

**Commission for Accessibility
Meeting Minutes
May 10, 2021**

Via Zoom

Kate White, Tony Phillips, Maureen Culhane, Don Ciota

Call to Order: 5:06PM

During this meeting the Commission discussed the current status of the town wide self-assessment being conducted by the Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD). Since this survey is in its final stages, it is imperative we make clear to IHCD what work or questions remain. The Commission is requesting, as a part of the transition list, a statement from IHCD relating what they believe are the best practices to be followed regarding the division of responsibilities between the town and the schools.

It is the opinion of the Commission the town and schools should each be responsible for items on the transition list on their individual spheres. We have requested IHCD to offer guidance with respect to the playgrounds associated with each school. The current arrangement, which seemingly is an informal one that goes back many years, is for the Parks Department to be responsible for maintenance on the outside of the school doors, with the schools responsible for interior maintenance. The monitoring of ADA compliance is a significant consideration with respect to design and upkeep. There has been push-back regarding which entity has ultimate responsibility for this aspect.

The Commission recognizes the town and schools are separate political entities, with separate governing boards and separate budgets, albeit ones that depend upon an identical taxpayer base. Since the funds to pay for ADA compliance and upkeep will ultimately be coming from the same constituency, it is the opinion of the Commission this responsibility should fall to the entity who is most directly involved in the use of the playground facilities, the schools.

The Commission offers its opinion only on the aspect of ADA compliance and not on whether the arrangement for the Parks Department to provide non-ADA related maintenance should continue.

We are awaiting the response from IHCD on this issue.

A town sidewalk policy is another matter we are expecting IHCD to address. With the advent of increased sidewalk dining, due to the pandemic, it would be helpful to receive guidance as to how the town may best communicate a policy that supports our restaurants, but also alerts businesses that such arrangements must allow adequate allowances for the passage of persons using wheelchairs and mobility devices.

Other matters include reviews of training policies; open spaces; website review; and prioritization of transition list remediations.

Meeting Adjourned. 6:15PM

Next Meeting: 5:00 PM June 14, 2021. Via Zoom

Minutes prepared by Don Ciota, Chairman
Commission for Accessibility