



## OBSERVER REPORT

**MARBLEHEAD DISABILITIES COMMISSION - March 12, 2025**

**LWVM Observer:** Nancy Powell

**Members Present:** Laurie Blaisdell (Chair), Briggete Duffy, Amy Hirschkron (remote), Gail Mack, Samantha Marino (remote), Andrea Mountain (remote)

**Members Absent:** Mara Dartly-Rocco

**Guests Present:** Kyle Wylie

### **Update MA Office on Disability Grant/Devereaux Beach**

Ms. Blaisdell met with representatives from Parks and Rec Department to do a walk-thru at Devereaux Beach and found that with the grant funding awarded, the Town will be able to make the entire beach accessible including the parking lot, the beach, the playground, the bathrooms, the pavilion and the restaurant. The project is currently out for pricing.

### **Harbor Implementation Board Meeting Update**

Ms. Blaisdell attended as a new committee member representing the MDC. The Board expressed interest in sharing the work they've completed and planned thus far.

### **Town Charter Invitation/Questions**

The Town Charter Committee has extended an invitation to the MDC to meet on March 25<sup>th</sup> to discuss key elements of charter creation and consider the responsibilities, authority, structure of the MDC and draft language for Counsel to eventually review.

### **Disabled Identification Registry**

The MDC, in cooperation with the Marblehead Fire Department, keeps a list of residents with disabilities who want to be identified as needing special assistance in the event of an emergency. As there have been no recent sign-ups for the registry, Ms. Marino will advertise this service on the Commission's social media channels to inform residents with disabilities about its existence and let them know the information they provide will be kept in the Dispatch System so first responders will have it available to them as needed.

### **139 Pleasant Street Hearing**

The Boston-based Architectural Access Board will hold a hearing on Monday 4/7 at 2:00pm regarding 139 Pleasant Street updates. Some MDC members plan to attend. Ms. Blaisdell will share the remote meeting link to interested MDC members.

### **1 Atlantic Ave AAB Update**

On February 11<sup>th</sup> the AAB received additional documents regarding the restaurant that is about to open at this address. At their meeting on 2/24/25, the Board ruled that the petitioner must provide further detail as to where trash will be stored and picked up outside the building. Their ruling also noted that the pull side of the rear door entrance lacks the appropriate floorspace clearance and this must be addressed.

### **Hybrid Meetings Discussion**

A reporter from the Current contacted Ms. Blaisdell for comment as the regulations established during COVID-19 are about to expire. Ms. Blaisdell stressed the importance of keeping public meetings accessible for all, including people with disabilities. She noted that internet access is still one of the main hurdles to overcome. Ms. Hirschcron confirmed that the end of the hybrid meeting law does not affect the MDC's meetings because State regulations permit disability commissions to hold hybrid meetings provided the chairperson is physically present in an agreed upon public meeting space while conducting the meeting.

### **Closed Captioning at Meetings Townwide**

Members have noticed that during School Committee meetings, closed captioning has not been enabled. A number of MDC members will attempt to log into various meetings to see if closed captioning is available and working properly.

**Next meeting April 9, 2025 at Abbot Hall and hybrid via ZOOM**