

MAYOR'S COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

**Boston City Hall
Piedmont Room, 5th Floor
5:30p.m. -7:30 p.m.**

October 17, 2012,

AGENDA

- Introductions
- Sidewalk/Curb Cut Update – Jay Walsh
- Approval of August Minutes
- Commissioner's report: Kristen McCosh
- Chair's Report: Carl Richardson
- Architectural Access Update – Kathryn Aldrich
- Follow up on request by John Kelley to support Second Thoughts initiative
- Set Date for Election of Officers for Commission
- Public Input
- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Minutes for Wednesday, October 17th, 2012

5th Floor Piemonte Room Boston City Hall 5:30-7:30PM

Present:

(CR) Carl Richardson, Acting-chair
 (HW) Heather Watkins
 (SL) Suzanne Leveille
 (JWard) Janice Ward – (non-active)
 (BR) Ben Roux
 (AS) Allegra Stout
 (RN) Raine Newman

Staff Present:

(KM) Kristen McCosh, Commissioner
 (KA) Kathryn Aldrich

Absent:

(JWinske) John Winske

Guest:

(JWalsh) Jay Walsh – Office of Neighborhood Services

August Meeting Minutes: Minutes approved by board.

Introduction of New Members:

Ben Roux
 Allegra Stout
 Raine Newman

Sidewalk/Curb Ramp Update: Jay Walsh, Office of Neighborhood Services

PROWAG requires the City to upgrade 5,000 curb ramps over the next 15 years in addition to the curb ramp work associated with roadway construction. The City has committed to composite pale yellow tactile warning strips. The pale yellow color was raised as an issue within historic districts, with strong push back from neighborhood groups and associations.

The Commission is now being presented with a color other than pale yellow, as the historic district neighborhood groups and associations have pushed for brick red tactile warning on standard concrete ramps, flares and landing pads. This is the decided overall compromise, as the goal is consistency citywide and the ramp decision is holding up road construction in historic neighborhoods.

August Minutes: Approved by Board.

Commissioner's Report: Kristen McCosh

Welcome to new members! The office is working through transitions as there are 7 funded positions, but only 3 people working on staff at the moment. There is a position open for an Advocacy Specialist, temporary staff person; Jesse Holm will start on Nov. 1st as the Program Specialist. The Program Specialist will work on the handicap parking program, and also look into examples such as the Landmark Commission rules and regulations regarding sidewalk jurisdiction. The hope is that the position will have

the opportunity to expand on programs the Commission offers. Jesse Holm will attend the November hearing, and start coordination with the board.

Disability Mentoring Day was held on October 11th with Mass Rehab, 10 mentees matched with 10 departments. There were 7 businesses present for networking and 3 people were offered jobs to make the event quite successful.

Disability Reframed: A Community Film Series on October 27th in coordination with the Cambridge Disability Commission for a social and educational event. The Film Series will take place at the Dorchester Kroc Center from 2-5pm, free parking available. Issue raised about captioning for the presented picture, is based on individual need – future film choices will be reviewed for captioning option ahead of time.

Chair's Report: Carl Richardson (Acting Chair)

One of the things John Kelly, the previous chair, had been working on was remote participation. Working with the State House on writing a bill regarding remote participation and waiving the Disability Commissions statewide in order to allow for quorum to be met remotely. Research and investigations are being done in order to consider the real possibility of these efforts. A request for Commission input and support will happen as this process moves along further.

City of Boston requested a number of blind individuals take part in a focus group to test the automated taxi cab equipment. New machines have been installed to make payment accessible with an audible device component. The focus group was done in coordination with Captain O'Connor.

At the State House on October 16th there was a White Cane Event, 2 kindergarten girls age 7 attended with their teachers and spoke at the event. Both girls have white cane skills and braille knowledge. It was very encouraging to witness the City of Boston working with these students in public schools to teach them necessary life skills.

Please send all ideas and agenda items before the next meeting.

KM noted that the Mayor is not able to approve remote participation, because the Open Meeting Law is such that all Commissions would then be subject to the changes. The Board has met with the Attorney General regarding the issue to further clarify the laws.

Architectural Access Report: Kathryn Aldrich

Worked with Commissioner McCosh and Office of Emergency Management on review of the Functional Needs Shelter Assessment hand-outs and process for Boston and surrounding areas. Comments were submitted to the OEM team working with TRC to establish a Functional Needs Shelter Readiness handout and work book, intake sheets, etc.

Working with Suzanne Taylor of the Freedom Trail Foundation, on a walking tour of the Freedom Trail to review the current level of accessibility of the locations and trail. Currently, there is very little to no access at all locations and a brochure with an accessible guide will be printed for 2013.

Working with a volunteer group to design and build the Universal Design Exhibit for Accessibility at the ABX Conference November 14-16th at the Boston Convention Center. To sign up to volunteer to staff

the booth: To view the sign up, go to:

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/30E0C49AEAF2AA02-booth/5344869

Connect Historic Boston, working on navigation, transportation and connections for pedestrians and bicycles. It is a Boston Transportation Department initiative to identify priority areas of need and create a realistic vision of ideas to make landmarks fully accessible for non-motorized traffic.

AAB Hearings coming up @ One Ashburton Place:

October 29th - First Parish Church – 2:00pm

November 19th – Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (new building) – 11:00am

Old Business:

Second Thoughts – John Kelly, previous chair, requested a letter of support regarding the assisted suicide question on the upcoming ballot. Second Thoughts is concerned that if Question #2 passes it will make it too easy for assisted suicide to happen.

SL noted that the initiative is flawed, unnecessary and a slippery slope for people with depression or a rushed physician.

VOTE: All in favor of Second Thoughts support.

New Agenda Items:

Ownership of street/responsibility of back alley access (PWD)

Hackney Access/new app

The Ride/ prices

Elections for Board

Events:

Allegra noted there is a forum on 11/1 for dual eligible for Medicare and Medicaid, and a forum for PCA orientation bill about workplace rights and fraud.

Public Input:

None

Meeting adjourne at 7:22pm

Commissioner's Report: Kristen McCosh

Chair's Report: Carl Richardson (Acting Chair)

Architectural Access Update: Kathryn Aldrich

The sub-committee is meeting every other week to review AAB applications for variance. The upcoming hearings to attend are:

September 24th @ 3:00pm – 299-301 Newbury Street

October 29th @ 2:00pm – First Parish Church

November 19th @ 11:00am – Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum New Building

Second Thoughts Presentation: John Kelly

See attached handouts.

Old Business:

New Business:

Adjourned.