



OBSERVER REPORT

MARBLEHEAD DISABILITIES COMMISSION

Thursday, July 8, 2021 – 4:15PM

Marblehead Community Center

Present: Laurie Blaisdell (Chair), Katie Farrell, Preston Ford, Sue Harris, Amy Hirschkron, Ed Lang

Guests: Richard Ramos, James Ashton (Marblehead Community Boating Center Initiative)

Harbors and Waters Update

Laurie and other commissioners had asked Mark Souza (Harbormaster) to put them on the Harbors and Waters Agenda for their June 7 meeting. They had intended to raise concerns about lack of compliance with ADA regs regarding waterfront access but had to postpone. Richard Ramos did attend, however, and reported that he had pressed for one of the agenda items, the installation of a Hoyer lift (a sling for transfers) on Marblehead Harbor (possibly Parkers Boat Yard as part of the Community Boating initiative) and at Stramski. The Harbormaster was supportive and indicated he would write to Marblehead Yacht Clubs seeking buy-in to make the waterfront more accessible.

Laurie received an email from Mark Souza outlining progress the Harbors and Waters Commission has made regarding eliminating barriers to the Harbormaster's Building and dock. He reported that: Tucker's Wharf docks have new transition plates, they are awaiting delivery of a keypad for the rear door, the accessible route to the back entrance has been cleared, barriers inside the back entryway have been removed, yellow ropes blocking parking near the Harbormaster's Office have been removed, and ramps have been ordered that will allow access between Tucker's Wharf and State Street landing where there are now only stairs.

The Harbors and Water's Board agenda for their next meeting on July 12 will include a discussion of accessibility issues. Several Commission members will attend in hopes of getting a commitment from Harbors and Waters to fully comply with the ADA 2010 Design Standards.

139 Pleasant Street

Sue gave an update on this property. On June 15th 2021 the Zoning Board granted the owners' new request to rezone the property as mixed-use (commercial 1st floor/residential 2nd and 3rd floor). When the Disability Commission was notified of this, Sue contacted the Mass Office on Disability to clarify the status of a temporary variance granted to the owners in February 2019 which they later withdrew. Commissioners have decided to report to the MA Architectural Board if the property remains out of compliance by the 2/4/22 deadline the variance requires.

Fort Sewall

Ed gave an update on the near-completion of Fort Sewall access improvements including paved paths where previously there were only stairs. Ed will discuss a few pending items with the Fort Sewall Committee.

Lucretia and Joseph Brown Elementary School

Katie can arrange to give the Commissioners a tour of the new elementary school and will provide possible dates. Laurie will invite Jeff Dougan of the Mass Office on Disability to join the tour. Katie will purchase a tool to measure ramp slopes using funds available to the Commission from Handicapped Parking violations.

Next meeting will be Thursday, September 9th at 4:15pm