



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

JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

10 November 2020

Regular Monthly Meeting

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

Absent: None

Guests: Lian Guertin, Resident
George Proakis, Director of OSPCD
Nick Antanavica, Director of ISD

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

General Business

- Meeting commenced on 10 November at 6:35pm.
- VOTE: Commission unanimously approved September and October minutes.
- The Mayor's office has approved Lian's membership request, and has forwarded the request to the City Council for approval.

- Nancy provided Communication Department a solicitation for new Commission members.

Guest Presentation

- George Proakis, Director of OSPCD, and Nick Antanavica, Director of ISD, attended to discuss the City's plan for outdoor restaurant seating and how to address various accessibility concerns with the current implementation.
 - Over the summer COVID rates dropped enough to allow outdoor seating for restaurant operations. The outdoor seating was accommodated in the public way and on private property.
 - The administration consolidated the approval process and quickly established operational requirements to facilitate business reopening as quickly as possible.
 - This rapid response resulted in poor accessibility compliance. Two items in particular:
 - The blocking of the public sidewalks, and
 - Access to restaurant seating.
 - The City has agreed to continue outdoor restaurant seating through the 2021 calendar year.
 - ISD has the tools to enforce all but one accessibility concern. Staff is short, but they are hiring staff to help with COVID and ADA compliance.
 - Their enforcement process:
 - Verbal notice in the field and discussion of corrective actions.
 - Violation letter for second offense.
 - If remains unresolved for 14 days, ticketing begins at \$300/day.
 - Licensing Commission has the authority to revoke or suspend restaurant licenses.
 - The temporary ramps to traverse curbs to street level seating require an MAAB variance, similar to one Boston requested this summer. ISD cannot enforce the temporary ramps without the variance. OSPCD (Economic Development), with review from Engineering & ISD, will apply for this variance.
 - The Commission agrees this variance is appropriate and support it.

- VOTE: Commission unanimously approves the Chair to review the variance application and provide a letter of support.

Chair's Report

- After reviewing a few recent residential development proposals, we have a concern that zoning requires building first floors to be elevated 24" above ground elevation. This requirement leads to an increased number of inaccessible and/or poorly accessible units than there would otherwise be.
- The City Council is proposing an affordable housing overlay district. The Commission believes this should coordinate with the State accessible unit requirements.

Director's Report

- ADA proclamation will be delivered to the City Council for vote on Thursday evening. The Commission does not need to attend.

Old Business

- Ithzel, Housing Department, plans to attend the December meeting.

New Business

- Proposal for members to discuss at a future meeting the lessons learned from the Shared Streets to provide the Mobility Division.
- Proposal for members to discuss at a future meeting the lesson learned from the recent street resurfacing projects and proposals to provide the Engineering and Mobility Divisions.
- Proposal for members to discuss at a future meeting acceptable and preferred design goals for street repaving and reconstruction.

Motion to Adjourn Meeting at 8:10pm; approved unanimously.