



City of Duluth
Commission on Disabilities
Monthly Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2017

Amber Madoll	E	Amanda Crosby	P
Beverly Richardson	P	Ann Roscoe	P
Amy Burke	P	Carl Crawford – Staff	P
Gerald Salveson	A		
Randall Vogt	E		
Michelle McDonald	P		

1. **Welcome**

The Commission welcomed Cindy Voigt from the city of Duluth's Engineering Division, Sophia Parr the director of planning for the DTA, and Mark Bauer from the Duluth Police Department's Parking Division.

2. **Approval of Minutes & Current Agenda**

Ann called the May 2017 meeting to order.

Roberta approved the May agenda and Michelle seconded the motion.

Amy approved the April 2017 minutes and Michelle seconded the motion. Thank you to Roberta for taking the minutes.

3. **Public Comment**

There was no public Comment.

4. **Current Disability Issues**

Due to concerns that were addressed at the May Commission meeting regarding accessible sidewalks at the construction of Maple Grove Road the commission invited city Engineering staff. Cindy Voigt was able to come and speak to specific concerns

addressed. Since the April meeting additional concerns were brought forward regarding the one way conversion of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd street West and how this change will affect pedestrians.

Cindy's department is responsible for "all things in the right of way" and they take all complaints and responsibility for the rights on ways during various construction projects throughout the city. This includes projects that the city is responsible for and private projects. Cindy explained the process to the commission. Part of that process is to sign or cone areas, especially when hazardous and to ensure accessible and safe routes for pedestrians. Cindy noted that it is impossible to monitor all sites at all times and often private contractors or contractors hired by the city do not comply. It is very important to call, as the department works on a complaint basis.

The commission brought forth concern that there was not proper signage for accessible routes in some areas and the accessible routes at the Maple Grove sight were in fact not accessible at all. One of the commission members was out there in her wheel chair and unable to navigate the surface. Amy gave the analogy of pushing a full shopping cart through mud or sand. Cindy responded that the contractor had reported to her that "in his opinion" the surface laid was accessible. Cindy stated that the Kenwood/Arrowhead site's accessibility would improve the week of 5/8/2017 including the grade and signaling at Cleveland and concrete will be laid.

Cindy gave a presentation on the one way conversion downtown. The commission is very concerned about accessibility and safety as the streets will be free flowing and the avenues will just have stop signs. This is a high traffic area for vehicles and pedestrians. The major concern is safety. How is a person using a mobility device, has vision loss or another disability going to have time or know it is safe to cross without a signal? There are also concerns on why the disability community was not consulted before the decision was made. Cindy stated that process will be slow, monitored and researched before any major decisions are made but at this point it is the city's plan to remove one way streets in this section. Phase 1 will be to cover signal lights and install stop signs on the Avenues. The final determination on the plan will be determined mid-October of 2017.

Michelle, with the support of the commission stated that the accessibility and safety of all individuals should be addressed immediately when planning engineering projects and not wait until complaints are made to enforce. Cindy stated at this point the department has not been consistent in their process but admits that enforcement is easier when it has been addressed up front in the planning process.

Cindy left the information for Taryn Erickson, PE. She will be our contact on these concerns moving forward.

Action & Advocacy Reports

a. Parks & Recreation

No new updates.

b. Wheel Chair Accessible Task Force –

Anne attended the Bike and Pedestrian committee as a representative for the commission. This is a committee to guide Duluth into a more “walkable” and bike friendly city.

Sophia Parr was invited to the commission meeting to discuss individuals with disabilities inability to schedule a ride on STRIDE. Sophia has addressed this and has had conversations with the dispatchers that they should not be turning anyone away for a ride. If an individual calls same day they will work to get that person in the schedule. Sophia addressed one particular complaint brought forth by the commission of a gentleman who was turned down for a ride. One of the schedulers had a rapport with the caller that the other dispatcher was unaware of. This resulted in this person being unable to get a ride scheduled when needed. Sophia and her team do the best they can to get rides scheduled on STRIDE and Duluth is very flexible and does a great job on trying to get everyone they can schedule. Sophia is working on a new application for STRIDE as the current application does not outline exactly what paratransit services are meant for. At this time a large majority of individuals who are certified to ride STRIDE are not utilizing the service and some individuals riding STRIDE could be riding the fixed route service. Sophia would hope that all who are able can ride the fixed routes. Sophia has advocated that the DTA add 5 new fixed routes to the schedule and 8 additional hours to paratransit services. Sophia is also working on a travel training program to guide individuals on the DTA system through 5310 grant funding. This will include educating bus driver’s to be competent and aware of accessibility on the fixed route buses. People should not be told they cannot ride the bus just because they are using a mobility device.

Individuals can also join the STRIDE Advisory Committee. The committee meets the second Wednesday of the month, 1 p.m., at the DTA offices on Michigan Street. It was brought to Sophia’s attention that this meeting location was not on a bus line. Sophia will work on either moving the building to the new transportation center and will open it up to individuals joining by media.

c. Olmstead Plan Update

5. Accessible Parking Requests

Mark Bauer reviewed 3 ADA signage requests and recommended them for approval. There is nothing at this time to present to the commission. The city is working on making this process more efficient. Part of this process is sending a letter to each applicant if their request for accessible signage was approved or denied. Mark will continue to give updates and address the commission on applications as needed.

6. **Other Business/Announcements**

Carl has confirmed that we have 5 vacancies on the commission. Applications are being accepted and older applications are being reviewed and will be sent to the Mayor for approval. We would like to increase the diversity on the commission and also increase the ability for individuals to attend by the use of technology. Applications can be filled out with the city Clerk's office or are available on-line.

Carl would like to create the opportunity for a joint meeting with the Disability Commission and Human Rights Commission. There will be more details to come on this collaboration. This would be to better measure the current goals in place and work.

Michelle motioned to adjourn the meeting. Bev seconded this motion.

The next Commission on Disabilities meeting is scheduled for Wednesday June 7, 2017 3:00 pm at City Hall, room 303.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Crosby
Secretary