

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

Whipple Senior Center
182 Green Street, Room 12
Weymouth, MA
December 11, 2019

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Hank Goldman, Chairman
Jon Blaisdell
Rick Johnson

NOT PRESENT:

Ron Evans
Ron Rizzo

ALSO PRESENT:

Sue McDonough

MINUTES

Chairman Goldman tabled the minutes to the next meeting.

ADA COORDINATOR REPORT

HP Parking at RK Center

Ms. McDonough reported on the issue sent to the committee by Laura. Mr. Tom Barry will change the parking at RK Center and add 3 HP spaces at the end near the Xfinity store and add a curb cut also.

Open Space Meeting

Ms. McDonough invited Commission on Disability members to an Open Space presentation on Wednesday night at 7:00pm at Town Hall.

Whitman's Pond HP Ramp

At Whitman's Pond the handicap ramp needs to be cleaned of weeds.

SEPAC REPORT

Chairman Goldman reported that the South Shore ARC did a presentation; the SPED Director was present.

SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Chairman Goldman reported there is an upcoming meeting with a presentation of all layouts, to be held on December 17th at 6:00pm at Town Hall.

OLD BUSINESS

Accessibility Concerns at South Shore Hospital

South Shore Hospital implemented changes a number of years ago related to hospital security that included closing and securing the main entrance each day at 8:00pm. A significant number of HP spaces are located close to this entrance. Once secured visitors can only exit (or enter) through the emergency entrance which requires a significant amount of additional movement to return to vehicles parked right outside the main entrance.

Prior to the remodel valet parking, assisted chair help and other services were available at an entrance very close to the ER entrance and this was also the location of a large number of HP spaces. A significant number of these spaces were changed to Ambulance parking when all these services moved to the remodeled main entrance.

Several years ago, Hank Goldman entered the hospital for some medical services at approximately 6:00pm. They were running late, and he did not complete his appointment until shortly after 8:00pm. When he went to return to his car, he found the entrance barricaded and was unable to exit. There were no directions of any type such as how or where to exit. Hank is disabled and has mobility issues. There was no one anywhere and no signage for any guidance and he just wanted to get to his car which he could see through the windows. He was unable to do so. After discussion at a COD meeting Hank and Ron went to meeting with South Shore Hospital to express concerns and work out a resolution.

During our discussion it was agreed the following could and would be done:

1. The website would be corrected to state Valet Parking ended at 8:00pm and that this exit would be secured at this time. It would be communicated that after that time the only way in or out would be through the emergency room. The website made no mention of the exit being closed and indicated Valet Parking was available until 9:00pm. As of today, December 11, 2019 it still reads:
 - ◆ *VALET PARKING is available at the McKim Family Main Entrance weekdays from 9am-9pm. Parking lots are also available on our campus with ample handicapped parking. We offer a parking garage next to the Cancer Center on Columbian Street where a courtesy shuttle will take you to the South entrance of the hospital.*
2. There would be prominent signage placed at the main entrance to clearly inform all those entering the hospital that the main entrance is secured nightly at 8:00pm and to plan accordingly if you are exiting after that time.

3. There would be signage placed inside the secured exit at 8:00pm providing a phone number to call for assistance in exiting if help was needed. We were told someone from security would come and facilitate an exit through the secured doors.
4. There would be a change in the signage for the ambulance parking that would indicate from 8:00pm until some later time this parking would revert to HP parking to provide adequate assessable parking near the ONLY entrance to the facility from 8:00pm until sometime in the morning.

This past June 2019, Hank's son was in the hospital and his wife was visiting. She entered around 5:00pm and went to exit at about 11:00pm. She was recovering from recent surgeries to have both knees replaced and was really struggling to just get to the exit only to find it barricaded. She called Hank and he told her there should be a sign with instructions and a phone number. There was a sign with limited information and a phone number. She called and the person answering the phone refused to provide any assistance. He insisted that she must exit through the ER and walk around to her car which was right outside the front door. She called back in tears. She was significantly uncomfortable for days after she was forced to walk the significant additional distance to her car and had to cancel two PT sessions.

I called the hospital when I got home later that evening and insisted on talking to someone immediately. They had the security supervisor call me late that evening and he insisted that she should have been let out that door and the employee was 100% wrong. I went to the hospital the next day myself and observed and looked for the agreed upon changes only to find that nothing had really changed. After another follow-up call it would be my opinion that South Shore Hospital will not make any changes unless forced to do so.

5. In addition to the four changes above that should have already been implemented I believe it would be appropriate to verify that South Shore Hospital has the appropriate number of designated HP spaces for a medical facility and that they are located and distributed correctly based upon the changes in access to the building with the updated security procedures in place.

NEW BUSINESS

SHOVELING

Ms. McDonough stated Ms. Collins reported an issue with the landlord not wanting to shovel.

McDonalds HP Door locked

Mr. Blaisdell stated at a recent trip to McDonalds (24-hour location in Weymouth) he came to find out that the HP door was locked, his dad almost fell trying to open the locked door. Then they went around to the other side of the building to the other handicap entrance with ramp only to be told that you cannot enter via that entrance as it is a hazard to the drive thru. Which leaves 24-hour McDonald's without a handicap entrance. Mr. Blaisdell will forward his photos to Ms.

McDonough and all members of COD. Ms. McDonough stated she will forward this item to Tom Barry and ask him to visit McDonald's.

MISSION STATEMENT – review

Mr. Blaisdell asked can this committee please review the COD Mission Statement and possibly add

- Public outreach
- Service dogs (i.e. the town's policy on) (what are rules and regulations)
- Hank added – abuse of HP parking

CLASSES with JEFF DUGGAN

Mr. Blaisdell asked how he can take classes or have sessions with Jeff Duggan, please provide information.

COD NEW DATE/TIME - discussion

Chairman Goldman stated the Wednesday is not good for Ron Rizzo, can he possibly meet on the third Wednesday of the month? Ms. McDonough can you find this out and report back.

NEXT SEPAC MEETING

The next SEPAC meeting will be held on the first Tuesday in January 2020.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on January 8, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Johnson made a MOTION to ADJOURN at 8:25PM. Mr. Blaisdell SECONDED the MOTION. It was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Christine Malloy
Recording Secretary

Approved by:



Hank Goldman, Chairman

Dated:

9/16/20