

BRAINTREE COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
Meeting Held Via Zoom
Monday, May 5, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE: Crystal Evans, Treasurer
Robin Torpey, Member
Mary Russo, Member
Scott Lamphere, Member

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

Call to Order:

Robin Torpey served as Acting Chairperson for this meeting.

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes;
Robin Torpey-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of March 3, 2025 were reviewed.

Motion made by Mary Russo to approve the meeting minutes of March 3, 2025. Motion seconded by Scott Lamphere. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes

Eaton's Pond:

Ms. Ziniti reported the gate at Eaton's Pond is closed for safety purposes and the DPW only goes in there to check on the Army Corp of Engineers work. Conservation is in the beginning stages of updating their open space plan and questions can be addressed with the Conservation Agent, Laura Morrison.

Ms. Evans stated there are public town trails at that location and all that would have to be done to make the trails accessible is to move the boulder that is currently there. Ms. Ziniti stated this could be addressed with Ms. Morrison. Ms. McGrath suggested an email be sent to Ms. Morrison suggesting the boulders be adjusted to create a larger opening. Ms. Evans expressed concern that residents with disabilities should have the same access to these trails as ambulatory residents. Mr. Lamphere expressed frustration with not being able to get answers or results from town departments.

Ms. McGrath stated she will send an email to the Director of the DPW and the Director of the Planning Department to bring this to their attention to see what can be done to move the boulders to enlarge the opening. Ms. Ziniti stated Ms. Morrison is going to include in the new open space plan that all trails in town must be ADA compliant.

Mr. Lamphere asked if they could address the accessibility of the Elm Street path which he raised in the past. Ms. McGrath stated they have a new DPW Director. Ms. Torpey asked that the new Director be invited to attend a future meeting.

South Shore Plaza Update:

Ms. Ziniti stated she has touched base with Allen Smith and she went to the South Shore Plaza and checked on the handicapped doors and paddles and everything seemed to be working. Mr. Smith indicated there are currently no updates on maintenance but he will keep them updated on anything in the future. Ms. McGrath stated the food court elevator was broken recently and there was signage indicating it was not working, but no directional signage. She brought this to Mr. Smith's attention and he indicated this signage would be put in place.

Ms. Evans stated this is an ongoing issue and she asked if the Public Safety Committee should be included in this discussion. Ms. McGrath stated she will speak with the Town Solicitor and email the police and fire departments asking if they would have any involvement on directional signage from a public safety perspective. Ms. Torpey stated having digital directional signage would alleviate a lot of these problems.

Handicapped Parking Fund Account:

Ms. McGrath reported the current balance in the handicapped parking fund is \$46,365.78. Mr. Lamphere suggested that in their discussion with the DPW Director perhaps the Commission could assist financially with some of the items of concern, as they have some resources accumulated.

Other Business:

Ms. Ziniti reported the benches at Elder Services have been installed and look great. One was installed by the main entrance and one by the park area. Mr. Lamphere asked for feedback on what is planned for the pavement in the area where they are doing drainage work near Elder Services. Ms. Ziniti stated she will reach out to Engineering and ask about the scope of work.

Ms. Ziniti stated there is an ADA complaint at Hancock and Washington Streets in the area of the Olympian Diner. There is damage around a service box in the sidewalk and BELD has been informed and has it flagged for repair. DPW will respond back to the state regarding the repair.

Ms. Evans raised concern with the Stop & Shop plaza. There is construction at the former CVS location and the sidewalk is completely inaccessible. She stated there are also brick planters in the sidewalk near Stop & Shop which completely block access for wheelchairs, forcing use of the fire lane, which is blocked by cars much of the time.

Ms. Evans expressed concern with ADA violations at the old Burger King which is being renovated into a Chipotle, both in the building and with curb cuts. She asked what can be

done to ensure the sidewalks are made accessible. Ms. McGrath stated this can be addressed through the building permit process.

Ms. Evans followed up on a discussion which was held at the last Commission meeting and asked if they have received clarification on who is responsible for clearing snow from sidewalks in a mall or plaza setting. Ms. McGrath stated it is the property owners responsibility to clear those sidewalks. Ms. Evans asked if DPW had clarified this for next year for snow removal. Ms. McGrath stated they have not clarified this with DPW.

Next Meeting: June 2, 2025

Adjournment:

Motion made by Mary Russo to adjourn the Commission on Disabilities meeting at 7:28 p.m. Motion seconded by Crystal Evans. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes