

City of Duluth
Commission on Disabilities
Monthly Meeting
March 2, 2011

Melissa Booth	P	Francis McGee	E
Clara Borrell	E	Patti Nadeau	A
Debra Burmeister	A	Tony Rubin	P
Roberta Cich	P	Beverly Strongitharm	P
Erika Erickson	P	Karin Swor	P
Lindsey Harkreader	E	Glenn Tridgell	P
Sara Junge	E	Randall Vogt	P
Durbin Keeney	A	Galen White	P
Lars Kuehnow	E	Bob Grytdahl-Staff	P

1. February Minutes/March Agenda

February minutes approved as written. Current agenda approved as written.

2. Signage Request

A. John Maniekee - 3111 Vernon Street. Erika Erickson visited the residence and noted that there is not an accessible path to the home from the off street parking in the back. *Randy made a motion to approve the signage request.* Discussion that followed revolved around whether it is appropriate to grant the signage request since the homeowner has off street parking. Karin Swor raised the question about the homeowner's ability to fill an accessible path from their off street parking to their home. Roberta Cich pointed out that the criteria the City established with the Commission does not ask for that information. The criterion that has been established asks if there is an accessible route from the street to the house, and if the route from the off street parking to the house is accessible. In this case, there is no accessible path. Roberta also pointed out that accessibility to one's home is important for a person to remain independent. Tony Rubin cautioned about providing accommodations for those whose parking is not convenient. *A vote was held at the end of discussion, with a vote of 9-1 to approve the signage request.*

B. Role of Commission in assessing signage requests

Roberta provided a copy of the guidelines the commission uses in assessing signage requests. *Tony Rubin made a motion to open discussion about the assessing the Commission's role in approving signage requests. Galen White seconded the motion.*

Tony has concerns that the Commission does not have a full understanding of the process regarding assessing signage requests. Roberta shared that prior to the involvement with the Commission, every signage request used to go through just the city. Approving signage requests is not a matter of convenience but a matter of a

person's access to their home. Accessibility is the number one thing that keeps people in their homes.

The question was raised as to why the City denied the original signage request. Erika reminded us that the city automatically denies signage requests when there is off street parking at the address. Glen asked what other options are available to residents. Tony suggested that a resident could repair their own property. Other commissioners expressed that the current guidelines do not require a person to repair their property; the guidelines ask if there is an accessible route to the home.

Tony withdrew his original motion. There was no other discussion.

1. Action Reports

- A. Parks and Recreation – Patti was not present to give a report.
- B. Snow Removal Task Force – Galen White provided a draft of the letter she wrote to send to members of the Snow Removal Task Force, asking for representation on the task force. *Erika Erickson made a motion to send the letter with Glen Tridgell seconding. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.*
- C. Accessibility and Tourism Task Force – Randy has not met with the group yet.
- D. DECC/Denfeld Auditorium accessible seating – Galen provided a written summary of her meeting with Lindsey Harkreader, community advocate, Jeff Anderson, and Executive Director of the DECC, Dan Russell. The summary included suggestions to make the DECC more accessible.

Tony Rubin advised that the Commission be aware of what we are asking in the suggestions for the DECC. Are the suggestions about ADA compliance or about what we would like to see? Erika Erickson pointed out that the suggestions are about advocating for equal access. Using the prerogative of the chair, Galen will call Dan Russell to clarify some accessibility questions about the building.

The discussion about the Denfeld building revolved around how to make it a better venue in the future for people with mobility issues. Karin and Bev volunteered to talk with the contact person at Denfeld. *Roberta Cich made a motion for Galen White, Karin Swor, and Bev Strongitharm to meet with the Denfeld contact person. Glen Tridgell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

5. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6. Other Business

A. 2010 Annual Report – *Roberta made a motion to accept the 2010 Annual Report as written. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.*

7. Announcements

A. Death By Chocolate After Dark – To be held March 10, 2011 at the Inn on Lake Superior from 5:30 p.m-8:00 p.m. Cost is \$30 per person. All proceeds to benefit ARC Northland.

B. ADA Training – Robin Jones from the Great Lakes ADA has a training scheduled for March 3rd from 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

C. Honor Flight Northland is a non-profit organization created to honor veterans living in Northeastern Minnesota and Northwestern Wisconsin for all their sacrifices. The organization transports area war veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit and reflect on their memorials. The organization has fund-raisers coming up to raise money for the program. Visit www.honorflightnorthland.org for more information.

D. WWII & Vietnam War videos – Wal-Mart sells WWII and Vietnam War videos in their \$5 bin.

Galen adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Booth
Secretary

MB:jm