

## **Andover Commission on Disability—May 26, 2021 Commission Meeting**

After the agenda was duly posted and distributed the meeting was conducted virtually through Webex starting at 6:35 p.m.

**Present:** Chair Julie Pike, Nancy Achim Audesse, Molly Bicking, Justin Coppola, Kathleen Dolan, Jemma Lambert, Trish Leelman, Janet Nicosia, Eileen Reilly, Steve Surette, Ellen Townsend, Judy Wakefield via phone, Lorraine Finnegan SMMA architect, Matt Rice SMMA architect

**Minutes:** Steve made a motion to approve the April 28, 2021 minutes. Jemma seconded. Passed. 10, 0, 1

**Roll call to accept the minutes:** Julie Pike, yes; Nancy Achim Audesse, abstained; Justin Coppola, yes; Kathleen Dolan, yes; Jemma Lambert, yes; Trish Leelman, yes; Steve Surette, yes; Judy Wakefield, yes

**Speakers:** Architects from SMMA on designing the West Elementary and Shawsheen School Project with an emphasis on Americans with Disability Act (ADA) compliance. Lorraine Finnegan – background includes Wood Hill/High Plain Schools and Bancroft School projects.

Matt Rice – made the presentation to the commission on the design plans starting with overall design criteria and needs addressed, moving into floor plans, and finishing with renderings.

Design Criteria: SMMA Looked at Andover's ADA transition plan for all schools to strive for universal design equity for all. They know they have to achieve a baseline criteria of universal design that embodies compliance with architectural access and ADA compliance. There's also been discussion about UDL (universal design for learning) as part of access for all. There is a need for a robust set of spaces dedicated and designed for special education programs in the district given that half of the student population at West Elementary are special education with gen ed peers there to model and support. Shawsheen and West EI will have dedicated classrooms for medically fragile (new), Autism spectrum, BRIDGE programs, Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT) and specialized Physical Education (PE) for gross motor development.

### **West EI Shawsheen School project:**

Shawsheen will be closed and the building returned back to the town. Both schools will be housed at the West EI site. The existing building will be in place while the new building is being built. The location is constrained by wetlands. Shawsheen will have a separate footprint so not overwhelming for preschool but will be connected campus. Surrounding the building are sites for baseball, softball, multiuse space, parking lots, and circulation drives to provide access throughout site. Play spaces will be age appropriate, have all resilient rubber surfacing, include some hard scape, fully

accessible, and incorporate outdoor learning environments to engage and interact with nature by building boardwalks to wetlands and the surrounding environments. There will be separate traffic plans for drop-off and pick-up for parents, buses, and specialty buses and vans.

- Parents - off Beacon Street. Drive around loop for West EI or Shawsheen. Intentionally long for safety so not queuing out on Beacon.
- Buses - off High Plain Road entry plaza departing Beacon. Intentionally separated out from parent location for safety.
- Specialty vans and buses – separate, dedicated drive off Beacon. Off main drive but closer proximity to entrance.

Floor plans were provided by levels starting with West EI (3 levels plus roof)

- Level 1 – off to left main office, in midst of cafétorium space, differentiated seating areas, gymnasium can open into cafeteria (walls). Western side of plan 2 wings – 3 stories - classroom links each classroom centered around neighborhood common space – each grade has own space within building – classrooms. Art classroom northwest wing, direct outside access, participate in outdoor art. Special Ed dedicated classrooms – autism spectrum disorder classrooms, alternative PE space, PT OT rooms adjacent
- Level 2 - classroom spaces with BRIDGE classrooms in middle supporting spaces surround, overlooking cafétorium is media room – digital learning etc.
- Level 3 grade 3 & 4, 5<sup>th</sup> grade wraps around
- Outdoor roof garden space – safe space protected on all sides. Opportunity for greenhouses and additional outdoor learning

Shawsheen (2 levels)

Larger classrooms on either side of entrance, medically fragile dedicated nurse's office, neighborhood common space – operable walls to create multi-use spaces, upstairs play space

Access – pair of elevators serving 3 floors of West EI 1 good proximity to main entrance and other to main classroom areas. Dedicated elevator at Shawsheen for 2 floors

Renderings were presented of the main entry approach, Shawsheen main entrance, entry looking north, drop off for western side, cafetorium, neighboring learning commons showing flexible furniture and with a focus on peer-to-peer learning and emotional/social growth. Design in response to different types of learners. Roof garden space also provides ambient lighting to floors below with windows

Ellen encouraged SMMA to build boardwalks into wetlands that are inclusive to all using DCR and MASS Audubon as a reference where they are the gold standard.

Conservation can provide assistance if needed.

Justin posed questions about ADA compliance not being visible in the images related to railings and ramping. Matt noted that they are concealing or using Access 1-20 slopes so no need for handrails. Handrails felt less integrated. Also not rendered to that level yet. Front entrance provides better scope. All at entrance will be compliant

Justin also asked if a separate team looks at ADA. Lorraine noted that their team along with an independent code compliant specialist, work on integration all at the same time

Molly mentioned a young man working with AVIS could be a good resource as well with outdoor learning spaces

Justin suggested that SMMA review bathrooms closely as over half the ADA non-compliance costs at Bancroft were related to non-compliance of the bathrooms

Janet mentioned AAB might be met but ADA might be asking for something different

Jemma noted ADA compliance does not in itself mean that a room is truly accessible for all. More we can do – be a model for others.

Julie thanked SMMA for the presentation. Commission to review Fin Comm report as this is one of the projects presented for support.

### **Old Business - Updates**

#### **• Spot Checks:**

Steve reported that the first round of paving should be done by the middle of June (includes Wild Rose Drive, Bannister Road, Bradley Road and Haggett's Pond Road.)

Justin received a request from the Shawsheen River Watershed Association re: ADA specs for their efforts to make Shawsheen River more accessible. Justin provided them along with online course info.

#### **• ADA Compliant Beach Mat for Pomp's Pond**

Justin sent Jemma a proposal for a 5' wide 100' long (actual length to be determined) ADA compliant beach mat recommended by DCR that can be used on sand to assist those using wheelchairs and with other mobility challenges with the idea that it might be a great item for Pomp's Pond to gain access to the beach and water. Jemma agreed. Jemma noted that Pomp's Pond has a water-submergible wheelchair. ACOD members discussed its purchase of approximately \$1325. Justin made the motion to put the remaining budget of FY21 toward Pomp's Pond beach mat. Steve seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **• Group Reports:**

Justin suggested that any extra budget money should be allocated to the ADA Transition Plan to get more completed this year. Remaining money in ACOD budget needs to be used before fiscal year end.

Janet noted that Facilities gets ADA money each year – hundreds of work orders are already in place for the ADA Transition Plan.

Justin ordered newsletters from the copy center for the 25<sup>th</sup> celebration newsletters to post them at Memorial Hall Library and Old Town Hall.

375<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Town – Jemma/Janet mentioned Anne Ormond and group looking to do First Night type of event. Not planning an Andover Day in September – not enough time to pull an event like that together - but maybe something else to replace it (TBD)

• **Projects:**

**Merrimack College – Jemma**

The commission voted to support a Merrimack College intern last meeting and their project of creating an accessibility business score card for the town. Jemma said the \$2000 town accessibility study PO is already underway.

**25<sup>th</sup> Celebration – Kathleen**

Kathleen asked to add this to the agenda for June's meeting to discuss then. Kathleen will also have more information on the 375<sup>th</sup> Celebration.

• **New Business:**

**Town Meeting Warrant articles:** Commission is to review/vote on them. Julie requested that the members review and send back to her using the index, mark article 1 approved or disapproved in order that she may send back to Town Clerk by Monday/Tuesday. Justin proposed an alternative process, as we only need to review the ones related to the Commission.

***ACTION ITEM – Justin will send out the list of proposed Warrant articles to support.***

***ACTION ITEM – Members should email Julie their vote by June 1<sup>st</sup>.***

• **Announcements:**

Molly reported on Elder Services. Capacity limits at the Robb Center are slowing being increased. An intern from Merrimack College will be utilized to sign people up to use ADA fitness equipment that was MOD Grant funded. Molly also noted the receipt of a grant from Cummings Foundation that put the Center over the top for the fundraising goal.

Jemma also noted the actual receipt of a grant from the state for ADA compliant fitness & aerobic equipment aforementioned. Almost all of the equipment has been installed.

Ellen reported that DCR plans to design a viewing station in one of the ponds at Harrold Parker State Forest and DCR will add an inclusive wheel chair friendly ramp for canoe and kayak at Field Pond.

**Adjournment:** Steve made a motion to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. and Justin seconded. Unanimously approved.

**Next meeting:** June 23, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. to be held virtually

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Lawlor

Andover Commission on Disability Wednesday, May, 26 2021 @ 6:30 PM Virtual Meeting Broadcast by line at [www.andovertv.org](http://www.andovertv.org). Every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting. Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Andover Commission on Disability will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to watch the meeting may do so in the following manner: Andover TV COMCAST CHANNEL 22 AND VERIZON CHANNEL 45 or stream online at [www.andovertv.org](http://www.andovertv.org).