

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
KATJANA BALLANTYNE
MAYOR

COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
13 December 2022
Regular Monthly Meeting

Commissioners

Adrienne Pomeroy, Staff Liaison, ADA Coordinator
Holly Simone, Chair
Bonnie Denis, Commissioner
Katie Milton, Commissioner (absent)
Lian Guertin, Commissioner
Brian C. Postlewaite, Secretary, Director of Engineering

Assoc. Commissioners

Henry Edward Hardy (absent)
Pauline Downing (absent)
Harriotte Ranvig
Colin Killick (absent)
Jamie Perconti

Guests:

Edris, Close Captioner
Crystal Huff

Note: Due to COVID-19 Shutdown, all attendees were remote via Zoom Meeting.

General

- Henry Edward Hardy submitted a resignation letter to the Commission, effective immediately. Holly expressed the Commission's appreciation for Henry's many months of service and contributions on this Commission.
- Result of new meeting time polling was 2nd Tuesdays of the month from 7pm to 9pm.
 - Brian moved to approve new meeting time, Lian seconded.
 - Brian, Lian & Holly approved; Bonnie abstained.
- Three community members are moving forward with the Commission to Review Appointments:
 - Deborah Haber
 - Harriotte Ranvig
 - Pauline Downing

Chair's Report

- The Mobility Division will be attending the Commission meeting in January to provide a high level update, and intend to attend regularly.

Coordinator's Report

- Paul Goldstein, City Housing, is planning a meeting to discuss housing access and would like a representative of SCPD to attend. Coordinate with Adrienne to attend.
- RSJ is working on a plan for ADA outreach with the community and is soliciting for outreach ideas. Please contact Adrienne to suggest ideas.

New Business

- Holly, Harriotte and Adrienne met with Dan Moore, the City Webmaster, to discuss accessibility of the City website.
 - Dan was excited to have PWD providing feedback on the website.
 - Dan seems confident that he could improve the ability of the website to be read by screen readers.
 - Search bar on home screen is not available to screen readers.
 - They have a call scheduled for 15 December to continue the conversation.
 - They are also planning another meeting in January.
 - Website accessibility needs to include Legistar and Somerville Data Farm.
- Variance Request, 690-694 Broadway
 - The project is a proposed Cannabis Dispensary.
 - The variance is to retain the existing 15% entrance slopes.
 - The proponent argued that the cost to reconstruct the building structure to lower the floor elevation to install compliant ramps was not feasible.
 - The commission suggested the following remedies:
 - Door opener button accessible from the sidewalk.
 - Railing on either side of the slope.
 - High friction surface on the steep ramp.
 - The Commission did not conclude a formal recommendation.

Old Business

- Communications Plan:

- Holly presented a spreadsheet that she had developed with Henry. This plan included the following items:
 - Somerville Media Center (independent, non-profit, community media center)
 - GovTV (city government media center)
 - Email addresses
 - City website
 - Participate in Engineering/Mobility design meetings with SBAC & PTAC.
 - Foster relations with other RSJ Commissions
 - Foster relations with MOD, AAB and DOJ.
 - Develop better communications tools with City staff (e.g. Zoom meetings instead of GoTo meetings)
 - Public Events
 - Social/Online media
 - Ward Teams
- Accessible Parking Funds:
 - Discussed whether fines submitted to our account include late fees or not and whether that would go to the SCPD account. Adrienne will check with the Parking Department.

Motion to Adjourn Meeting at 8:20 pm; approved unanimously.