

BRAINTREE COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
Meeting Held Via Zoom
Monday, January 4, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE: Lynn Vaillancourt, Vice Chairman
Crystal Evans, Treasurer
Robin Torpey, Secretary
Mary Russo

ALSO PRESENT: Kristina Ziniti, ADA Coordinator
Marybeth McGrath, Director of ML & I
Rob Millette, BEMA

Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. via roll call vote: Lynn Vaillancourt-yes;
Crystal Evans-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Robin Torpey-yes

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. McGrath advised that the meeting minutes will be provided at the next meeting.

Review of Sunset Lake Park Sketch:

Ms. McGrath stated that since the last meeting Ms. Ziniti has connected with the Engineering Department, who provided a sketch of the proposed playground improvements. Ms. McGrath stated a permanent anchor is provided for the picnic table. There will be a path around the playground area with a handicapped accessible parking space. Ms. Vaillancourt asked about the location of the picnic table. Ms. McGrath indicated the picnic table will be outside of the playground on the beach side. Ms. Evans stated that there would have to be additional accessible picnic tables to be ADA compliant. Ms. McGrath stated this sketch is just a proposal and the final project will be ADA compliant. Ms. Vaillancourt asked about the proposed fencing and Ms. McGrath stated that she was informed by DPW and Parks and Recreation that there will not be fencing installed around the playground.

Ms. Evans stated the reason she brought this proposal to the Commission was to install fencing, as parents of autistic children do not feel comfortable bringing them to this playground because of the proximity to the parking area and the lake. Ms. Vaillancourt stated that previously the Commission had discussed doing this in phases, the first being a pathway, the second being equipment, and the third being a fence for safety. She asked for clarification from Parks and Recreation. Ms. Vaillancourt recommended having an accessible park bench or picnic table within the playground area, in addition to the proposed picnic table. Ms. Torpey and Ms. Russo were in agreement with this proposal. Ms. Evans stated by law they would have to provide tables

in both locations. She stated the best location for the table on the beach side would be under the pavilion, which is paved and would provide shade.

Ms. Vaillancourt stated that the Commission had intended there be a pathway through the playground for accessibility and this sketch does not include that pathway. Ms. Evans expressed concern with the proposed parking, breaking up the four proposed spaces into two on each side. Rob Millette of BEMA stated he has no concern with that proposal, but he does move equipment in and out of the existing building at the site. Ms. Vaillancourt recommended rearranging some of the parking spaces to make the handicapped parking more accessible and to make it easier to move equipment in and out of the building. Members discussed the best location for the pathway. Mr. Millette stated his concern is the pinch point from his building to the parking lot. Ms. McGrath stated this can be discussed with Engineering.

Ms. Evans asked if the Commission members could actually meet at the lake to get a better idea of what is being proposed. Ms. McGrath stated she would have to check with the town to see if this is allowed and it would be considered a public meeting. Ms. McGrath stated she will take all the information discussed back to Engineering and ask them to prepare a new design. Ms. Evans expressed concern with the surface and tree roots in this area. She recommended each member try to visit the area individually and bring their ideas to the next meeting. Ms. McGrath recommended having Engineering and Parks and Recreation attend a future meeting to discuss some of these issues. Ms. Vaillancourt asked that a schematic be provided for the next meeting and she will send Ms. McGrath a drawing of what they had discussed at last month's meeting. She also asked that information be provided on why Engineering and Parks and Recreation do not want to install a fence.

Informational:

Shared Streets Grant, Winter Edition: Ms. Ziniti stated they are offering a winter edition of this grant and she will be meeting with Engineering and the grant writer to discuss possible projects, such as finish items for South Braintree Square. The grant application is due February 26, 2021 and the grant amount runs from \$5000 to \$300,000.

Massachusetts Office on Disability Grant: Ms. Ziniti stated that she has been trying to get in touch with the office to get information on the grant and has not been able to get through. She stated at this point she assumes they did not get the grant, but she will follow-up.

Updates:

Finances: Ms. McGrath stated there is \$49,759.70 in the handicapped parking fine account. She stated that this is a large amount, but some projects can become costly and she knows the Commission will consider expenditures carefully. Ms. Vaillancourt stated they would like to focus on projects that affect the town as a whole if possible, which is

why they are using a phased approach with the playground project and considering any grants that may be available.

Other:

Ms. Vaillancourt raised concern about placement of one of the benches in South Braintree Square, near the nail salon, given the new traffic pattern. She recommended not having anything obstructing the view of drivers turning right. Ms. Evans stated the bench in that location was not on the sidewalk, but approximately 12 feet back and would not create a site problem. Ms. McGrath stated the installation of the benches is on the DPW's list of work to complete, but she is not aware where it lies in prioritization.

Ms. Torpey expressed concern about a large pile of snow in one area of South Braintree Square. She stated the rest of the snow clearing was great, except for this one pile.

Ms. Evans stated at the next meeting she would like to discuss the pedestrian crossing in South Braintree Square, as the programming is not what was discussed with the DPW at a prior meeting.

Adjournment:

Motion by Robin Torpey to adjourn the Commission on Disabilities meeting at 7:51 p.m. Motion seconded by Crystal Evans. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Lynn Vaillancourt-yes; Crystal Evans-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Robin Torpey-yes