

AGE FRIENDLY & DISABILITY COMMISSION

Meeting 3	Date: September 1 st , 2022	
Location: Town Hall	Start: 11:01am	End: 12:32pm
Members Present: 4/6	Members in Absentia: Christopher Harry & Jim Adams	
<u>Meeting Minutes:</u> -Meeting called to order: 11:01am -Review of minutes from last meeting, Jolene was secretary -Made a motion to accept minutes: Chelsea, Connie seconded, all in favor -Gloria arrives 11:02am -Jolene & Chris will have to sign an approved copy of the minutes every meeting, for transparency -Becky Basch, here from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission -Becky is a senior planner with the commission, for the last few years has been working on an initiative centered around Age & Dementia Friendly; 3-year grant. -Finishing up with Amherst, Hadley, and Palmer organizations -Passed out a packet with three main initiatives: Resolution, apply for Regional Designation, Continue to assist communities and get new communities involved. -43 cities and towns to receive a cover letter that will be submitted to AARP to be approved from Age & Dementia friendly (running programs, providing assistance, put funding towards programs) Quarterly meetings as a way of check in on the 9 domains of an Age and Dementia Friendly Program An example of this meeting: going through senior center design with the person who just completed Hadley & Chicopee senior center -Also aiming for Regional Approval, with each community having their own action plans -Not sure if Brimfield participates in Community Compact Best Practices, Becky will check status (great way to obtain funds) -Can apply every other year with two goals -Probably don't have an ADA Self-Assessment and Transition Plan; going to check with Eva -Prioritizes what needs to be brought up to ADA Code in the town, evaluates overall -Have not had the discussion of becoming Age & Dementia Friendly; we do not know the process but know that we are interested. Becky would be willing to come to a board meeting for support -Becky thinks approaching it from a Regional stance might be beneficial due to our size and make-up -Recaps on the numerous buildings and their inaccessibility, such as Town Hall & the Library; Connie gives anecdote that the current 'accessibility' of the library is to call and get a book and they'd bring it; but the building cannot be answered -Jolene is going to submit a request to get on the agenda for either the 12 th or the 26 th ; do all topics at once -If everyone agrees, we will move forward; all in favor. -Becky makes the point that the reality is every town's demographic is getting older; people live longer. So these plans need to be in place to support this population change -Update on the meeting with Senator Fattman -Gloria and Connie met with him; first got to know each other, then moved on to some buildings -Focused on the Library, Hitchcock, Town Hall/Annex, sidewalks. The total inaccessibility. -Senator Fattman says the funds are there and can be applied for, but nothing will happen until March, April, or May -Jolene is going to send an email to clarify which funds he means; Gloria recalls him mentioning a grant, and we think it would be the same one we discussed in meeting one -Senator says to 'go for it' in terms of the Library project -Chelsea expresses the desire to have some substantial support in a tangible form from the Senator; even if just a letter. -Becky asks if there is a plan from the Library; Jolene answers no, that it's just been a drawn out process. -Becky recommends getting in with the architect as soon as possible.		

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- Becky and Connie leave at 11:32am
- Smart Streets program to help with the inaccessibility with traffic issues; Mike Doyle & Zach from Highway have the contacts for that
- Gloria questions the Cumberland Farms door situation; which way they swing, if it's truly accessible
- Go over the last meeting more in-depth incase Chelsea has questions
- May potentially need a treasure soon as we pursue funding; going to look into that process more, but it's not pressing
- Jolene did hear back from Mr. Leadbetter; going to keep an eye out on issues, and also encourages us to maybe attend a PTA meeting to have a deeper conversation. Looking at the playground, talking with the Janitor
- Zach was not reached out to in the past month on the position on the benches, going to this month; Mike Doyle has pointed out the benches may not be being placed back correctly after mowing the grass
- Do the benches get moved for the summer concert series; contact Zach first, if not, ask Cindy S.
- Deb gave Chris and Jolene access to town website; Jolene shared login for Gmail account with Chelsea (this is only the login for the commission's email/Google apps, not the website)
- Jolene is still working on updating the website; in agreement that what we have up is great for now, and it will take more shape as we grow as a commission
- Gloria pivots back to the library; wants to take a walk through with someone. Jolene also agrees; maybe even get Senator Fattman back out or Mike Doyle
- Gloria and Jolene might plan a walkthrough
- Also brings up the point of talking to Rebecca, the librarian, who has tried her best despite the confines of the building, to get her viewpoint/history/knowledge of the building.
- The library becoming part of CWMARS is a great launching point for this project
- Reinforces that the library is the best main project, in terms of obtainable goals and feasibility.
- Gloria asks if it's a conflict of interest for her to provide pastries to the library who is selling pastries during the flea market; Jolene is going to double check
- Town Hall/Annex situation is still the same; making sure there is not an issue between the key FOBS interfering with the door openers. Door company and FOB company are in communication
- Jolene talked with selectman Adams recently on the phone about some issues; brought up the point of 'turning the side door into a handicap accessible door, due to it being on the main floor'; feels like we should bring that up the board, and that it could be implemented
- Also discussed parking on RT 20, which is technically not allowed; but the two spaces in front are depressed a little bit; can they be made into handicap spots? Or make new spots on the side of the building near the potential new door.
- Ask opinions first (Zach or the Building inspector) and then go to the board.
- Move on to absentee voting; issue was tabled on August 15th due to it being too close to voting
- Deb was the one who brought this issue forward, citing the difficulty of doing all the high volume of labor on her own; essentially, she needs support
- Jolene mentions its most likely an issue that's pressing or immediate, but something we keep an eye on
- Also mentioned that the commission could help hand out absentee ballots to community members who need it
- Gloria asked if the route of our mail going to Hartford first could be override to just stay within town; unfortunately no, that is up to Post Master General.
- Ballots can only be valid if they are *received* by the listed date, not postmarked.
- Tax exemptions forms are posted on webpage; should maybe still reach out to Eva to put it in the Senior Center Bulletin.
- Adams said the sidewalk leading up from the handicap spots is on the books to get fixed; we can request a copy of that plan/report if desired

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- Sidewalks and trails are still in the works, no new updates
- Gloria is thinking that if we can't make the building accessible, maybe hire a person whose job it is to assist people who cannot access the building; a 'runner', essentially
- Jolene feels it would be unlikely due to budget, but admits there are other ways around it (senior work off program)
- Chelsea worries that the program would not be executed properly, and it would potentially be used against us for future projects
- General discussions on ableism; general lack of disability/chronic illness education in the community (which is common for small communities); hope is that the commission brings that education to light, and that over time we can trust the community to do ideas like the runner without it being misused
- Collect information from each department, see where people are at, especially as winter approaches and it becomes more dangerous for disabled people.
- Motion to adjourn, Chelsea makes a motion, Gloria seconds, all in favor
- Meeting Ends: 12:32pm

Cliff
J. G. Adams, Jr.
Gloria Hunt
Anne Schen

