



Marblehead Disabilities Commission

Meeting Minutes – January 10th, 2024

Members Present: Laurie Blaisdell, Dee Cuffe, Briggete Duffy, Amy Hirschkron (*remote*), Samantha Marino (*remote*), Andrea Mountain (*remote*)

Members Absent: Cheryl LaLonde, Ed Lang

Guests Present: Nancy Powell

Ms. Blaisdell called the meeting to order at 4:14 p.m.

1. Upon motion by Ms. Cuffe, seconded by Ms. Duffy, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the December 13th, 2023 meeting.

2. Review Marblehead's ADA report. Ms. Blaisdell reported that Marblehead is starting to use an electronic checklist (View Point) that requires all commercial or town building projects to have all line items "checked off" by the Building Department in order for the permit to go through, assisting with accountability. Ms. Blaisdell explained that she had asked the department heads if there could be a check box for ADA compliance, a request that the Disability Commission unanimously endorses. Ms. Hirschkron asked a clarifying question to ensure that the person's name and title who has "checked off" the items will be recorded. Ms. Duffy further clarified that this new checking system is akin to a workflow procedure and that the person who is responsible for checking off the line item must be a qualified individual within that specific speciality (e.g., electric, plumbing, fire, etc.). Ms. Hirschkron asked if the new ADA line item could be related to the corresponding regulations for the permittee to view as necessary. Both her, and Ms. Marino recommended that the ADA compliance line item must be a requirement, and not an item that can be "skipped" within the View Point document. Ms. Blaisdell will inquire and then report back to the Commission.

Further discussion ensued regarding the problem with ADA compliance not being enforced from the beginning of a building project within the town and that there seems not to be consistency in implementing ADA regulations across projects. The Commission agreed that the department heads within Marblehead, and especially the Building Commissioner, should be required to thoroughly read the new ADA report as well as acquaint themselves with applicable ADA regulations. Ms. Duffy noted that there appears to be a considerable lack of knowledge throughout the departments in relation to ADA compliance, and that education for these entities should be a priority.

The Commission unanimously agreed that it would like a follow-up meeting with the Town Administrator regarding a new ADA View Point line item being added to the checklist, ensuring that the upcoming and ongoing projects are ADA compliant (e.g., the new library), as well as an update and how the Commission will be involved in the implementation of the town's ADA transition plan. Additionally, the Commission is requesting more information about the process for



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building projects and the specific individuals who are involved. Ms. Blaisdell will contact Stephen Cummings, the new Building Commissioner for an explanation of the process as well as what trainings the Building Department has had on ADA compliance.

The Commission further identified the following two items as top priorities as selected from the ADA Transition Plan:

- The Town Administrator becoming the designated ADA Coordinator.
- Updating each department's website pages within the Town's main website

3. Follow-Up: 116 Pleasant Street. Ms. Blaisdell (1/3/2024) replied to the business' owner following his inquiry requesting a meeting with her regarding installation of a ramp for ADA access. Ms. Blaisdell recommended that the business owner reach out to the Architectural Board to apply for a variance as soon as possible, so his building project is not delayed, as the Disabilities Commission is unable to do anything further.

4. Follow-Up: 139 Pleasant Street. Ms. Blaisdell reported that the 30 day extension for providing additional documentation to the Architectural Board following the building project's initial feasibility study will be end tomorrow. The Commission will continue to monitor the outcome.

5. Follow-Up: Ramp between State Street and Harbormaster's Office. The Commission will be re-measuring the slope of the new ramp between State Street and the Harbormaster's Office, as Ms. Blaisdel's calculations of the slope were tallied as being significantly more than the ADA regulation allows.

6. Town Meeting: MDC Report. Tabled until next meeting.

7. Follow-Up: 71 Atlantic Avenue. A letter was received indicating that the variance was accepted and the tutoring facility will be using a neighboring business' ADA accessible bathroom as necessary.

The Commission unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 5:13 p.m.

Next Meeting: February 14th, 2024

Respectfully submitted,
Samantha Marino, Secretary and Commission Member

Approved by unanimous vote of the Commission: _____

Appendix:

Documents available upon request:

- Email correspondence between Ms. Blaisdell and the owner of the Riptide Lounge



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- Approved variance determination for 71 Atlantic Avenue