviewed her contacts with Ryan Kelly about his request to include information about Affordable College Community on the Commission's website. The Commissions agreed that, based on the responses, the website will not be listed.

Website: Members reviewed and approved proposed revisions and updates to the Commission website pages proposed by Sue. Discussion to be continued at the next meeting. Andrea will begin making the approved revisions.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 10, at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Harris, Member