



TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

NOTICE OF MEETING

January 9th, 2023 | 7:00 p.m.

Via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89841678891?pwd=U1NrUkVtOG00RWZlZTdmcStKRzJ3Zz09>

Consistent with the Governor's orders extending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law every effort will be made to allow the public to view and/or listen to the meeting in real time. If you do not have a camera or microphone on your computer you may use the following dial in number: 1-301-715-8592 Meeting ID 898 4167 8891 Passcode 348433. Please only use dial in or computer and not both as feedback will distort the meeting. This meeting will be audio and video recorded. In compliance with the Americans with Disability Act, this location is accessible to people with disabilities, Wakefield provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request. If you are a person with a disability and require information or materials in an alternate format, or if you require any other accommodation, please contact the Town's Disability Coordinator, William Renault-Town Engineer at 781-246-6308 as far in advance of the event as possible. Every effort will be made to grant your request. Advance notification will enable the Town to make reasonable arrangements to remove an accessibility barrier for you.

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm.

Members in attendance:

Marie Rej, Lorna Davidson-Connelly, Lois Benjamin, Paula Thompson, Katharine Staiti, Judy Tanner, Janice Mirabassi; Members not in attendance: Levonne Coughlin; Kristen Bardol
Guest: Bill Renault

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Participation:

Bronwyn Della-Volpe; Bob Brooks

- Both public participants are interested in the letter that was shared by the Melrose Commission on Disabilities RE: the proposed building site, parking lot, and sidewalks for the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational Technical School.
- Mr. Brooks stated that the proposed site poses significant access problems.

Approval of Minutes from November 7 and December 5, 2022

Motion to approve; seconded; all in favor.

Financial Report as of December 31, 2022:

The account stands at \$11,366.29

Old/New Business

Summaries, discussion, and updates:

- **Discuss the letter from Melrose Commission on Disabilities in relationship to the Northeast Vocational Tech HS.**



- The Commission will request, through Bill Renault, that the individual involved in this building project who is best versed on disability access issues attend a Commission meeting and make a presentation to address those issues.
- We can invite the Commissions, Special Ed PACs, and ADA Directors from the other 11 cities/towns in the District to participate in that meeting.
- Need to determine: Who would host the meeting, and would it be offered by zoom or in-person – or both?
 - We will plan to use the Town zoom account – and will check on how many participants can be accommodated.
 - Potentially schedule this topic for our March Commission meeting.
 - Bill Renault suggested tht we craft an email to the Commissions from the 11 other communities and let the Commissions share the invitation however they think is appropriate.
 - It would be best to have a unified voice among the Commissions and advocates.
 - It was suggested that we hold this meeting prior to the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting at which the proposed school is going to be presented.
 - The school's site plan has already been presented to the MSBA (MA School Building Assn) for approval. Is there an appeal process? E.g., the extremely long (proposed) ramp that would lead from the parking lot to the building meets the letter of the law in terms of structure, but it is still quite impractical – and may actually be impossible for some folks with disabilities (or folks pushing a wheelchair) to use.
 - The group viewed the online renderings of the proposed building and tried to determine the location of the accessible parking spaces and the long, hillside ramp. Questioned whether or not the accessible spaces for staff, guests, and students with disabilities are to be located in the upper parking lot adjacent to the school main entrance.
 - Marie Rej: Asked if it is sufficient to hold this meeting in March during our regular meeting time. The decision was to plan for March. From Wakefield: we will invite the Veterans group, the PAC, Mass Rehab, and folks from the Senior Center.
- **Discuss and establish short term goals and long terms goals for 2023:**
 - Plan and hold a public meeting on the Voke School accessibility issues.
 - Plan for Mass Rehab to join us at a meeting to hear about employer supports that MRC can provide.
 - More work on employment opportunities and supports for individuals with disabilities.
 - Continue learning about housing issues, and advocacy for housing options for people with disabilities – including group living options.

- Become involved with the proposed new Wakefield High School building to advocate for disability access and opportunity.

Wrap-up: Next Meeting February 6, 2023

Motion to Adjourn: 8:22 pm

Motion made; seconded; all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted by Marie Rej and Lorna J. Davidson-Connelly, Co-Chairs