



Public Health
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CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

14 January 2020

Regular Monthly Meeting

Present: Nancy Salamoun, Staff Liaison, Mgr. of Equity Diversity and Inclusion
Bonnie Denis, Chair
Colin Killick, Commissioner
Finn Gardner, Commissioner (remote)
Brian Postlewaite, Assist. Director of Engineering, Commissioner

Absent: none

Guests: Katie Milton, Resident
Lian Guertin, Resident
Meredith Gamble, City Complete Count Coordinator
Nancy Bacci, City Deputy Director Health & Human Services

General Business

- Meeting commenced on 14 January at 6:40pm.
- Introductions
- Meeting minutes approvals:
 - September 2019 – unanimous.
 - December 2019 – unanimous.

Guest Presentation

- Meredith Gamble is the City's temporary U.S. Census Complete Count Coordinator.
- Her goal is to make sure everyone in Somerville is counted in the 2020 U.S. Census.
- Two-thirds of residents are renters.
- Census data is anonymized once duplicates are removed.
- No disability questions on the Census questionnaire.
- There are three ways to answer the Census questionnaire:
 - Online,
 - Phone, and
 - Paper.
- Meredith requests advice on how to best reach out to the disability community.
- Census is hiring: 2020census.gov/jobs

Chair's Report

- Accessible Parking:
 - SomerNova accessible parking, which serves Artisan's Asylum, Brooklyn Boulders, Aeronaut, and adjacent businesses, was removed. Nancy is working with ISD & SFD to resolve.
 - Family Dollar & Forge parking lot on Somerville Ave does not have accessible parking. ISD is issuing violations.
 - Dilboy Pool lot does not have accessible parking?
 - Winter Hill Brewery, Broadway, does not have accessible parking.
- Requests Katie Milton and Lian Guertin consider applying to be members.

Director's Report

- Now that the Commission has been regularly meeting quorum, the Commission can continue reviewing applications for MAAB variances.
- Working with the state to get variance review training for the Commission.

Old Business

- Brick sidewalk reconstruction
 - Engineering Department Report by Brian Postlewaite:

- Approximately 1% of the City's sidewalks are brick. This is not enough to have a City brick sidewalk maintenance crew; outsourcing this maintenance is more expensive.
- Brick sidewalks can be constructed to MAAB compliance. Maintaining compliance throughout the life of the sidewalk is more difficult due to maintenance outsourcing. Maintenance costs more and repair requests are less prompt due to coordination with a maintenance contractor.
- Brick sidewalk construction is four times more than cement concrete sidewalk construction. Thus for the same sidewalk reconstruction budget, the City can improve sidewalk accessibility on four times the sidewalk using cement concrete instead of brick.
- Engineering Department recommends cement concrete sidewalks in the pedestrian zone of City sidewalks.
- Commission Discussion:
 - Stated that brick sidewalks are not comfortable and often unsafe for the disabled community and the City standard should exceed minimum MAAB requirements.
 - Wants to know the percentage of brick within business districts. Disabled residents spend more time in business districts than in neighborhoods, thus the 1% brick could be a larger burden.
 - Bonnie would work with Colin to draft a letter describing the Commissions' perspective.
 - Brian observed that he would have to recuse himself from the letter writing and approval.

New Business

- None.

Public Input

- Katie suggests that review and comment on new zoning that was recently passed. Discussion that this may not be appropriate during the public meeting, but could be consider immediately before or after.
- Lian asked whether the SHS restrooms had private single stall restrooms that could be used by disabled students.

Motion to Adjourn Meeting at 8:15pm; passed unanimously.