

Planning & Sustainability • City of Northampton

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Disability Commission Minutes Tuesday July 12th, 2020 4:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

Members

Jeremy Macomber-Dubs, Chair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	City Councilor Marianne LaBarge <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Keith Benoit, Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Emma Cornwell, Vice Chair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gene Page <input type="checkbox"/>	Kathy Murri <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Linda Kakos <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Clare Marilyn <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Rodney Kunath <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Michael Morton <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

1. Chair gave notice that the meeting was being recorded.
2. Introductions and Public comments. Amy asked if there was any follow up with the Mayor meeting with the sidewalk conversation and if there was any information on what businesses are accessible. Amy also asked for an update the soft-surface accessible trails.
3. The Commission made corrections to the minutes from June 14th, 2022: The Disability Commission is taking is month of August off, not September and will reconvene on Sept. 13th 2022. Emma Cornwell name is also misspelled. Also, that it was mentioned that the written record of the transcript from the meeting should be made available.
4. The Disability Commission discussed acknowledging July as Disability Pride month. Michael Morton proposed that the Commission bring in speakers once every few months. Councilor LaBarge is supportive of this measure and it is too late to send something to the City Council. Councilor LaBarge proposed that someone from the Disability Commission can also speak at City Council public comment later this week. Keith Benoit said that he will add this to the June agenda for next year and that the 32nd anniversary of the passing of the ADA is this month. Gilad from Community Action said it is important to recognize this and that maybe there is a movie to screen. Jeremy Macomber-Dubs said that “Crip Camp” would be a good movie to show. Ben Kalish said that the Library has wide selection of movie that it has rights to show and would happily do this, but doing it now is too short of a notice.
5. Keith Benoit, City Staff asked for feedback on a survey for audible warning signals at crosswalks. The purpose is to understand where people who are blind or low-vision



live so that the audible warning signals near their homes can be prioritized. Ben Kalish commented to remove the language regarding blind/low-vision on asking for help filling out the survey.

6. The commission was asked by Keith Benoit if the City should add an accessible parking space on Market Street and if there was any recommendations. Jeremy Macomber-Dubs says he is in favor of this. There should be a spot closer to Joes, but that the curb-cuts on that street are very bad. He often does not even use the sidewalk on Market Street. Councilor LaBarge was in agreement and that it needs to be looked at. Emma Cornwell said that the only business that is accessible on that street is the Roost and that an accessible parking space should be located near there.
7. The Chair of the commission asked if any members wanted to be part of a subcommittee for accessibility of businesses. Councilor LaBarge said that this important. Jeremy Macomber-Dubs said there is are some things that are very low cost barriers that can be fixed such as high top tables being replaced with low top tables. Rodney Kunath said the business should have automatic door openers as people cannot open the doors themselves. He recommends all restaurants have automatic door openers. Councilor LaBarge said that the Commission should invite the building inspector to the meeting to ask questions. Rodney Kunath agrees and that it should be done before we talk to businesses. Emma Cornwell nominated Jeremy to the subcommittee. Councilor LaBarge and Emma Cornwell volunteered to be part of the subcommittee.
8. The Chair of the commission asked members if there was any follow up comments with the Mayor. Councilor LaBarge said that she believe the Mayor heard the commission regarding the shoveling of sidewalks. Jeremy Macomber-Dubs was happy that she came, but found some of the answer lacking. He also said that he was asked to be part of hiring committee, but found some of the language to the job posting to be discriminatory. There was further discussion on the hiring process.
9. Keith Benoit gave an update on the accessible soft-surface trails at Rocky Hill Greenway and their might be more opportunity for a grant to complete the work, but would need a meeting with the Disability Commission to better understand. That meeting might need to be a site visit, but the site currently does not have parking and the current trails are not fully accessible.
10. Michael Morton said that the Mayor was interested in a Taste of Northampton and that is a good idea. Rodney Kunath said that the pedestrians on King Street and Finn Street, and is happy that it has been fixed.
11. Next meeting:
 - Next meeting will be on September 13th, 2022
 - Invite building inspector to next meeting
12. Adjourn at 5:20 PM upon motion by Councilor LaBarge and second by Linda Kakos.

