



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



Friday, January 15, 2021
Virtual meeting by conference call

Commission Members

Present: Laura Grunfeld, Chair
Rick Brown
Pam Mercer
Gail Mullen
Priscilla Rueger

Absent: None

Guests: None

Grunfeld chaired the meeting. She called the Commission on Disabilities (COD) meeting officially open at 10:36 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 November 20, 2021 minutes: By consensus, the November 20, 2020 minutes were approved.

2.) ADA Self-Evaluation Priorities: The Chair of the Select Board, Rene Wood, asked that the COD submit a list of priorities for accessibility projects. We reviewed the list of projects in the ADA Self Evaluation, identifying a) which are complete and can be moved from the Pending list to the Completed list, b) which require a grant or other funding, and c) which could be done without additional funding either by ourselves or other Town staff with a little encouragement from the COD.

We assigned Town departments to COD members so that they can connect with the heads of these departments and get updates as to where we stand with current projects. Mullen will get updates for the Library and the Police Department. Mercer will get updates for the Senior Center and the Fire Department. Grunfeld will get updates from LaBombard for the Town Hall, Town Center, Town Park, the Highway Department, and the Transfer Station.

When we reconvene in February, we will have had time to individually consider which are our priorities. We will report with our updates and, as a group, determine our suggested priorities. These will be reported to Wood and LaBombard.

3.) **Covered Bridge Park Accessibility:** A boulder at the Covered Bridge Park blocks the path for wheelchairs. Mercer will remind the Town to move it.

4.) **Sheffield Times' Articles:** Mercer's Accessible Outdoors column was on hiatus for the January/February issue but will return for the next issue.

Mullen plans to 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.

5.) **COD Annual Report:** Grunfeld will prepare the COD annual report and Brown will assist with editing before it is turned in by February 12.

6.) **Members' Items:**

- a. Mullen stated that the archives stored at her house are not yet moved to the Town Hall.
- b. Grunfeld reported that she requested the usual \$300 for the COD annual budget.
- c. Mullen will contact Great Barrington's Town Manager, Mark Pruhinski, to get an update on the formation of the Great Barrington COD and see if they need support.
- d. Grunfeld reviewed some of the COD's accomplishments from 2020, many made possible by the grant writing skills of Rene Wood. This included:
 - i) A Massachusetts Office on Disability grant funding pocket-talker assistive listening devices for the Town Hall, a Media Center at the Library, and accessible parking signs.
 - ii) A Shared Streets & Spaces grant funding flashing lights at three crosswalks on Route 7 and upgraded driveway crossings in the Village Center to be more compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
 - iii) A Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for housing rehab, often used to build ramps and other features making homes accessible.
 - iv) Another CDBG grant funded the design work for major renovations that will help bring the Police Station, the Library, and the Town Park into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - v) A Complete Streets grant application the COD hopes will lead to improved accessible parking and replacing the brick sidewalks in the center of town.

7.) **Visitors' Items:** No visitors were present.

8.) **Items for next meeting's agenda:** Reports from Mercer, Mullen, and Grunfeld regarding ADA self-evaluation updates from Town departments. Discussion to determine what projects we will recommend to the Select Board as priorities from the ADA Self-Evaluation list. Sheffield Times articles.

9.) **Date, time, place for next meeting:** Friday, February 19, 10:30 AM. This will be a virtual meeting, by Zoom (if allowed) and conference call.

10.) **Communications:** None

11.) **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 AM.

Respectfully submitted:



Laura Grunfeld
Chair, Commission on Disabilities