

Dearborn Performing Arts Center, Wet Rooms 1 & 2  
January 20, 2005, 6 PM

Commissioners & City Employees Present:

Cathy McAdam, Chair  
Cheryl Kreger, Vice-Chair  
Dale Swanson  
Nancy Bower  
Gary Filiak  
Sonya Tishler  
Kim Hetrick  
Jane Nelson Thomas, excused  
Claudia Damian, excused  
Mona Ramouni, excused  
Susan Fitzmaurice, ADA Coordinator  
Jeff Oldenberg, Fire Inspector

Guests:

Christopher Thomas  
Carl Noe

Call to Order: 6:08 PM

Roll Call

Agenda: no changes

Minutes: In Item 11 change Access committee to Education, and Swanson to Kreger in contact information note. MOTION: I approve minutes as amended. Motion by Commissioner Swanson, seconded by Commissioner Bowers, unanimous vote of approval.

City of Dearborn Guest: Jeff Oldenberg

Inspector Oldenberg discussed his background and how he came to be interested in disability issues. He mentioned a safety panel with the Dearborn Schools he was going to be attending where he would make some inquiries about emergency procedures in place for students and employees with disabilities. He discussed how in newer buildings there were fire proof areas of buildings created to be safe havens, but he did not think any of these existed in Dearborn. He also discussed the city's emergency preparedness management coordinator Tom Harper and how his role overlapped that of the fire emergency management coordinator and how they worked closely regarding these issues.

Inspector Oldenberg brought a Knox box for the commissioners to view and discussed how they were used and how secure they were. He said keys were made available only to designated persons. Dearborn keys work only in Dearborn. Only fire personnel are given access to the keys via a tone that emanates from the fire truck that releases the latch to the Knox Box. The Knox box holds a house key inside it. The Knox box is placed on the residents door so that fire personnel can get into a burning house if no one is home or there is an incapacitated or disabled person inside. A new city ordinance would make it an offense if a person tampered with a Knox box. Knox boxes are provided to a resident on request at no cost, but they can pay for one if they choose. They cost \$164.00.

Commissioner Hetrick mentioned he had one and how much it had helped him in a specific incident. One of our guests asked about their usability on second floor apartments- and the inspector said they could be used on any door. Commissioner Filiak asked why other emergency personnel did not have access to the keys, and the inspector did not know why, but said they could be met by fire personnel if they were ever needed.

There was a discussion of how the commission could help support their being additional Knox boxes available as the fire department is running out of them. Commission Chair McAdam asked if the commission decided to help purchase boxes could they be designated for people with disabilities only and he said yes- we could designate them for anyone we wished.

Inspector Oldenberg made some final comments on how he had been unable to find fire safety info in Braille and would continue to pursue that. He also encouraged everyone to have a smoke detector and keep fresh batteries inside as it was the most important fire safety act anyone could do.

ADA Report: Susan Fitzmaurice ( see attached for full report)

In addition to the report, it was reported that it is time to renew our chamber membership. There was a discussion of providing an insert into the chamber relocation packets. It was agreed that this would be a good way to let people who are new or are considering moving to Dearborn know we are here.

MOTION: I motion we spend \$1.00 per insert for the Chamber of Commerce relocation packet and renew our membership. Made by Commissioner Swanson, seconded by Commissioner Hetrick, unanimous approval.

The parking lots were discussed, along with the changes that came about in part in thanks to Christian Mageli's pertinent information.

Information was provided regarding the Affordable Housing Conference as a good thing for commissioners to consider attending.

There was a discussion of pertinent legislation including the Visitability legislation before the Michigan House and Senate. Chair McAdam and

Commissioner Tishler are going to write a letter of support to send to Mayor Guido to encourage his support of the legislation.

Chair Report: Cathy McAdam (see attached report)

There was an extensive discussion of the Michigan Avenue Project. It was reported that over 30 people were in attendance including SMART, MDOT, the construction company, engineers, the Mayor, and interested citizens. The Mayor was clear in his support that the bus stops be safe, compliant, and in the same number as before. There have been at least two articles in the newspapers regarding this meeting. An answer as to what changes were proposed by MDOT to meet the ADA was promised in two weeks time. It was decided we would have a special meeting in 3 weeks to try to force the issue to be addressed expeditiously. A special meeting was decided upon for February 10th at 2 PM, hopefully in the PAC, Wetroom 1 & 2. The ADA Coordinator will send invites to interested parties and get the room set-up.

Chair McAdam also encouraged us all to be thinking about who may want to become more involved in the commission. We all go through unexpected life changes and at any time we may need a new commissioner, and we always need active committee members.

Vice Chair Report: Cheryl Kreger

Vice-Chair Kreger discussed the Strategic Plan as a living breathing document. That should be revisited at least once each year. It should be published on our web page. Chair McAdam discussed the need for a header. It was decided further discussion on the Strategic Plan would take place later in the agenda.

Public Comments.

Both of our visitors introduced themselves more extensively. Christopher was very interested in our Public Awareness & Education committee from a mental health stand point. Carl came in hopes of getting information about low vision aids.

Disability Awareness Day : Dale Swanson

After a brief discussion where Chair McAdam detailed John Kemp's contribution to the disability community it was decided that a note would be sent asking him to finalize his decision about being our keynote by January 31st. Chair McAdam would do this.

A discussion of vendors brought up the issue of competing with the Novi Expo in August and the amount of time needed to dedicate to planning. It was also

decided that two workshops might be better attended than six.

MOTION: I move that we raise funds to bring in a keynote speaker for DAD. Made by Commissioner Kreger, seconded by Commissioner Swanson, unanimous vote.

Outreach to Community: Cathy McAdam

Chair McAdam discussed what we should do in April when we have only a tentative meeting scheduled. This time was set aside for Town Hall, but she suggested we do a specific outreach/ social activity with the senior community or with other community organizations. Commissioner Hodak said she would discuss the idea with some of the senior organizations she is involved with and see what kind of activity they would be most likely to attend. The education committee was asked to explore ways to connect with other city commissions to see what they have done and ways we can share information.

Strategic Plan: Cheryl Kreger

Commissioner Kreger reiterated some of her earlier remarks. There was a discussion of dates and names and it was decided that these specific details would be removed from the plan to keep it more fluid. The committee names would be changed to Communications and Awards Committee, and Visitability and Housing Committee.

MOTION: I move that the Strategic Plan and Action Steps be adopted with the suggested changes and additions. Motion by Commissioner Kreger, seconded by Commissioner Swanson, unanimous vote.

BREAK

Committee Reports

Education Committee: Cheryl Kreger ( Report Enclosed)

In the discussion of the Town Hall Meeting was decided that the way the Town Hall meeting was done this past year was not as successful as we would have hoped after our success the first year. Having the Town Hall meeting at the same time as the vendors at DAD might be more productive. The Education Committee will look into changing the format at future meetings.

Communications & Awards: Dale Swanson (Report Enclosed)

The web page was discussed. It was decided that Doug Feldcamp would be asked about the possibility of the city maintaining the web site since the city site

now seemed to be accessible. We would continue to maintain our own host and domain name.

Enews is to go out again in mid February. It will need an update from our ADA Coordinator.

Access Committee: Claudia Damian ( Report Enclosed)

Visitability Committee: Sonya Tishler

No meeting since last commission meeting.

### Commissioner Reports

Gary Filiak discussed the city plowing snow into accessible parking spaces and how he resolved the problem.

Mary Hodak discussed her continuing involvement with senior issues.

ADA Coordinator Susan Fitzmaurice discussed the “disability concerns” re the new film Million Dollar Baby.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:32 PM

### ADA Report

**Michigan Avenue Project.** The current project has been closed. A new project to correct the slope irregularities is going to begin this spring and it is estimated to take 6 months to complete.

**West Village Project.** The planned townhouses meet ADA guidelines. Only the one-level ground floor units in townhouses must meet ADA requirements and I saw the floor plan blue prints and they clearly do.

The other part of the development is a high-rise apartment complex. The blueprints for those have yet to be completed. At this meeting it was clear that it was understood that all of those units would have to be ADA compliant as they were all reachable via an elevator.

What is still a problem is a proposed crosswalk across the train tracks from the residential units to the parking structures and shopping. The slope in that area is very high. There is no way to make the sidewalk ADA compliant without it being very very long and very zigzaggy. It simply does not seem reasonable to ask a person to walk 6 -8 times more to walk on level ground. There appears to be 3 solutions:

1. Create the zigzag path anyway.
2. Create a straight non ADA path
3. Create no path.

Solution 1 or 2 still depends on the railroad giving permission for the tracks to be crossed with a path- which to date they have not done.

**Bailey's.** There is experimentally being tried some grates around the trees that would give just enough legal space for ADA compliant sidewalk adjacent the sidewalk cafe.

## **GRANTS**

**ADA Compliant Training Room.** The room has now been cleared and it can now be used as a training room once the equipment is bid on, purchased, and installed. It is time to apply for grants again - and this can be tried for again with some minor revisions to what was written and submitted last year.

**Close Captioning.** The close captioning equipment has been purchased, installed, and is in use. This was purchased with grant money.

**Audible pedestrian signals.** The engineering department has materials I gathered on various audible signals. To me one stands out as much better than the others because in addition to the audible indicator it has a countdown display. If the cross walk allows you 10 seconds to cross - you see 10-9-8-7 displayed so you know how much time is left to help you (especially seniors) decide whether to cross the street or not. Whichever signals are decided upon will also be purchased for the new Warren Ave work. This was decided upon based on safety concerns and my knowing that these will be required at bust intersections in the very new future. It is better to install them as the new work is done with the Warren fund than to do it a year or two later and have to look for new funding. Two audible signals, plus 1 with senior funds will be installed along Michigan Avenue.

**Braille Transcription.** With DAD over, Cathy and I should have some time to play with equipment and get this project underway.

**NEW grant proposals must be submitted by December 19th.** We need to decide what next must be done in the city. Do we want to buy new doors for Snow library? Do we want to fund a task force on visitability in Dearborn? Do we want to purchase materials and staffing to get new signs up around the city? Do we want to purchase some computer equipment for the library? Do we want to purchase voting machines?

**TTYs.** I called all of the city TTYs in early November and received answers to only 2 of them. I spoke with Melinda about this and she suggested that the new telephone system installed on the last weekend of October probably reset all of the phones in such a way that the TTYs all need to be reset. I have called some of the offices to talk them thru resetting their TTYs but not all of them. I asked them if they felt they needed a refresher course on TTYs and got a mixed response.