

Town of Andover Commission on Disability

Minutes of the July 27, 2022, Meeting

6:30 P.M. Virtual Meeting Broadcast on Andover TV

Members Present: Justin Coppola Sr., Jemma Lambert, David Kahan, Kathleen Dolan, Stephen Surette, Trish Leelman, and Katherine Ananis.

Also Present: Janet Nicosia, ADA Coordinator and Plant and Facility Director, Bob Douglas, Director of Conservation, Ellen Townson, Conservation Commissioner, and Gail Bloom, Council on Aging, and Elizabeth Maldari, intern.

Call To Order: Justin called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. and took roll call as follows:

Kathleen, Y; David, Y; Trish, Y; Jemma, Y; Katherine, Y; Justin, Y. (Stephen arrived after roll call)

Guest Speaker, Jeff Dougan, Mass Office on Disability, Assistant Director for Community Services:

Justin announced that Jeff Dougan unfortunately had a last-minute cancellation.

Minutes of May 25, 2022:

It was moved by Stephen, seconded by Trish and voted 7 - 0 to approve the Minutes of May 25, 2022.

Kathleen, Y; David, Y; Trish, Y; Jemma, Y; Katherine, Y; Stephen, Y; Justin, Y.

Old Business:

Elizabeth Maldari, Status Shawsheen River Master Plan for people with disabilities:

Justin introduced Elizabeth. At this time, Justin also introduced Gail Bloom, new Council on Aging liaison. Stephen entered the meeting at this point.

Elizabeth presented a screen share "Access on the Shawsheen River" to be included in the Master Plan. Elizabeth explained that this project, something she is passionate about, is also part of her dissertation. She has contacted about 50 people during her research and the access update includes:

- round table discussion with ACOD; and members of Conservation Commission (intro, planning, and timeline)
- online survey
- one-on-one interviews
- site visit to West Parish Garden Cemetery
- input event in the park
- input event at music in the park
- library study
- art with middle schoolers at youth center

Stakeholders involved include: ACOD, Andover High School, Memorial Hall Library, Parks and Recreation, Conservation, Center for History and Culture, Business Arts and Culture, residents and supporters.

At "Plan a River Pop-Up", Elizabeth was joined in the park by adults and children to share their vision of Shawsheen River for recreation and other purposes. They drew their ideas on plexiglass and High School

Liaison to ACOD, Liam Flanagan assisted that afternoon as resident artist. Justin attended and said he was impressed at the number of people engaged with the plexiglass drawing project.

Elizabeth showed a slide showing the flow from initial awareness, arrival, information, activity, rest, and departure. She talked about community awareness, transportation to the river, accessible parking, dog management, picnic areas, smooth paths, activities, bathrooms, potable water, and other issues to consider. Justin asked about tapping into existing town-wide community calendars, and a brief discussion followed about possible press releases and where this project fits into the Master Plan. Justin asked for a new calendar of events for August.

Fishing was noted as an activity and Bob said the kayak launch proposals to be discussed next, would generate interest in the press.

Trish asked whether kayaks and canoes for use on the river would be town owned or privately owned. Bob noted that some locations provided town canoes and kayaks such as Pomp's Pond and Ellen noted some kayaks are ADA compliant and there are grants for those.

Elizabeth posed "How can we move through a landscape and How can a landscape move through us"?

Next Steps include more in person sessions on conservation land, to determine amenity and feasibility. Katherine praised the work done on this project and said she would like to work further with Elizabeth on this initiative.

New Business/

Liaison Report & Announcements: Jemma, Janet, Ellen, Gail:

Justin announced that **Andover Day** is September 24 (see schedule below). Justin would like to have handouts available for that event. Jemma said she would help Justin with updating the **newsletter** and. Katherine has put together an **Implicit Bias** flyer -- a QR code will be included to access the proposed resource list. Katherine agreed to work on a flyer with "**10 things to know about ACOD**" which would include text and graphics. Katherine agreed to work on graphics if she gets the text. Janet asked whether the Massachusetts Commission on Disability might have info that could be downloaded for some of these flyers.

Jemma no reports

Janet no reports

Ellen waiting to hear about the kayak study

Gail introduced herself, saying she was glad to be part of ACOD. Her background is in occupational therapy primarily in geriatric and psychiatry, and she is a former Director of Human Services for the City of Everett.

Stephen no update

Kayak Launch Initiative:

Janet reported on the process and status of researching and choosing a proposed kayak launching sites into the Shawsheen River and Pomp's Pond.

Janet showed three architectural designs on access docks and access ramps—costing between \$300K and \$500K each.

One dock (FWM Docks) allowed kayaks to launch from either end of the dock and all designs enabled a slide from seat to kayak with stabilization bars and then a lowering of the kayak into the water. Tactile pads on the dock warn of dock edges to water and rails could be installed similar to those on the gangways leading into the water.

1. Pomp's Pond Kayak Launch Feasibility Study— asphalt ramp from parking lot to water.

2. Lowell Junction/Shawsheen Pines— Vertical pathway and 60-foot-long aluminum gangway to middle of river— due to river flow. A launch exists— need to use new launch with reinforced foundations.
3. Nason’s Landing on River Street—60-foot gangway to get further into the water to the channel. Could be multi-use such as fishing along with boating. Road would have to be filled in to get up to River Street.

Trish asked about whether the full range of accommodation for disabilities would be available, including balance, hearing, or sight disabilities. A brief discussion followed about possibly adding railings to the dock, and ensuring signage would be available in braille. Other access issues will be discussed going forward. Ellen suggested training and or programming to assist with various disabilities and Elizabeth said development of a multi-use site with activities would draw people to the area who might be able to assist and support others.

Janet said the end decision was to fully develop plans for Pomp’s Pond and Nason’s Landing and improve Shawsheen Pines without putting an ADA boat launch at the Pines.

She noted the MOD grant is \$250K and she is considering proposing the balance of monies needed to be voted at Town Meeting. David emphasized the issue of safety at the sites. Janet and Bob agreed that boating rules should be posted at the sites.

Justin suggested that a class on basic safety might be offered by the Recreation Department and Jemma agreed with this idea and further suggested ACOD funding of this for next Spring as a special trainer would need to be hired. Justin asked how these ideas tie into Shawsheen River Master Plan.

Elizabeth will put together the disabilities portion of the Shawsheen River Master Plan and include Nason’s Landing. Justin suggested a commission vote to support the grant application that Janet noted with MOD. Ellen said she supports what has been discussed at this meeting and is excited at the prospect of access to the river, but the Conservation Commission should be brought into process especially as the land is town conservation land, and the approval process from the Commission is needed next.

It was moved by David, seconded by Stephen, and voted 5-0 to authorize Justin to write a letter of support for the grant application to MOD that Janet will apply for in the amount of \$250K.

Roll call: Stephen, Y; David, Y; Trish, Y; Justin, Y; Jemma, Y.

Janet then showed slides of the Recreation area including a road created from Pomp’s Pond to the pickleball court and 2 HP spaces. A path to these courts leads to the pavilion/bathrooms and playground area. Jemma and Justin praised Janet for all the work involved in these proposed and in some cases, finished projects. Justin noted the need for further discussion on signage and or kiosks.

Andover Day Schedule:

9:30 AM Setup	Justin		
10 AM – 12 PM	Justin	Kathleen	Eileen TBD
12 PM – 2 PM	Bernadette	Trish	
2 PM – 4 PM	Katherine	Steve?	David
4 PM Breakdown	Steve?	David	

Announcements:

Virtual ADA Basic Training (CAM) sessions are being planned this year by MOD:

September 13th & 21st from 9:30 am – 2:30 pm.

November 2nd & 3rd from 9:30 am – 2:30 pm.

July 26th 1990 – 32 years anniversary see <https://adaanniversary.org/>

August No ACOD meeting (our traditional vacation)

Sept. 28th ACOD meeting

Oct. 26th ACOD meeting

Oct. 27th MOD Summit Hybrid/Somerville/Zoom

Adjournment:

It was moved by David seconded by Stephen and voted 5-0 to adjourn at 8:11 P.M.

Roll Call: Stephen, Y; David, Y; Trish, Y; Jemma, Y; Justin, Y.