

**Approved 2/14/2013**

**Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD)**

Minutes for Thursday, January 10, 2013

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

Meeting was called to order at 5:37pm

**Present:**

Members: Miriam Cooper, JoAnn Haas, Bet MacArthur, and Naomi Pinson, Kathy Watkins, and Dave Wood.

Staff: Michael Muehe and Kate Thurman

Absent: Elizabeth Dean-Clower, Sandy Durmaskin, and Alissa Land.

Guests: Superintendent Chris Burke, Cambridge Police Department; Nicole Horton, DHSP Inclusion Specialist; Helen Kobek, Cambridge Resident; Jonathan Lazar, Radcliff Institute; and Augusto Obregon, Nursing Student.

**Documents Used:**

- Agenda for January 10, 2013 CCPD Meeting
- Minutes from December 13, 2012 CCPD Meeting
- “Web Accessibility: A 15-Minute Tour” PowerPoint Presentation by Jonathan Lazar
- *The Mountaintop Flyer*
- Copy of Spot.us article “Why did Boston public transportation chiefs ignore their own guidance on fare hikes for the disabled?”
- ReelAbilities Boston Disabilities Film Festival brochure

**Minutes:** A motion approve the December 13, 2012 minutes was seconded and passed.

**Guest Speaker:** Dr. Jonathan Lazar, an expert in the field of web accessibility who focuses his research on understanding how people with disabilities interact with technologies, how improved interface design of such technology can change the quality of life, and how human-computer interaction and public policy influence each other, provided a brief “tour” of web accessibility, touching on assistive technology (AT), web accessibility guidelines, methods for evaluating web accessibility, transparency, and university/community partnerships. For more details, please see the February – March, 2013 issue of *AccessLetter* [posted online at [www.cambridgema.gov/ccpd](http://www.cambridgema.gov/ccpd)].

**Public Works Update:** Kathy Watkins reported that DPW is currently updating the Five Year Plan, which she will report on at next month’s meeting. Ms. Watkins said that the last snowfall was the first one under which the newly expanded DPW snow removal efforts were in place. She said that it went fairly well, but that they will be working with their contractors to tweak their work. DPW has received about 300 complaints about unshoveled snow or ice, each of which was investigated, and about 100 tickets have been issued.

Ms. Watkins said that she would be happy to work with CCPD to draft a letter to property owners in commercial districts about clearing disability parking spaces, which, while not a compliance issue, is a good practice issue. This letter would be targeted to commercial properties abutting disability parking spaces and would discuss the importance of clearing snow banks between those spaces and the sidewalks, which is not required by the City’s ordinance, but is good practice.

**Sidewalk Update:** JoAnn Haas said that some sidewalks dip, so that when snow melts, it has a tendency to freeze on sidewalks. Kathy Watkins clarified that the abutting property owner is still responsible for clearing such ice from the sidewalk.

**Police Community Liaison Update:** Superintendent Chris Burke reported that the same rules apply to bicycles as to cars in traffic. All officers (not just bicycle patrol officers) are responsible for enforcing traffic rules for cyclists. Superintendent Burke said that the Department analyzes crash reports so they can focus enforcement on high accident areas. He also said that there are two mechanisms in place for issuing citations to cyclists:

- Cyclists can be cited according to Massachusetts vehicle traffic laws, and there is a “cyclist” check box on motor vehicle citations, allowing an officer to indicate that the ticket was issued to a cyclist
- Cambridge also has a City ordinance requiring cyclists to follow MA vehicle traffic laws, so violations also violate the ordinance, and officers can issue citations under the City ordinance

When the citation is issued under the MA vehicle traffic laws, the court is responsible for the notification process and follow up, whereas the City Clerk’s office handles this for citations issued under the City ordinance. Superintendent Burke said that although officers cannot mandate a cyclist to show ID in order to verify name and address since ID is not required for cycling, a lot of people pay the fine without incident. He said that there are three ways to reduce accidents involving cyclists:

- Education
- Enforcement
- Engineering (the way the roadway is designed and constructed)

Superintendent Burke added that there is no statewide requirement to report crashes of bicycles and pedestrians, but the Cambridge Police Dept. does regular reports to create records of such events. CPD’s standard is that any time officers respond and there has been any physical contact between the cyclist and pedestrian, they write a report.

**Disability Reframed:** Bet MacArthur reported that the next film, *Children of a Lesser God*, will be screened at the Cambridge Senior Center on January 12, 2013 at 2pm.

**Executive Director’s Report:** Mr. Muehe reported that CCPD will be co-sponsoring a performance of *The Mountaintop* at the Central Square Theater on January 26. There will be a Disability Rights Symposium at 2PM, followed by the performance at 3PM.

He also said that the City is organizing a Transit Advisory Committee to look at transportation issues. The City Manager will be making the appointments and is looking for applicants, who must be either a Cambridge resident or employee.

Mr. Muehe reported that Eileen Keegan Bongiorno has retired from the City of Cambridge, so he is in the process of speaking with Ellen Semonoff about getting a replacement DHSP representative. Also, there are two open CCPD memberships as of April. A letter of solicitation will be sent out later this month for people to apply to be members. Please spread the word.

**Project Coordinator’s Report:** Kate Thurman reported speaking with Jaymie Saks, the Executive Director of the Boston Jewish Film Festival, which is organizing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Boston ReelAbilities Film Festival. She reported discussing the possibility of hosting a film at the Cambridge Main Library during the 2014 ReelAbilities Film Festival.

Meeting adjourned at 7:34pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kate Thurman, Disability Project Coordinator