



***Nantucket Commission on Disability
Minutes
Open Session
Thursday August 17, 2023***

Due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the Covid-19 virus outbreak, and pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Regarding Open Meeting Law, this meeting was conducted remotely by video conference via Zoom and the meeting will be aired at a later time on the Town's Government TV YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-sgxAlfdoxteLNzRAUHxA>

Present:

Mickey Rowland, Jeanette Topham, Georgia Snell, Maribeth Maloney, Augie Chotkowski, Rocky Fox, and Brenda McDonough.

Absent: All present.

Guests:

Call to Order: 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Rowland welcomed a new Commission member, Rocky Fox. Mr. Fox told the Commissioners about his history here on Nantucket and involvement in the community. Mr. Fox knows first-hand the challenges one faces here on Nantucket with an ambulatory disability and wants to get involved to make a positive difference addressing these challenges.

Mr. Rowland read the "Script for Remotely Conducted Open Meetings" and all members present via Zoom responded affirmatively as Mr. Rowland called their names.

Agenda: 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Rowland stated, by unanimous consent we are adopting the agenda.

Note:

Election of Officers:

Ms. Maloney motioned to nominate Mr. Rowland as Chairperson, which Ms. Snell seconded this motion, and all the present Commissioners voted in favor of this motion.

Mr. Rowland motioned to nominate Ms. Maloney as Vice Chairperson, which Ms. Topham seconded this motion, and all the present Commissioners voted in favor of this motion.

Mr. Rowland motioned to nominate Ms. Snell as Secretary, which Ms. Maloney seconded this motion, and all the present Commissioners voted in favor of this motion.

Minutes: 3:08 p.m.

Ms. Topham motioned to approve the May 17, 2023, minutes, which Ms. Maloney seconded, and all the present eligible Commissioners voted in favor of this motion.

Open Session: 3:04 p.m.

New Business: 3:04 p.m.

Topics:

Commission on Disability's Definition:

The Commission reviewed their current definition and thought a definition update was due. Ms. McDonough asked the Commissioners to submit their suggestions for our new definition. Ms. Maloney and Mr. Chotkowski submitted the following, which Mr. Rowland read to the Commissioners.

The Nantucket Commission on Disability provides guidance, assistance, and advocacy to support the needs and interests of all people with disabilities, living on or visiting the Island. Given Nantucket's designation as a National Historic Landmark, a significant aspect of the Commission's work involves serving as a dedicated and robust voice for the disabled community in navigating the balance between historical preservation and the mission that we strive to achieve, which is "Access for All."

Ms. Maloney mentioned that it is a balance to provide the best access to goods and services and still preserve the historic nature of Nantucket.

Mr. Fox asked if the ADA or the AAB trumps the historic aspects of Nantucket. Mr. Roland explained that the AAB is the governing body for access codes in Massachusetts. Whenever a business or the town cannot fully comply with the 521 CMR, Massachusetts Architectural Access Board's Rules and Regulations, they submit a variance application to the State and must prove that it is impracticable to meet full compliance with the code. The Commission receives a copy of the application and reviews it at their meeting. The Commission votes to either support the variance request or not support the variance request. The Commission sends a letter to the AAB stating their position on the application.

Mr. Fox spoke about the hazardous conditions of the island's sidewalks and inaccessible public buildings on the island. He was not aware of how accessible/inaccessible Nantucket is until recently, because a family member has mobility impairments. Now Mr. Fox has a different perspective on the inaccessible sidewalks and businesses. It was mentioned that the poorly lit downtown adds to the difficulty of navigating the town's sidewalks in the dark. Mr. Fox mentioned that the voters amended the outdoor lighting bylaw at Town Meeting.

Ms. Topham motioned to revise the Commission's definition to Ms. Maloney and Mr. Chotkowski's proposed new definition, which Ms. Snell seconded the motion and all present members voted in favor of this motion.

Commission on Disability's By-Laws:

All Commissioners received an email copy of the Commission's By-Laws prior to its meeting. Mr. Rowland noted that the Commission's By-Laws are basically cut and paste from the State's Commission on Disability's sample operating by-laws. Some of the Commission's by-laws need updating to truly represent our Commission in 2023. Mr. Rowland mentioned that the Commission should include the following in Article II: Powers and Duties:

- Review AAB variance requests
- The ramp loan program
- Nantucket Disabled Parking permits

Ms. Maloney will edit our current by-laws and present the edits to the Commission at its next meeting.

Items Discussed:

- Ms. McDonough identified areas where new curb cuts and crosswalks are needed. Ms. McDonough spoke about a grant that the State offered to municipalities to improve access in town owned spaces and buildings. Maybe the town can apply for this grant to install curb cuts and crosswalks in downtown and midtown.
- Ms. Topham spoke about installing a longer boardwalk at Galley Beach. One can access the beach with the present boardwalk, but Ms. Topham believes that the boardwalk should go as close to the water as possible.
- Mr. Fox informed the Commission that Housing Nantucket purchased 145 Orange Street and maybe Housing Nantucket can help to provide better access in this area with installing curb cuts at the crosswalk at 145 Orange Street.
- Mr. Chotkowski said that the Tap Room's elevation door is difficult to close.
- Ms. Topham mentioned that the lighting at the downtown Stop&Shop is inadequate.
- Mr. Fox wondered how many accessible parking spaces are required in public parking lots. Mr. Rowland answered that there is a required minimum number of accessible parking spaces given the total number of parking spaces in any given parking lot.

Old Business: None

Public Comment: None

Update:

- Mr. Rowland and Ms. McDonough attended a sidewalk survey meeting with other town representatives and sidewalk engineers. This group surveyed the sidewalks and curb cuts along Sea

Street, Step Lane, and Center Street. The town wanted to make sure that all interested parties were included in the conversation. It was a great meeting. Everybody embraced Mr. Rowland and Ms. McDonough's suggestions for improving accessibility in that area.

- Ms. Topham mentioned that the asphalt sidewalks at Children's Beach needs repair. Ms. Topham also mentioned that the town should install more sidewalks in residential areas, namely, the beginning of Hummock Pond Road. All the Commissioners agreed with this.
- Ms. Topham inquired about Traffic Safety's recommendations regarding widening Easton Street between North Beach Street and the Nantucket Hotel to alleviate traffic. Mr. Rowland stated that Traffic Safety took no action on this resident's request.

***Topics Not Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of Meeting:**

Adjournment: 4:12 p.m.

Ms. Topham motioned to adjourn Open Session, which Ms. Maloney seconded, and all voted in favor of this motion by the following roll call vote:

Mr. Rowland: Aye

Ms. Snell: Aye

Ms. Topham: Aye

Mr. Chotkowski: Aye

Ms. Maloney: Aye

Mr. Fox: Aye

Submitted by:

Brenda McDonough, Facilitator