

METUCHEN ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES from March 24th, 2021

Borough Council Liaison: Sheri-Rose Rubin

Present:

Members:

Jennifer Asprocolas, Michael Geschlecht, Rena Kallman, Dave Kallman, Wesley Brooks, Robin Brown, Todd Pagel, Cathy Ostermueller (Senior Center Liasian), Pat Kay Audra Sbarra (Chair),

Absent: none

Public in attendance: none

Old Business: none

New Business:

Snow ordinance

- Two issues were discussed in snowstorm, the need to clear snow after storms from curb cuts and a revision to include snow piling on the corners from removal to the street by DPW.
- It passed though Rena noted that timing of when to shovel is not clear. Snow should be cleared within twelve hours after storm.
- Audra noted that while enforcement is good, the key is having it out there and Rena noted that the committee's idea for this could be put in Metuchen Mirror.

- Robin noted concern of people having to walk in the street is curb cuts and sidewalks are covered in snow or blocked by trees and a feasible width needed to shovel.
- Audra noted a further discussion could take place at a council meeting or after an email is sent should more issues arise and stories matter.

Community Conversation

- Committee congratulated Jen and Wes for a successful presentation on Growing up with a Disability.
- Pat noted all future presentations could be recorded though prior notification would be required particularly if topics are sensitive to viewers.
- Jen noted it was nice to focus on specific aspects on what the committee focus on.
- Pat noted it would be best to do the housing presentation first and then aging over the summer. The housing presentation will be given the first week of May tentatively.
- Jen will reach out to realtors and Audra noted that community resources are also important to reach out and show where to look.
- A tentative title will be “How to Find Accessible Housing”.
- Pat noted that it is important to know what is required by law for a home or apartment to be accessible.
- Todd noted that it is important to cover advocacy for housing in the borough. For example, an apartment with three or fewer stories is not required to have an elevator. That is a state mandate and sometimes people need to be convinced to do the right thing.
- Robin noted it may be a good idea to also discuss accessible housing with planning board developers from the borough in terms of people with disabilities being part of the working world and included in future developments.
- Pat suggested for a member of the planning board to take part as well in the presentation to explain accessible housing in their consideration and what questions real estate agents get asked when it comes to housing and aging.

Outline for presentation on housing so far

1. Why Accessible Housing matters

2. What is accessible housing and where to find it

Audra asked for the committee to think about stories to share for the presentation.

There will be no April meeting. The next meeting will be the presentation on Wednesday May 5th at 7:30 PM followed by the regular meeting on May 26th at 8PM both virtual on Zoom.