



OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

Marblehead Disabilities Commission -March 13, 2024

LWVM Observer: Nancy Powell

Members Present: Laurie Blaisdell (Chair), Dee Cuffe, Brigitte Duffy, Amy Hirschcron (remote), Andrea Mountain (remote)

Members Absent: Cheryl LaLonde, Ed Lang, Samantha Marino

1. Review Marblehead ADA Report

Commission members discussed having regular interface with the Town Administrator to review the ADA Transition Plan and get his thoughts on setting priorities as there are many non-compliant areas yet to be addressed. Laurie noted that the prospective ADA Coordinator should have a seat at the table on all capital projects.

2. New Grant- Mass Office on Disability

An ADA Improvement Grant has recently become available and a new hire in the Town Planning Department has reached out to the Commission with an offer to complete the application process. The Commission foresees using the funding to make accessibility improvements at Devereaux Beach. When the Town launched a public survey in 2022 to help identify barriers to accessibility, citizens viewed "outdoor facilities" as being high on the list. At Devereaux, the ramp leading to the restaurant needs repair, the bathroom in the parking lot is inaccessible and the numerous potholes in the lot cause uneven/dangerous passing especially for those using mobility devices.

3. New pole at Stacy and Washington Street Intersection

The Marblehead Municipal Light Department has set a new light pole in the sidewalk that blocks access to a curb cut. Laurie reached out to GM, Joe Kowalick, who will consult with Water and Sewer Superintendent, Amy McHugh about a remedy.

4. 116 Pleasant Street

The Riptide Restaurant is now open to the public and is wheelchair accessible.

5. 139 Pleasant Street

The Architectural Access Board is set to begin enforcement proceedings in this matter involving a business that failed to comply with accessibility requirements after ignoring numerous deadlines and losing their right to appeal.

6. New Railings at State Street Dock

New double bar railings have been installed on the ramp leading from the State Street Dock to the Harbormaster's Office providing an added level of safety.

7. Letter Received re: Dolphin Yacht Club

A resident sent the Commission an unsigned letter asking for an explanation as to why the DYC isn't required to provide access to their second-floor dining and deck facilities. Laurie followed up with the Building Commissioner who will review the documentation and respond.