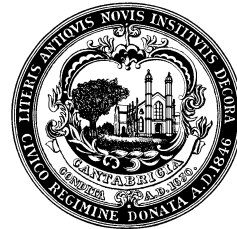


City of Cambridge

Commission for Persons with Disabilities

51 Inman Street · Cambridge, MA · 02139-1732

617-349-4692 voice · 617-492-0235 TTY · 617-349-4766 fax



Alicia Zeh-Dean

Chair

Valerie Hammond

Secretary

The next meeting of the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities will be held in the 2nd Floor Conference Room at 51 Inman Street on Thursday, July 11, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.

Gary Dmytryk

Jerry Friedman

Stelios Gragoudas

Nicole Horton-Stimpson

Philibert Kongtcheu

Julie Miller

PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ARRIVE BY 5:30 PM

AGENDA

Please turn OFF your cellphones before the meeting begins. Thank you.

NOTE: CCPD meetings may be audio recorded for the purpose of taking minutes.

Rachel Tanenhaus
*Executive Director/
ADA Coordinator*

Kate Thurman
Project Coordinator

- | | | |
|--|---------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Introductions | 2 min. | |
| <i>If needed, alternates named</i> | | |
| 2. DPW's Five-Year Plan for Street & Sidewalk Construction | 30 min. | Kathy Watkins |
| 3. Approval of June 13 Minutes | 2 min. | CCPD Board |
| 4. Announcements | 2 min. | CCPD staff / Board |
| 5. Chair's Report | 10 min. | Alicia Zeh-Dean |
| 6. Public Works Update | 5 min. | Jerry Friedman |
| 7. Police Community Liaison Update | 10 min. | Dan Wagner,
Deputy Superintendent |
| 8. Executive Director's Report | 10 min. | Rachel Tanenhaus |
| 9. Public Input | 3 min. | general public |
| 10. Old Business | 2 min. | CCPD Board |
| 11. New Business | 2 min. | CCPD Board |

This is a scent-free meeting. In consideration of individuals with environmental illness and/or multiple chemical sensitivity, please refrain from wearing perfume, after-shave or any other scented products to our meetings. Thank you for your consideration.

The City of Cambridge, Commission for Persons with Disabilities, does not discriminate on the basis of disability. The Commission for Persons with Disabilities will provide auxiliary aids and services, written materials in alternative formats, and reasonable modifications in policies and procedures to persons with disabilities upon request.

The next CCPD meeting will be held on Thursday, September 12

[NOTE: we will not be meeting in August]

Approved 9/12/19

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD)

Minutes for Thursday, July 11, 2019

51 Inman Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room, Cambridge, MA 02139

Meeting was called to order at 5:33pm

Present

Members: Jerry Friedman, Julie Miller, Stelios Gragoudas, Gary Dmytryk, Valerie Hammond, Alicia Zeh-Dean, and Philibert Kongtcheu

Absent: Nicole Horton-Stimpson

Staff: Rachel Tanenhaus

Guest Speakers: Kathy Watkins, Chief Engineer, Cambridge Department of Public Works (DPW)

Documents/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Minutes from June 13, 2019 Meeting

Update on the Five-Year Street and Sidewalk Plan from the Cambridge Department of Public Works (DPW):

Kathy Watkins, Chief Engineer, presented

- The plan is based on the concept of Complete Streets – streets that work for all users (biking, walking, transit, driving).
- A cycling safety ordinance was passed this past year by the City Council. It lays out bike safety and comfort infrastructure in the city and codified the city bike plan.
- If the five-year plan shows a protected bike lane for a given street, reconstruction of that street must include the protected bike lane.
- Vision Zero is the city's plan to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries from walking/biking/driving, and factors strongly into the Five-Year Plan.
- Anything in the first year or two of the Five-Year Plan is more certain. Further out, it gets a little vague.
- High priority areas have the most pedestrian activity
 - Major arterials
 - City programs and services
 - Bus stops
 - Streets on the bike plan
 - CCPD priorities
- How are sidewalks evaluated? What makes them more/less usable/accessible?
 - Ten years ago, DPW added criteria for cross-slope, driveways, pinch points (especially street trees)
 - What happens with street trees that impede accessibility? About ten years ago, DPW broadened the conversation from trees vs. accessibility to looking at the whole street way – bump-outs that take out parking rather than trees or accessibility.
- Please report obstacles through the SeeClickFix app.
- Streets on college campuses (Harvard, MIT, Lesley) are usually the responsibility of the college rather than the city.
- Removing obstacles benefits everyone, not just people with disabilities – folks using baby strollers, people aging in place, etc. Pointing this out broadens the conversation around obstacle removal and street/sidewalk improvement.
- Sidewalk materials:

- City policy regarding brick is that on big projects DPW will replace brick with brick edging around cement. This will take place in front of 344 Broadway and down part of Inman Street, in the hopes of getting support for extending down to City Hall.
- When bricks are used, the city has switched from molded brick (which is terrible) to wire-cut brick (which is less terrible).
- When the city uses brick edging, the brick is installed on top of asphalt.
- Porous surfaces can provide water to trees but tend to gap more. Brick edging can be more porous.
- On residential streets, abutters have a choice, but if they want brick, they are required to pay for it themselves. Brick can cost an additional \$3,000-20,000 per property. There is no additional fee to switch from brick to concrete. Concrete is easier to maintain than brick.
- The Plan considers equity in repairs, particularly around income status and limited English proficiency in neighborhoods, because if DPW response is based on SeeClickFix then only higher-income and English-speaking areas will be repaired.
- The Plan emphasizes transit and its benefits:
 - 30% of Cambridge residents drive alone to work, while 70% commute actively
 - 45% of people commuting to Cambridge drive alone
- What's included in the Plan?
 - Accessibility (original motivation)
 - Transit
 - Bike travel
 - Street trees
 - Infrastructure
 - Vision Zero goals
- The Plan addresses some small streets, as well as some streets that are part of larger sewer and drainage plans or plans for reduction of flooding in the Port.
- DPW tries to spread construction across the city.
- Funding:
 - Funding devoted to streets and sidewalks totals approximately \$6 million/year
 - In addition, funding from sewer and infrastructure projects can result in street and sidewalk work.
 - \$106 million total goes towards street and sidewalk work.
 - Larger projects include:
 - Central Square
 - Inman Square
 - The Port
 - River Street
 - \$800,000/year is set aside for spot sidewalk work in the Miscellaneous Sidewalk Program.
- DPW also repairs and builds ramps in specific areas impacting people with disabilities.
- Climate change:
 - Plan takes increased heat and flooding into consideration
 - Heat has the biggest impact on public health – even more so than flooding
 - The urban forest makes a huge difference for urban heat islands
 - The city has an urban forestry master plan
 - Raised crossings and pedestrian ramps help with ponding, especially in a city as flat as Cambridge
- Almost 70% of city sidewalks are concrete.
- The city is creating concrete sidewalks with brick furniture zones.

- Cambridge doesn't own the transit system, but we can help enhance the system:
 - Bus lanes
 - Space around bus stops
- Trees:
 - Sidewalk must be more than 6 feet wide in order to plant new street trees (4-foot sidewalk and 2-foot tree zone).
 - Trees can also be planted in the abutter's front yard with permission
 - Curb extensions can be installed
- Cambridge is putting in lots of accessible pedestrian signals.
- DPW emphasizes pedestrian access during construction – please report any problems via the SeeClickFix app or by calling DPW at 617-349-4800. Bike and transit access are also essential.
- The Plan includes input from CCPD and bike/pedestrian/transit committees.

Minutes:

A motion to accept the June minutes was seconded and passed.

Chair's Report: Alicia Zeh-Dean reported

- There will be no meeting in August. The next meeting will be in September.
- Alicia will have left the area by the September meeting, so Valerie will be Interim Chair.
- We will hold elections when our Board vacancies have been filled.

Public Works: Jerry Friedman reported

- The public process for River Street/Carl Barron Plaza continues. Check the River Street Project website for dates and times of events.

Executive Director's Report: Rachel Tanenhaus reported

- The Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) will be holding its annual conference on September 27, 2019 at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel in Marlborough.
- MA SILC is looking for new members. For more information, visit www.masilc.org or contact the SILC office at info@masilc.org or (978) 620-7452.
- Brandeis University is conducting INROADS: Intersecting Research on Opioid Misuse, Addiction, and Disability Services, with the aim of learning about the intersection of opioid use disorder and disability from people who have lived experience with both. They will conduct focus groups with people who self-identify both as people with physical or mental disabilities and as people with experience of opioid misuse or opioid use disorder. If you fit into these categories, please contact Dennis Heaphy of the Disability Policy Consortium at dheaphy@dpcma.org and cc: Pili Kamenju at pkamenju@dpcma.org. Include the words "INROADS focus groups" in the subject line. Participants will receive a \$25 gift card.
- Cambridge & Somerville Legal Services seeks a participant in the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to work as a receptionist for 2-3 days (14-20 hours) per week. The program is open to anyone 55 years of age or older who is low income and living in Middlesex County. They prefer but do not require a bilingual person (English and Haitian Creole, Spanish, or Portuguese). Pay is \$11.00/hour and will not affect rent for people in federally assisted housing. For more information, contact Sandra Tavaréz at (617) 603-2713. To enroll in SCSEP, call Angel Miranda at (978) 888-1932.

- MA SILC wants folks to know about the Wheelchair Lemon Law Program. More information is available at <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/customized-wheelchair-lemon-law>. If your private insurance (not MassHealth) doesn't pay for the wheelchair you requested, you can file a complaint with the Division of Insurance at <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/filing-an-insurance-complaint>.
- The Census is hiring for a variety of temporary jobs, including census takers, recruiting assistants, office staff, and supervisory staff. To be eligible, you must be at least 18 years old, have a valid Social Security number, and be a U.S. citizen. For more information, visit <https://2020census.gov/jobs>.
- The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights State Advisory Committee for Massachusetts is accepting applications for membership. State Advisory Committee members assist the Commission with its fact-finding, investigative, and information dissemination.
- The National Council on Independent Living wants to hear from voters with disabilities who have experienced access barriers in previous elections. Please contact Sarah Blahovec at sarah@ncil.org or (202) 207-0334 extension 1103.
- Kate is out of the office until Monday, July 22. Rachel will be in the office except for on Monday, July 15.
- Happy 29th anniversary to the ADA, which was passed on July 26, 1990! Furthermore, happy 40th anniversary to the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities, which was established on July 1, 1979!
- Rachel and Kate presented to City of Cambridge staff on service animals. Turnout was good and the workshop is well-received.
- Rachel represented CCPD at a meeting convened by the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, Boston office, bringing together several community disability groups to discuss priorities in disability rights law enforcement and plans for next year's 30th anniversary of the ADA. Rachel suggested prioritizing preservation of the ADA.
- Rachel assisted with the City's diversity training for new hires by presenting the disability-related portion of the workshop.
- Rachel participates in a monthly conference call with members of various disability commissions in the Boston area. Fellow participants had expressed concerns about scooters and other impending forms of micro-mobility, so Rachel invited Stephanie Groll from Cambridge's Community Development Department to discuss Cambridge's actions regarding scooters and get feedback from people with disabilities. The conversation went very well.
- While attending a quarterly meeting of the Massachusetts Health and Disability Partnership, Rachel heard a fantastic presentation by Lydia Brown on Disability Justice. Rachel then spoke to her supervisor about bringing Lydia to Cambridge to speak on the same topic and will reach out to Lydia to invite them.
- Rachel met with the instructors of the Making Connections course on community engagement to present to them on community engagement and communication with people with disabilities. Attendees indicated that they learned a lot and will continue to utilize CCPD as a resource.
- As of July 1, 2019, Rachel will be tracking requests for MAAB variances in Cambridge in a spreadsheet and reporting on it at Board meetings. On July 11, she received a copy of a request for a variance for Camie's Bakery and Café at 194 Harvard Street. The petitioner wants to raise the ground floor in order to make more room in the basement. The water table in the area makes lowering the basement floor impossible. The builder would then put an accessible entrance on the side of the building. The architect approached CCPD for technical assistance and a letter of support for the variance. CCPD provided technical assistance but declined to write the letter since the change in level requiring a side ramp is only taking place because the business is choosing to raise the ground floor.

- Rachel thanked Alicia Zeh-Dean for her time and hard work as Chair of CCPD and wished her well in her travels. Rachel also congratulated Julie Miller on the birth of her baby and thanked her for her work on the Board, as Julie's term will expire after the September meeting.
- Once Julie's term expires, the Board will have five vacancies. CCPD staff will be screening and interviewing applicants but have been delayed slightly by issues with the application system. CCPD hopes to recommend new Board members to the City Manager as soon as possible!

Old Business:

- We continued the discussion from the June meeting of the Assisted Suicide bill. A motion to postpone any decision on action related to the bill to the September meeting for more in-depth discussion was seconded and passed.
- Phil updated us on RiseUp, a makerspace for people with disabilities to create assistive technologies:
 - RiseUp is applying for a grant by July 12, 2019 for \$25,000 from MassDevelopment to outline a plan for use of space in the LBJ apartment building on Erie Street. Josh Safdie's architecture firm is also pledging \$25,000 to match.
 - RiseUp is working on a proposal for Cambridge's participatory budgeting session.
 - They attempted to apply for a grant recommended by Alicia but the registration process on the relevant federal website was onerous.

The meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Rachel Tanenhaus