

Town of Acton Commission on Disability

Minutes

October 13, 2011

Acton Town Hall, Room 204

7:00 pm

Members Present: John Brako, Lisa Franklin, Chair, and Brenda Viola, Treasurer and Wen Li

Member Absent: Danny Factor, Secretary and Joy Kohout

Guests: Ann Brako

Meeting was called to order by Chair, Lisa Franklin at 7:12 pm.

Minutes from September 8th were accepted with corrections.

Documents: 521 CMR: AAB, 22.00 (link: www.mass.gov, 2006)

Acton 2020, Goals and Objectives (Docushare, Acton Planning Department)

AAB, Exchange Hall Correspondence 9-19-11(Docushare, COD, Variances)

Treasurer's Report:

Fund –Series-1000-General Fund:

Beginning Balance: 2012 Budget \$1,468.00

Expenditures: 9-19-11 for CAM Training (Wen Li) \$ 15.00

9-23-11 for Outdoor Canopy \$ 79.68

10-4-11 for Brochure Holders (6) \$ 21.62

Ending Balance: 10-13-11 \$1,351.70

Fund Series-3000-Special Funds:

Gift Fund-3061 (549)

Current Balance: \$1,049.47

Gift Fund-3148 (251)

Current Balance: \$ 237.47

For The Record:

- John has agreed to be the liaison to the Veteran's Administration.
- **Idylwilde:** has moved the carts, but placed a display in the access aisle.
- **Mia Bella Candy Box:** is now open. It is accessible inside the store. The entrance is not wide enough due to the opening mechanism. The threshold is too high. Lisa talked with the owner and she is agreeable and eager to make her store accessible. Frank is going to discuss options with her.
- **Community Education Class:** Received a copy of a complaint letter sent to Erin Bettez, Director of Community Education from a woman who uses a wheelchair who could not access a private residence where the class was being held. The class is being moved to an accessible high school class room. Lisa called MOD (Mass. Office on Disability) who said anything offered by the Town can not be exclusionary. Lisa called Liza Huber to set up an appointment with Erin and Liza to discuss inclusion and access.

- **October 12th Meeting with Town Moderator at 1:00pm:** Lisa met with Don MacKenzie, Town Moderator and Eva Szkaradek, Town Clerk to discuss access issues at Town Meeting. Don said he could make accommodations if he knows in advance. Lisa gave him the Website and has requested a CART demonstration from the MCDHH (Mass. Commission Deaf and Hard of Hearing). Don suggested we write a letter to the League of Women Voters to do a study about accessibility at Town Meetings.

Topics:

- **Oktoberfest:**

Use canopy no matter what the weather

Have an extra chair as a resting place, this provides an inviting environment to discuss issues

Coffee would be nice, but we do not have a power source near this site

Poster as this attracts people and promotes conversation

Sidewalk board saying, this way”To Discuss Issues” pertaining to disability rights

Event Calendar

Request table not next to someone playing music. Need a quieter space for discussion.

Need updated copies of Town’s resource list.

Make a COD banner. A suggestion was made to purchase one.

- **Exchange Hall, 2 School Street:** We reviewed the Correspondence 9-19-11. The letter included “the updated inventory of AAB regulations that are in violation of the code, a request for variances, plans with door numbers, and pictures of various areas that are relevant to these items and a letter from his (Glenn Berger) accountant, Clark Taylor, CPA regarding the sustained loss for Exchange Hall for 2010.” Further discussion for a response letter was tabled until we do a site visit for clarification of accessibility issues. Lisa will call Glenn to set up a site visit.
- **Parking Fines:** Fines are in effect. Effective date was unknown, check with Janet.
- **HP Spot in West Acton:** We discussed possible options for locations. The best two options are: 1.) on the corner of Rt. 111 and Windsor Ave. and 2.) On the corner of Rt. 111 and Central St. Number 1 space is closer to the residents who live in adjacent apartments, near the cross walk, middle of West Acton center, and is across the street from the Pharmacy. Number 2 space is near the stop light cross walk for safer crossing, on the same side of the street as bank and pharmacy, access to businesses on both sides of street via safer crossing at lights, and is closer to the churches. Since both options have equal merit, our discussion warranted claims to have both HP spaces. We unanimously voted to recommend both spaces to the Highway Department. Lisa will contact them with our proposal.
- **Dining Guide:** View another guide by the Aging and Disability Resource Consortium of Greater North Shore via Independent Living Center of the North Shore and Cape Ann, www.ilensca.org.
- **Schools contact Dr. Mills for meeting appointment:** Tabled
- **Acton 2020 Vision: Part of Plan: Making Connections and Diversity**
We reviewed our own previously suggested goals for 2020. At the October 12th Meeting, the Committee wants input from the COD to reword and include strategies on Inclusion and Diversity.

Objective 5.4: Support Citizens with Disabilities participating in the community.

- Apply Universal Design Principles to new town facilities and in development guidelines.
- Review physical access that benefits all, will include note that this is in addition to requirements ADA and AAB and redo transition plans
- Support job training and career counseling opportunities for disabled individuals, add commitment from town (like State) to hire a certain percentage of PWD through out all departments?
- Much of discussion centered around the needs of PWD
- Of seniors and mothers with young children and the possibility of building a new senior center and/or community center. In Town discussions, a proposal has been made for the construction of a new senior center or community center. Seniors reported that the COA Board feels that others can use the center after hours. If a new senior center is built, then the old one can be designated as a community center. Some ideas from this covers needs of PWD as do the goals for increasing connections between citizens.
- More specific issues and concerns for PWD were included within the housing and transportation sections but otherwise the only specific note to our constituency was in asking for a more sensitive word than “walking and biking” when indicating distances between neighborhoods and meeting spaces.
- Note: I (Lisa) feel the 2020 Committee has been open and inviting to our contributions and that we have not made a serious enough case for the needs in our community so that it has become a top concern for the overall project. There is still time to submit further corrections and suggestions to the group before November 9th presentation to the town at large.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Viola, Secretary