

City of Cambridge

Commission for Persons with Disabilities

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Avril dePagter
Chair

Mary Devlin
Secretary

Loring Brinckerhoff
Jerry Friedman
Robert Goss
Stelios Gragoudas
Keisha Greaves
Valerie Hammond
Nicole Horton-Stimpson
Daniel Stubbs

Rachel Tanenhaus
Executive Director/
ADA Coordinator

Kate Thurman
Project Coordinator

**The next meeting of the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities
will be held online via Zoom on Thursday, January 12, 2023 at 5:30 PM**

PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO JOIN BY 5:30 PM

AGENDA

Please keep your microphone muted when you are not speaking

- | | | |
|---|---------|--------------------|
| 1. Introductions | 2 min. | |
| <i>If needed, alternates named</i> | | |
| 2. Announcements | 3 min. | CCPD staff / Board |
| 3. Approval of December 8 Minutes | 2 min. | CCPD Board |
| <i>See page 4 of agenda packet</i> | | |
| 4. Public Works Update | 10 min. | Jerry Friedman |
| 5. Chair's Report | 20 min. | Avril dePagter |
| <i>CCPD Retreat Planning</i> | | |
| 6. Executive Director's Report | 20 min. | Rachel Tanenhaus |
| 7. Old Business | 5 min. | CCPD staff / Board |
| 8. New Business | 5 min. | CCPD staff / Board |
| 9. Public Input | 5 min. | general public |
| <i>See pages 2&3 of this agenda packet for instructions on providing public comment</i> | | |

CART/closed captioning will be provided for this meeting

Captions can be turned on within the Zoom platform. Additionally, you may stream CART in a separate URL at <http://bit.ly/CCPDCART>
(captions will not appear until the meeting has started)

The City of Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities, does not discriminate, including 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 online on Thursday, February 9

Members of the public: See instructions on following pages on how to watch the CCPD meeting and provide public comment via Zoom

Approved 2/9/2023

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD)

Minutes for Thursday, January 12, 2023 CCPD Meeting

Online via Zoom

Meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm

Present:

Members: Mary Devlin (Secretary, filled in for Chair), Jerry Friedman, Robert Goss, Stelios Gragoudas, Keisha Greaves, Valerie Hammond, Nicole Horton-Stimpson, and Dan Stubbs

Absent: Avril dePagter and Loring Brinckerhoff

Staff: Rachel Tanenhaus and Kate Thurman

Commission Announcements

- CCPD's member retreat will be held on Saturday, April 1, 2023
- The Arts Council recently received a \$5,000 grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council to increase arts in the city which they will use to purchase portable assistive listening devices.
- Enrollment for the Department of Human Service Programs summer programming will be opening soon. To increase accessibility and equity the process has been revised, and there is now a single application for all programs. Nicole encouraged members to refer residents to her with any questions.

Minutes:

The December 8, 2022 minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Works Update:

- Jerry reported that with the lack of snow, DPW has saved money on the snow removal program so far this winter this year.
- Budget season has begun and DPW is requesting an increase in funding for two programs:
 - Miscellaneous sidewalk program focused on accessibility improvements.
 - A 15% increase (~900K) to their in-house program on accessibility-related sidewalk repairs.
- Current projects Update:
 - River St project has started
 - Willard St has started
 - Harvard Square Plaza is moving along
 - Inman Square project almost done
 - Gore Street finishing up
 - First Street connection to Cambridge Crossing happening, will open next year

Chair's Report

- Mary filled in for Avril, who was unable to attend.
- The Retreat Planning group will meet with Ora Grodsky, who will be facilitating the retreat, later in the month and will report back to the group at the February meeting.
- Mary reviewed the list of member interests from the October meeting:

- *Retreat*: We should start planning the retreat and not hold indefinitely until new members are appointed. We need to work on our by-laws (that were deferred until we held the retreat). Rachel will inquire about scheduling a retreat.
- *Visibility*: Increasing our visibility at community events will help residents know about us and what we can do to support them.
- *Communication*: It would be good for us to ramp up our communications to community residents about who we are and what we can do to improve the lives of people with disabilities.
- *Intra-commission relationships*: We should develop relationships and cross-pollination with other commissions, especially those that have overlapping missions. The office staff already have relationships but we could do more interaction between boards.
- *Community Forums*: Hosting events i.e., film series, speakers' bureaus, social service providers' gathering, Zoom book club,
- *Intersection of race and disability*: Become the point for DisCrit (short for "Disability Studies and Critical Race Theory") information for families.
- *Update the CCPD website*: Make the website more inclusive. Kate currently working on it to make our site more accessible.
- Nicole noted that we should try to answer the question of what the Commission's reach is into the community and reach out to other cities and towns to see what their Commissions' activities and roles are.
 - Mary suggested this be done prior to the retreat.
 - Rachel noted that many other Commissions follow the MA Office on Disability (MOD) template on disability commissions, but because CCPD was created prior to the statute enabling disability commissions, it works a bit differently. The link for the MOD template can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/commissions-on-disability/>
 - Kate informed members that [Massachusetts General Laws \(MGL\) Chapter 40, Section 8J](#) authorized cities and towns to form disability commissions. However, CCPD was established by City ordinance prior to the passage of the state law.

Executive Director's Report

- Rachel yielded some time for members to share their thoughts about the recent police-involved fatality. The following was brought up:
 - Members and staff acknowledged the gravity of the situation and its horribly tragic outcome.
 - There is a concern that this event might trigger mental health crises for others.
 - There was some surprise that this happened because there was an impression that Cambridge was doing more to support people with mental illness and their interactions with emergency services.
 - It was noted that there is training for City employees on interactions with people who present as needing additional support during their engagement with City departments.
 - Valerie shared information from NAMI-MA with the Police Department on how to work with people living with mental illness.
- Rachel discussed her findings on the history of the Commission
 - It was established in 1979, well before the passage of the ADA in 1990.
 - Rachel is the third director in the history of the Commission and has been in the position for five years.
 - She shared stories from news clippings over the years, but there is not a lot of documentation of the activities of the Commission prior to the early 1990's.
 - In a review of the by-laws and regulations, there is not a lot of distinction between the role of the Commission staff and the role of the Advisory Board members.
 - Rachel will pursue some research on the early days of the commission to share at the retreat.

Meeting adjourned at 6:34 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Devlin, Secretary