

Planning & Sustainability • City of Northampton

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Disability Commission Minutes Tuesday March 9, 2020 4:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

Members

Jeremy Macomber-Dubs, Chair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marianne LaBarge <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Keith Benoit, Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Emma Cornwell, Vice Chair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gene Page <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Doug Renick, Scribe <input type="checkbox"/>
Linda Kakos <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Clare Marilyn <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kathy Murri <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rodney Kunath <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Michael Morton <input type="checkbox"/>	

1. Keith Benoit remarked that this meeting was being audio and video recorded.
2. Introductions and public comments. No public comments were received.
3. The Commission approved unanimously upon motion by Marianne LaBarge and second by Gene Page the minutes from February 9, 2021 with a roll call vote.
4. Keith Benoit shared the Accessible Parking Ordinance language review. The Disability discussed about how some people do not respect the handicap signs. Many people agreed. Jeremy Macomber-Dubs asked if the “Handicap Parking” signs were being changed. Keith Benoit on staff said no, the City needs to get a list of all the signs that the City owns. Linda Kakos said that the parking enforcement officers have walked past people who did not have placards before. Councilor LaBarge said that parking violators paid for the Disability Commission, so it is a mixed blessing.
5. Discussion regarding the intersection of Finn St. and King St. Some members thought that the end of Finn Street and King Street near the liquor and sea food store and King and Cushman’s insurance agency which has no pedestrian lights is very dangerous. It is not safe for walking. Linda Kakos said that a car came down Finn St and a drunk driver ran the red light and hit her car. Councilor LaBarge said that MassDOT is handling much of the King St. redesign, it is an extremely dangerous. There is a lot of conversations around this and a lot of work is to be done.
6. Benjamin Kadish said that he crosses that intersection frequently and it is dangerous. It is very dangerous and there are no good alternatives. A pedestrian would have to cross three streets to go across one street. Rodney Kunath said that it has been a



long time talking about this intersection. Marilyn Clare asked when are they going to start, Marianne LaBarge said that the eminent domain piece has already started for the Damon R

7. There is some snow in high violation areas (e.g., some of the sidewalks on King Street between downtown and Finn) that have high volumes of traffic and are sometimes not cleared, but I want that effort to be volunteer driven and not absorb staff time.
8. Keith Benoit gave an update on the Main Street Redesign, website, and previous meeting. The previous public hearing was on 2/28/21 and presented the Picture Main St. starboard. The consultants discussed the planning phase over the next nine months until they submit the 25% to MassDOT. The Disability Commission is encouraged to go to the website and submit comments. Emma Cornwell asked if we should submit comments as a commission. Jeremy Macomber-Dubs said that it was a good idea. Keith Benoit confirmed that people will look at the website and bring their ideas to the next meeting.
9. Councilor LaBarge said that she talked with other councilors about bringing the Forbes Library ADA Coordinator into the Disability Commission, to learn from and share ideas. Ben Kadish said that they have a Disability Advisory Board and that they are on hiatus currently and will be having their next online meeting in the next few weeks. He implored the Disability Commission to get involved with them, their previous meetings minutes are online.
10. The Commission decided to discuss the Main Street Redesign at the next meeting and Cooley Dickinson hospital entrance.
11. Adjourn at 4:48 PM unanimously upon motion by Marianne LaBarge and second by Jeremy Macomber-Dubs.