



Town of Sheffield
Commission on Disabilities
Town Hall – 21 Depot Square
P.O. Box 325
Sheffield, Massachusetts 01257



Friday, November 20, 2020
Virtual meeting by conference call

Commission Members

Present: Laura Grunfeld, Chair
Pam Mercer
Gail Mullen
Priscilla Rueger
Absent: Rick Brown
Guests: None

Grunfeld chaired the meeting. She called the Commission on Disabilities (COD) meeting officially open at 10:33 AM.

Grunfeld read the required opening statement: *In accordance with Gov. Bakers 3/12/20 Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting law, and the Governor's 3/15/20 Order limiting the number of people who may gather in one place, this meeting of the Town of Sheffield Commission on Disabilities, is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public is permitted (other than virtually), but every effort will be made to ensure you can participate in this meeting. When we hear by a ping sound that someone has joined the meeting we will ask that person to introduce themselves.*

1.) Approval of August 21 and September 21 minutes: By consensus, the August 21 and September 21 minutes were approved.

2.) Covered Bridge Park Accessibility: Mercer reported that, as of last week, the boulder had not been moved. Mercer will contact the Highway Department by email.

3.) Sheffield Times' Articles: Mercer's second column about the vernal pool trail at the Southern Berkshire Regional School was published in the November/December issue of the Sheffield Times. Mercer will submit her third column for publication in the January/February issue in mid-December. The COD members gave Mercer, along with Grunfeld's editing assistance, permission to submit the next column without further review from the COD.

Mullen will write a short notice for the March/April issue of the Sheffield Times regarding the form that people with disabilities may submit to the Police Department so that, when responding to a call, emergency personnel are alerted to the presence of people with disabilities and are prepared to assist properly.

4.) COD Mailing: There was discussion about the COD mailing which was meant to distribute an accessibility survey. We decided that instead of putting our energies into the survey we would tackle some of the items listed in the ADA Self-Evaluation.

5.) Members' Items:

- a. Mullen spoke with Library Director Lindquist to confirm that there is an emergency evacuation plan in place and that emergency personnel are aware of the plan. The Library Board does not want staff responsible for lifting or moving people in an emergency so persons with mobility disabilities will wait for emergency personnel in a designated area. We asked Mullen to inquire as to where those areas are located and if there is signage directing patrons to these areas. She will also check with Rene Wood to find out if she has connected with the emergency personnel about learning how to use the evacuation sleds. Town maintenance has plans to replace or reposition the trashcans and paper towel dispensers in the restrooms as they block the area that is meant to remain clear for access by those using wheelchairs.
- b. Mullen will move COD archives that are stored at her house to the Town Hall.
- c. Grunfeld reported that Select Board Chair Rene Wood said that the Town has been awarded the grant for flashing beacons at three of the sidewalks crossing Route 7. This should make those crossings much safer for pedestrians.
- d. Grunfeld reported on the progress of the Community Development Block Grant Designer Review Committee on which she and COD member Brown serve along with other members of the community. Plans will soon be finalized that will bring the Police Station's front and rear entrances, the Library's front entrance and courtyard exits, and the restroom at the Town Park into compliance with the American's with Disabilities Act and the Architectural Access Board regulations. After the plans are selected another grant will be needed for construction of these projects.

6.) Visitors' Items: No visitors were present.

7.) Items for next meeting's agenda: Determining what projects to tackle from the ADA Self-Evaluation.

8.) Date, time, place for next meeting: Friday, January 15, 10:30 AM. By conference call.

9.) Communications: None

10.) Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted:



Laura Grunfeld
Chair, Commission on Disabilities