



## Arlington Disability Commission Agenda

**Date:** Wednesday, July 19, 2023

**Time:** 4:00pm

**Location:** Conducted by Hybrid Participation

Attendees: Grace Carpenter, Kerrie Fallon, Ileana Gatica, Cynthia DeAngelis, Janice Cagan-Teuber, Kari Sasportas, Michael Rademacher

Guests: Tim Ross, Johnathan Alessi, Andre DaSilva

Absent: Paul Parravano, Paul Raia, Cynthia DeAngelis,

### Agenda

1. Call to Order, Read Ground Rules, Welcome
2. Ground rules
  - a. [Please don't use Zoom chat/messaging during the meeting, unless that is your primary way to participate in a meeting. The co-chairs have disabilities that make it hard to deal with Zoom chat/messaging]
3. Approve Draft June Meeting Minutes
  - a. Cagan-Teuber motioned to approve, seconded by Rademacher
4. Guest Introductions
5. Planning Department
  - a. Complete streets project, more accessible routes around Town. More blue bike stations, one by High School, other by Mystic/Bikepath. Mystic River to Minuteman bikeway connection.
  - b. Carpenter asked if Johnathan is aware of plans for permanent bike storage for recumbent bike, very secure as adaptive bikes are expensive. Johnathan stated Alewife may have MBTA bike storage that can fit adaptive trikes.
  - c. Cagan-Teuber asked Johnathan if the bicycle advisory committee owns
  - d. Sasportas stated DCR has a universal access program for adaptive bicycle guidelines.
6. Town Day
7. Commission Leadership
  - a. Carpenter stated there are currently three co-chairs that started in September of 2021. Stated a leadership change would be appropriate. Parravano was running meetings, Grace would do preparation for meeting, Raia was a liaison to other commissions and organizations.
  - b. Carpenter and Sasportas discussed how the Rainbow Commission is structured and how that could translate to the Disability Commission.
  - c. Sasportas stated that there are subcommittees that are working groups. Work

groups are divided along lines of commission (education, communications, community engagement, Town systems and policies, transportation, etc.)

8. Hybrid Meetings

- a. Andre stated hybrid is the best option as some folks are more comfortable meeting in person. Microphone could be useful for in person participants to be heard more clearly.
- b. Sasportas stated remote access (whether hybrid or fully remote) is critical for accessibility.

9. Town Hall Flag Plaza Update

- a. Rademacher stated he thinks it will likely be brick on a stable base to avoid uneven settling.

10. Newsletter

- a. Carpenter stated there will be no newsletter for August since we are not meeting. Would like help with crafting the newsletter each month in the future. The goal of the newsletter is to let people know what the commission is working on and to keep commissioners informed. Asked that all members can read before each meeting.
- b. Sasportas volunteered to help out with social media for the commission.

11. Sidewalks & Utility poles around Cooke's Hollow

- a. Carpenter asked what is the timeline for the Mystic Bike Path, design discussions have not started yet. Currently looking at funding options. May not be started for 7 to 10 years.
- b. Ellen Leigh stated there is a lot to consider where it pertains to disability access.
- c. Johnathan stated they are working with MassDOT
- d. Carpenter asked about the sidewalk quality around Cooke's Hollow on Mystic Street, wondering if we can prioritize more sidewalk repair? Johnathan stated Wayne Chouinard is working on prioritization map. Johnathan thinks we may be able to include some of these repairs in the Complete Streets project.
- e. Carpenter asked best way for residents to report sidewalk issues. Rademacher stated there are many sidewalks that are not in great shape. If they can be identified and prioritized by the commission that can help them get fixed sooner.
- f. Andree stated while at UMass, a group of students had a method of identifying problematic sidewalks. Their solution was an accessibility map, an online program that allowed students and staff to mark on the map where access barriers exist. Students were paid for their time marking areas of concern, Gatica stated that could be an option for Arlington to identify problematic sidewalks.
- g. Ellen Leigh asked if the database of sidewalk prioritization is publicly available or is there a way to find out where a specific sidewalk is on the list or planned to be included in other projects. Rademacher stated long range documents/lists are not ideal to put out because plans are fluid and can change. Said there needs to be better on the ground notification from residents.
- h. Sasportas stated the commission's role is to seek guidance from residents who have mobility issues as they are the ones who have the lived experience.
- i. Rademacher stated resolving utility poles is difficult fix. The Town has to work with all of the utilities on each pole that have to be moved in a certain order.
- j. Rademacher suggested the commission submits a list of sidewalk/utility pole prioritization.

- k. Gatica asked what are the Town's responsibilities on training utility companies on accessibility.
12. Subcommittee reports
- a. DEI
    - i. Language access project. Sasportas asked about AAC (alternative and augmented communication) for nonverbal residents.
    - ii. Mass Commission for Deaf/Hard of hearing has brochures similar to communication board at playgrounds.
    - iii. MassMatch would be good for technical support.
  - b. DPW
    - i. No new updates since last month.
  - c. Outreach Working Group
13. Correspondences
- a. Boys and Girls club?
  - b. Pathways to Friendship?
  - c. Is there something the commission can do long term to provide engagement with residents?
14. Public Comment
- a. APS does not have a line item for understanding our differences. Gatica asked if the commission could write a letter of support for the curriculum.
  - b. Sasportas stated a new DEI person started, maybe we could reach out to them.
  - c. Gatica will draft a letter, will send around for other commissioners to add to.
15. Next meeting Wednesday September 20, 2023 at 4PM
16. Closing
- a. Rademacher, seconded by Cagan-Teuber.

Commission members not able to attend please email [dei@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:dei@town.arlington.ma.us) prior to the scheduled meeting.

Anyone needing accessibility information or other assistance in order to attend this meeting should contact [dei@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:dei@town.arlington.ma.us). This meeting is open to all interested individuals.