

GREENFIELD COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS (CDA)

Jon Zon Community Center, 35 Pleasant St.

Minutes of Thursday, April 11, 2019

*****1:00 p.m.*****

Members present:

Lynne Kelley, Chair

Virginia DeSorgher

Margo Campbell

Douglas Mayo

Also present:

MJ Adams, Acting ADA Coordinator for the City of Greenfield

Robin Fordham, Grant Program Assistant for the Community & Economic Development Department

Members absent:

Cynthia Dodge, Vice Chair

Ms. Kelley called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

The meeting was recorded by Ms. Fordham, using the voice recorder belonging to the CED department.

Approval of Minutes:

March 14, 2019 minutes – Mr. Mayo moved to accept the minutes. Ms. DeSorgher seconded. Minutes approved 4-0.

Treasurer's Report:

Ms. Campbell reported that there were no changes to the fund balances. The General fund balance stands at \$202.00. The Handicapped Parking Fund balance stands at \$2,201.00.

Open Issues:

ADA Evaluation and transitional plan

Ms. Kelley asked if Ms. Adams had spoken with the Mass Office of Disability regarding the MOD grant which was not funded. Ms. Adams had not yet spoken with MOD, but reported that even without the MOD grant, the City would be replacing problematic brick on main street with brick stamped concrete, and placing curb cuts near the veteran's office, with work to happen in the summer. Ms. DeSorgher asked if the MOD grant was likely to be funded next year. Ms. Adams said there would be a longer planning process for the grant application this year, including feedback from the MOD, which should improve the application. Ms. DeSorgher asked if the grant noted the high disability population in Greenfield. Ms. Adams said yes, that was noted in grant that elders, parents with strollers, etc. would be assisted along with the disabled population.

Garden Cinema

Ms. DeSorgher provided an update on the Garden Cinema Architectural Access Board hearing. The hearing lasted approximately one hour, at which point the Board did not reach a decision, but said they would deliberate and let us know. Jeff Dugan was present, the former head of the AAB, as was George Gohl and his partner. Another individual, not from Greenfield, was present – she had submitted a complaint directly to the DOJ when not able to get into cinema, and she reported on her incident. Ms. DeSorgher spoke to Mr. Gohl via phone prior to the hearing to express appreciation for the Cinema, but that people had been waiting for access issues to be resolved, which included access to community events held at the theater. Mr. Gohl reported that he had been denied financing at Greenfield Savings Bank, and had started working with Greenfield Cooperative, and also reported that the roof was in need of repair in order to avoid the building being condemned. The Board said they were “underwhelmed” by his attention to matters, including not providing follow up reports, and asked for dates of when he contacted the banks. Ms. DeSorgher reiterated the interest in keeping theater open. Ms. DeSorgher reported that the DOJ complainant received a settlement of \$5k. Ms. DeSorgher reported that the recent request for a sign stating the elevator is not function has not been fulfilled. Mr. Mayo reported that the sign used to be there, but noted it not currently there.

Ms. Kelley noted that she had previously explained to Mr. Gohl that someone could make a complaint to the DOJ for lack of access, and the CDA was trying to avoid that by addressing current issues. A decision from the ABA will be forthcoming and forwarded to the CDA.

FRTA

Ms. Kelley reported that Ms. Dodge went to the FRTA task force meeting, in her absence the group chose to defer discussion to next meeting and have her report then.

CAM Training (Community Access Monitoring Program)

In regard to the CDA hosting a CAM meeting, Ms. Kelley reported that the MOD has already made its training schedule for 2019, but the CDA could look toward hosting in 2020 spring. Ms. Dodge has sent Ms. Kelly info on Olver Center for hosting, and it appears it would work nicely as a location. Ms. Kelley ask about the Olver Center policy on the non-refundable fee for use of room (\$50 for 1-3 hours, \$100 for 4-10 hours) if the CDA would/could cover this charge, and Ms. Adams confirmed that the CDA could use its funds. Ms. Kelley noted that this is a good location, especially now with the parking garage open. She will get back to MOD to let them know the CDA is interested in hosting in spring of 2020, and will follow up with further info on parking for meeting attendees.

Franklin County Bar Association

Ms. Kelley said FCBA President Benjamin Simanski has not gotten back to her yet about brown bag brainstorming meetings, but she will continue to try to connect with him.

Pleasant St. Apartment

Ms. DeSorgher reported that there was conflicting information on whether this met development met disability access standards, and that according to Eric Twarog, it did not need to meet standard. Ms. DeSorgher's understanding

was that is the development is over 4 units, 521 CMR applied. Ms. Desorgher talked with building inspector, Jeff Dugan. This development was new construction, multi-unit, and Jeff Dugan reported the bottom two units need to have entrance that is accessible. Ms. DeSorgher read the email to her from Jeff Dugan email, and will submit to Ms. Fordham as attachment to minutes.

Ms. DeSorgher reported that Mr. Twarog and Mr. Snow said from this point forward, anything new construction will come before the CDA for review (Mr. Snow is zoning board enforcement).

Ms. Adams noted that for Massachusetts fair housing, if there are less than 10 units, and no public money spent on the project, units should be made accessible as presented in the MA Fair Housing training. The challenge is layers of regulation, causing confusion for zoning enforcement. Ms. DeSorgher noted that as far as ADA, the most stringent code applies, and that this development is in a centrally located place ideal for a disabled tenant. Ms. DeSorgher noted that now that the building is complete and the permit was allowed, she didn't feel comfortable recommending filing a complaint. Ms. Kelley noted that if someone seeking housing was interested in this location, they could still bring a complaint, but that the CDA's goal should be to help advise the town to prevent this type of event in the future. Mr. Mayo asked if, considering the error is issuing the permit, whether planning board could find way to compensate for loss of two units in future projects from same developer, and Ms. DeSorgher said she would bring up at next Planning Board meeting. Regarding 132 Davis, Ms. DeSorgher confirmed that it is 4 units, and therefore below the threshold.

New Business

Fair Housing

Ms. Kelley requested that MJ send information from the Fair Housing Seminar.

Remote access

It was noted that when Ms. Dodge participated recently by phone, she could not hear sufficiently. There was a general discussion about using Zoom for

remote access, and whether or not IT could provide training on Zoom to the CDA. Ms. Fordham agreed to email a request to IT and cc Lynne Kelly.

Ms. Fordham agreed to report on an access request for handicapped parking space at a private residence.

Ms. Campbell discussed the possibility of creating a list of handicapped accessible businesses in town.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Next meeting:

1:00 p.m. on May 9, 2019, at the John Zon Community Center, 35 Pleasant Street

Ms. DeSorgher moved that the meeting be adjourned, and Ms. Campbell seconded the motion. The vote to adjourn was 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 2:21 p.m.