



Boston Disability Commission Advisory Board

BOSTON CITY HALL | ONE CITY HALL PLACE | 9th FLOOR | ROOM 967 | BOSTON MA, 02201
617.635.3682 | fax 617.635.2726 | TTY 617.635.2541 | www.cityofboston.gov/boardsandcommissions

KRISTEN MCCOSH
Commissioner

Commission Members

Zary Amirhosseini

Feleshia Battles-Byrdsong

Jerry Boyd

Eugene Gloss

Dusya Lyubovskaya

Carl Richardson

Kyle Robidoux

John Winske

Minutes for Monday, August 28th, 2017
9th Floor BRA Board Room 900, Boston City Hall, 5:30 – 7:30 PM

Present:	Staff Present:
(ZA) Zary Amirhosseini (FB) Feleshia Battles-Byrdsong (JB) Jerry Boyd (EG) Eugene Gloss (DL) Dusya Lyubovskaya (KR) Kyle Robidoux	(KMC) Kristen McCosh, Commissioner (JD) Jessica Doonan (PM) Patricia Mendez (CM) Chris Morawski (WP) Winston Pierre
Not Present: (CR) Carl Richardson (JW) John Winske	
Guests: Lauren Bryant, Parks and Recreation Department Jasmine Gothelf, Ruderman Family Foundation	

July Meeting Minutes: A motion was made to approve the July meeting minutes by Jerry Boyd (JB), then seconded by Zary Amirhosseini (ZA). They were then unanimously approved by all present.

Martins Park Presentation: Lauren Bryant, Parks and Recreation Department

Lauren Bryant (LB) gave a very detailed presentation on one of the twelve parks she is working on, Martin's Park, which is a brand new park being built on the Fort Point channel near the Children Museum in memory of Martin Richard who was killed in the Marathon Bombing. The park brings together the needs of the neighborhood such as commuter walkways, accessibility features from the disability community, and the wants of the Richard family to create a park that feels very imaginative and natural, despite being in an urban environment. The park has multiple levels that allow for wheelchair users to access all aspects of the park. The park includes a play ship, climbing structures, water play, swings, and many smaller interactive activities. Many of the accessibility features within the park will have plaques to both highlight these aspects and educate people about them as well. An inclusive design scorecard is being piloted on this park which is based on PlayCore's five elements of inclusive play (cognitive, sensory, physical, social, communication). The groundbreaking for this park occurred on August 16th and is slated to open in the fall of 2018. Some of the partners involved in this park are the MBTA, the Children's Museum, the Public Works Department, Fort Point Historic Landmark Association, and the Disability Commission.

LP ended her presentation highlighting a few other parks that have new accessibility features such as Children's Park in Roxbury, Hardman Court in Brighton and the Franklin Park Pathways. During the question and Answer period LB told the Board about the Youth Lead the Change Program a few years ago in which the youth in the City of Boston voted to spend capital funds to renovate a park and playground to make it accessible. This program continues to allow youth to allocate money towards park accessibility.

Jasmine Gothelf, Ruderman Family Foundation

Jasmine Gothelf (JG) spoke to the Board about the Ruderman Family Foundation and its work towards inclusion cross-disability, sector, and age. The Foundation does significant work in disability advocacy through social media activism and advocacy issue white papers on topics such as representation in Hollywood and law enforcement and people with disabilities. Every two years the Foundation hosts a cross-disciplinary summit which will take place November 19th and 20th.

The Summit will focus on many topics such as youth with disabilities, law enforcement, voting, and entertainment. Many workshops will be held on how to get into activism and leadership for young professionals with disabilities. There will also be a hackathon happening at the same time as the conference. JG encouraged the Board to attend and to spread the word about the conference within their networks.

Commissioner's Report: Kristen McCosh

Kristen McCosh (KMC) opened her report introducing new staff member Winston Pierre (WP). WP said a few words about himself and his job as Constituent Engagement Specialist. KMC continued her report explaining that WP will be working on getting the accessibility priority survey which was built by a Rappaport Fellow in our office this summer. So far roughly 100 people have participated in the survey and the goal is to have about 500 surveys submitted. KMC encouraged Board members to take the survey and to share it with their networks.

Related to transportation in the City, KMC attended a City Council hearing last week related to parking for healthcare workers and family of people who are elderly or have disabilities. A working group will be formed as a result of this hearing and recommendations will be made. An announcement was made that the RIDE paratransit Uber/Lyft program will be expanding to include the wheelchair accessible vehicles within the Hackney cab fleet.

Some dates that KMC would like to the board to keep in mind are Abilities Expo on September 8-10th at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center and the Civic Engagement event which is tentatively scheduled for September 22nd. To end her report, KMC talked briefly about a meeting that occurred this summer regarding disability history in Boston.

Architectural Access Update: Patricia Mendez

Architectural Access Specialist, Patricia Mendez (PM), opened her report by discussing National Grid and the new metal covers that will cover the underground vaults. These covers will provide more traction in inclement weather. The next project is the Fenway Center on Beacon St in the Fenway area. This will be a large development with two residential towers, one level of commercial space, two levels of underground parking, and will connect the MBTA green line Fenway Station and a MBTA commuter rail stop. This development will have a public plaza with a public elevator to accommodate the change in levels between two different streets. PM then spoke about the North Washington St Bridge which is a City of Boston, Mass Dot and the Federal Highway Administration project to replace the bridge linking the North End and Charlestown in its entirety. This project will take about five years and will provide pedestrian walkways, bike paths, trees, and benches to give it a very beautiful friendly feel. Symphony Hall MBTA station is also being upgraded for accessibility which will include four elevators and restrooms.

Lastly, in regards to City hall accessibility Upgrade, PM informed the Board that new hearing loop systems have now been installed in the Board room (room 900), room 801 and the Piemonte room on the 5th floor. The City Council Iannella Chamber is also still on track to be finished with its accessibility upgrades by September 18th. The hope is that the chamber will be ready for unveiling at the Civic Engagement event.

Old Business

Jessica Doonan (JD) gave an update on the letters approved last meeting, which will be both mailed out in the coming week pending approval from the Intergovernmental Department.

New Business

No new business at this time.

Action Item

No new action items at this time.

Public Input

Jack Peacock from Worcester asked about the National Grid covers and the impacts of ice which PM explained that the drainage of the covers should prevent icing.