

Lancaster Commission on Disability Meeting Minutes

March 15, 2016

LLC / Senior Center

Members Present: Mike McCue, Chairman; Lesley Allison, Rose Bissonnette, Daryl Blaney, Marilyn Chambers, and Carolyn Stump. Absent: Lorry Doucet. Guests: Walter Sendrowski, Lancaster Selectman, also Rose MacDonald, Jackie Nosek, and Greg Stirk from Bigelow Gardens.

Mike called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

1. REVIEW & APPROVE MINUTES FROM 2/16/16 MEETING.
 - a. Reviewed and approved 2/16/16 Meeting Minutes.
2. Town Matters, Commissions or Committees, Businesses Update
 - a. Town Matters
 - i. Pellechia Boat Ramp
 1. Mike reported that “Noreen stated the MA Fish & Wildlife, Division of Boating & Fishing Access, will not be funding the construction of the handicap-accessible parking area and ramp at the Pellechia CA. The design and permitting have been completed by the agency, but the construction funds have been diverted to other state projects. Town may be eligible to apply for the construction funds through the DCR Recreational Trails grant program. The grant application deadline is 2/1 and Noreen will prepare an application. A 20% match will be required; in-kind labor can be included”.
 - ii. Kalon Farms
 1. Mike reported that Noreen had given the information to Peter Munro, Building Inspector, regarding Mike’s concerns about potential handicap issues. Building Inspector indicated to Mike that he plans to see Kalon Farms at the appropriate times for Inspection.
 - a. Mike stated he is concerned that Kalon Farms needs to be aware of handicapped requirements during their planning stages, not just at Inspection.
 2. Mike brought Walter Sendrowski up to date on the background of concerns, including handicapped parking, walkway to patio, restrooms etc. in addition to liquor licenses (since Kalon plans functions that will involve alcoholic beverages of some types)
 3. Walter stated that the Town of Lancaster currently does not have the legal authority to grant full liquor licenses to a facility. Temporary licenses, e.g. wine tastings, are approved only 1 year at a time. Walter also stated he will research steps for these type licenses.
 4. Walter agreed it is not the COD responsibility to contact owners ahead of time. Instead, Walter suggested contacting appropriate town personnel/ departments (such as Noreen Piazza, Planning Director) regarding any concerns, and she/they will follow up accordingly to contact the owners or builders involved.
 5. Prescott Building

- a. Mike questioned status and when the COD will see the drawing plans. Walter mentioned he would look into this and advise. Also, that an excellent presentation was done by the Project Manager, complete with slides, at Town Meeting Feb 9th.
 - iii. COD involvement in early stages of Town Projects
 - 1. Mike expressed concerns that the COD is not involved early enough in town projects. Mike acknowledged that the COD is an Advisory body, but feels that in some instances problems can be eliminated before they occur. Otherwise it can be exceedingly difficult to rectify an ADA issue after the fact.
 - a. Walter will check with Noreen and Ryan to determine how there can be more communication between Town and COD on various projects to be part of the planning process early on and throughout to minimize unforeseen issues.
 - b. Commissions or Committees – no new information
 - c. Businesses Update – no new information
3. Bigelow Gardens
 - a. Presentation by Rose MacDonald, President and Greg Stirk, Vice-President of *Ruth Roffee Flower Power Tenants Association* at Bigelow Gardens. Please see the attached handout regarding needs at Bigelow Gardens which Rose, Greg & Jackie stated have been presented to LHA (Lancaster Housing Authority) management.
 - b. Positive developments include
 - i. Curb cuts are to be installed next month
 - ii. Lighting outside along some sidewalks, though not felt as sufficient
 - iii. One ramp has been installed that Greg worked hard to achieve
 - c. Ownership of Lancaster Housing Authority is unclear, making it very difficult to get work done.
 - i. Tenants Association found, and has a copy of the land deed. Yet when this land deed was conveyed, and official ownership overall, is in question. Is the Owner the State or Town? Who is ultimately responsible for buildings, roads, sidewalks etc.?
 - ii. Per Mike's request, Walter stated he will see if Town Counsel can help and in addition, research various issues including legal ones.
 - iii. Independent Elderly Living and Handicapped Elderly Living housing designations supposedly each hold separate status types.
 - d. Bathrooms are a priority due to feces backing up into tubs and showers in a number of units, indicating septic system issues. Rose MacDonald stated that the Board of Health was contacted and the board investigated the situation.
 - 1. Mike suggested Rose contact State Health Department, Representative Naughton, and if necessary possibly bring the conditions to light via media exposure.
 - e. Greg states that about 40 out of 70 units have partially or totally disabled occupants.
 - f. All are invited to the next LHA Board Meeting April 27 at 5:15 pm in the Community Room.
 - i. LHA Board Meetings are now being videotaped.

4. Recap of MA Regional Disability Meeting held Worcester March 9th
 - a. Rose Bissonnette and Mike McCue attended this meeting and reported highlights
 - b. New Leadership has decided on regional rather than state-wide training meetings
 - i. 160 out of 360 towns in MA have COD's, mostly Central & Eastern MA
 - ii. New England Office for Disability is located in Boston
 1. Connecticut has very few if any COD's and no state wide meetings. Maine few COD's and only several people attended a state wide meeting. Massachusetts has hundreds of attendees at several statewide meetings.
 - iii. .MOD Director reports directly to the MA Governor
 - iv. Lancaster is the only Town in MA, or perhaps anywhere, currently with an Accessibility Awareness Month
 - v. Lancaster was encouraged to get neighboring towns to have their own COD
 - vi. Legislation in MA Senate SB1323 proposes updating and merging Federal ADA and State (521-CMR) laws into one law.
 - vii. A new consortium exists: "Massachusetts Alliance of Commissions on Disability"
 1. Mike has signed onto this group. It meets the 1st Wed of each month at 1 pm.
 - viii. A possible "211" instead of "911" for disability emergency communications is in development phase. An individual's medical information could be stored on this database so that no time is wasted, such as numerous questions, getting medical emergency attention to the caller.
 - ix. A 2-day training session on various laws including building codes can be found on an enhanced MOD website. Training is designed for COD's, ADA Coordinators, building inspectors etc.
 1. The next session nearest to us is to be held in Framingham, MA
5. Misc / Other as necessary
 - a. Mike questioned whether or not the town's website is in fact fully "accessible".
 - b. Mike received an "Access Recreation LLC flier with lots of beach accessible products for handicapped", which he will share with the Recreation Committee.
 - c. COD membership openings advertising
 - i. Walter invited Mike to present at a Board of Selectman meeting, and will speak with Ryan McNutt, Town Administrator regarding this.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:30 pm

Attached: Ruth Roffee Flower Power Tenants Association - "Handicapped/Disabled Needs"

Respectfully submitted,