

MINUTES OF THE 7/25/2022 MEETING OF THE WESTPORT  
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

Members participating: Brian Gallagher, chairman, Martin Costa, Rick Grundy, Ray Phenix, Kim Legendre, Sue Sherman

The meeting was opened at 3:45.

Remote participation: Ray Phenix, Kim Legendre, Sue Sherman.

The minutes of the May 23, 2022 meeting were approved.

The new trail at Westport Woods: The new trail is wheelchair accessible and it is very nice. The second half of the trail will be completed this fall.

Water access:

North Beach/Children's Beach: The Road Department has fixed the areas that were washed out. The Beach Committee will place a wheelchair accessible picnic table at the beach and will address the issue of the one table that is tipped up rendering it unusable.

Beach Avenue: The GeoGrids will be installed after 9/1/2022. Martin will confirm this with Chris Gonsalves of the Highway Dept.

Head of Westport River: There is a wheelchair accessible picnic table, a handicapped accessible Port-A-John and a ramp to the water's edge.

Horseneck Beach: There is a nice, recently paved walkway that runs the length of the beach, mobility mats leading to the beach and handicapped accessible bathrooms.

Cherry and Webb Beach: It is not handicapped accessible and any plan to make it accessible would not be feasible.

Sidewalks in new developments: The current regulations call for sidewalks in developments of 20 or more homes. Our commission, through Martin has let the Planning Board know that we would like this regulation changed to state that sidewalks should be required in developments of 5 or more houses. This would make it easier for disabled individuals to get from house to house, foster a sense of community and prevent developers from finding ways to avoid installing sidewalks. The Planning Board was very receptive to the input from our commission. Any change to the requirements will require a public hearing. We will continue to push for this change. Brian Gallagher will contact the Planning Board to confirm that our commission wants to be notified of new projects in town.

Ideas for Future Projects-money to the Recreation Department: Everyone agrees that Dana Stewart the director of the department is doing a great job. We have agreed to donate \$5,000.00 to the department. We want to do this every year, assuming we have the money. We will determine if approval of the Select Board is required.

Martin Costa advised that the Audubon Trail off of Horseneck Road East is very nice and handicapped accessible.

Lees receipts are being collected by Sue Sherman and Kim Legendre. Lees Market continues to donate money to our commission based on the number of receipts we collect.

ADA Transition Team: There is money available from the state or projects that the local commissions on disability want to get involved in. An updated ADA Transition plan is required. Our town administrator, James Hartnet advises that creating and updating the

ADA compliant plans is an involved process. He will provide a link to Brian Gallagher that might be helpful. There is an August first deadline for grants that will be available as of September first. We need to press for a meeting of the ADA Transition Plan committee. Our members on the committee are Brian Gallagher, Anders Newcomer and Martin Costa.

Playground update: Our commission has donated money to the Recreation Department for the purchase of handicapped accessible swings for each of the two playgrounds in town. Dana Stewart has found volunteers to install the new swings.

Although the playgrounds are accessible, they are inadequate to the needs of children with disabilities. The school system is creating a new playground that might be more accessible and usable. Our commission would like to do what we can to ensure that families in town have a safe, enjoyable place to take their disabled children.

Martin Costa mentioned that he learned of an all-terrain wheelchair. It is lever driven. It is a GRIT Freedom chair. Information can be found at [info@gogrit.us](mailto:info@gogrit.us). The company is in Medford, MA.

Our next meeting is August 22, 2022 in the Select Board meeting room.

Meeting adjourned.