



WELLFLEET COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES  
300 Main Street – Town Hall  
Wellfleet, Massachusetts 02667

The Wellfleet Commission on Disabilities met on October 12, 2023 remotely via Zoom  
Members Present: Kate Clemens, George Harris, Jim McAuliffe, Robert Dupuis, Suzanne Grout Thomas,  
ADA Coordinator

Absent: Fred Gentner

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m.

**Old Business**

1. The minutes of the July 19, 2023 meeting were approved.

2. Submittal of Massachusetts Commission on Disabilities (MCOB) Grant Applications

Mr. Harris reported that he worked with Ms. Thomas and other Town officials to prepare and submit planning and project grant proposals to the MCOB by the September 15, 2023 deadline.

3. Communication on Grants

Commission members decided to inform Jeff Dougan, (MOD Assistant Director of Community Services) of the Commission's progress since the Commission's two highly productive meetings with him. Mr. McAuliffe will compose an email to inform Mr. Dougan that the Town has gone forward to file both MOD planning and project grants and to express appreciation for the resources he provided and his guidance and encouragement.

Commission members commented that substandard conditions will be identified through the self-evaluation under the planning grant and prioritized for remediation under the Town's capital improvement plan.

4. Follow up on MOBI Mats CPC Proposal

The Community Preservation Act (CPC) proposal entitled "Accessibility to Town Ponds and the Bay Beaches" on the Town Meeting warrant in the amount of \$32,760 was approved by the April 29, 2023 Town Meeting. The proposal includes installation and storage of MOBI mats and installation of a sunshade next to a platform at the end of the Mayo Beach boardwalk. This proposal was submitted by the Wellfleet Recreation Department and recommended by the Wellfleet Commission on Disabilities.

Commission members inquired about the status of the projects.

5. Update on non-conforming ramp at Hatches

Ms. Grout Thomas asked Rebecca Eldridge for a copy of the complaint about the ramp that Ms. Clemens filed with the Town as a private citizen. Ms. Eldridge was unable to locate the complaint. Commission members commented that the complaint response procedure needs to be reviewed.

Ms. Grout Thomas offered to facilitate an on-site meeting at Hatches including the owner, Adrain Kmiec, a Commission member, and the interim Building Commissioner to review the conditions and consider options. Mr. McAuliffe offered to contact Valerie Fletcher of the Institute for Human Centered Design concerning the participation of representatives of the Northeast ADA Center.

Ms. Clemens made a motion that the Commission go forward in gathering information to increase understanding of the Hatches situation. Ms. Grout Thomas will contact the owner of Hatches and the interim Building Commissioner concerning an onsite meeting at Hatches including a Commission member. Mr. McAuliffe will contact Valerie Fletcher concerning a site visit by representatives of the Northeast ADA Center, either separately or in conjunction with the meeting arranged by Ms. Grout Thomas. Mr. Dupuis seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

#### 6. ADA Compliance of Chequessett Neck Bridge Project

In an email to Ms. Grout Thomas, Wellfleet DPW Commissioner Jay Norton inquired whether the Commission is planning to review the “*existing ADA document for the Town*” and whether the Commission will provide “*feedback/blessing*” on the ADA related components of the design and construction of the Chequessett Neck Bridge, which is part of the Herring River Restoration.

Mr. Harris indicated that the Commission on Disabilities has an advisory rather than a regulatory role and is not empowered to authorize design and construction plans. Mr. McAuliffe commented that the accessibility of the Chequessett Neck Bridge might be assessed for ADA compliance as part of the self-study, if the Town’s planning grant is approved.

Mr. Dupuis indicated that the Commission could review the overall design of the project to ensure that the provisions for handicapped access are in place. The Commission lacks the authority to review the specifications. This is left to the project engineers. Mr. Harris asked Mr. Dupuis to provide him with a summary of his remarks. Mr. Harris indicated that he would circulate these remarks to Commission members for comment and contact Mr. Norton to clarify the role of the Commission.

#### **New Business**

Commission members recognized Ms. Grout Thomas for her leadership and diligence throughout the grant application process. It would not have happened without her! The Commission appreciates that she did all of this in addition to her primary responsibilities and on her own time.

Ms. Grout Thomas reported that there is now an *ADA INFORMATION* link on the Town webpage which connects to the Grievance Procedure and resources such as the Massachusetts Office on Disability and the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board.

It was moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

Next meeting: To be determined

Respectfully submitted,  
James McAuliffe, Secretary