



# TOWN OF HAMDEN

## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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Mayor

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### COMMISSION ON DISABILITY RIGHTS & OPPORTUNITIES

**MINUTES: The Hamden Commission on Disability Rights & Opportunities** held a Regular Meeting on Monday, January 14, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Friends Room, Miller Library Complex. The following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in attendance: Chris Balogh, Jon Aldo Dwyer, Rosalie Cavanaugh, Eileen Carpinella, Annmarie McConville, Barbara Brandon, Pat Delaney

Commissioners Absent: Kathleen Sullivan, Bryan Barry

Others in Attendance: Guest Mark DuPont, ADA Coordinator Chris Marchand, Commission Clerk Gerry Tobin

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1. Review Minutes of November 14, 2012  
**Ms. Carpinella made a motion to approve the minutes of November 15, 2012. Ms. Cavanaugh seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.**

2. Correspondence  
There was no correspondence.

3. Chairman's Report  
Chairman Balogh had nothing to report.

4. ADA Coordinator Chris Marchand's Report  
Mr. Marchand attended an ADA conference and distributed the brochures from that last month. Mr. Marchand reported Josh's parents have been attending the meetings for the all abilities playground. The initial request for proposals went out and several companies responded. There was a lot of back and forth on the design, changes were made, and the final design has been chosen. There was a meeting held last Thursday, and the only remaining item is color choices. The plans still have to be

approved by the Inland Wetlands Commission, Planning and Zoning for a Special Permit and 8-24 review, and the Legislative Council. Funding is in place and comes from the State of Connecticut. The cost is \$400,000. The hope is to break ground in April or May and have the playground ready by the end of June. The permitting process will start in February.

Some commissioners commented that they felt that they felt that a playground for the disabled is what they needed, as opposed to an all abilities playground. Their concern is that children without disabilities are stronger, faster, etc., and the children with disabilities might have to wait long periods of time to use the equipment. Ms. Brandon felt that this playground is a step toward inclusion. She feels the press releases and other publicity can address the fact that people with special needs were thought of in the planning. The park should be looked at in a positive way. Ms. Carpinella asked if Josh's family could be invited to one of our meetings to come up with some guidelines for playground use. Mr. Marchand said there will be a dedication plaque with credit to the state for the funding. The gateway sign will say Josh's Jungle. Ms. Carpinella asked if commissioners could email each other some suggested guidelines which can be refined at our next meeting.

Mr. Marchand had no compliance complaints to report.

Regarding the 1993 self evaluation and transition plan, the Town of Hamden and many other towns did not complete the evaluations. Mr. Marchand said we now of to start over with the new guidelines and new department heads. Many upgrades have been made to town buildings including ramps at the libraries, curb cuts at Hamden Housing, etc.

Ms. Cavanaugh made note of the doors at Marshall's that are not automatic. Ms. Delaney reported that bubble mats (curb cuts) in front of stores in the Hamden Mart need repair.

Mr. Marchand announced that the State of Connecticut through the Department of Economic and Community Development has a grant program for Accessibility. He is able to get grants for elderly and/or disabled residents seeking assistance for outdoor ramps, etc. through another grant program, but this DECD grant can be used for exterior and interior accessibility. He suggested commissioners encourage people to apply. A household of four qualifies at an income of \$65,000 (80% of median income) under his program. With this grant, a family of four could qualify with an income of \$85,000 (100% of median income). Mr. Marchand explained that the grant requires residents to remain in their homes for a certain number of years, depending on the amount of the grant, and if those requirements are met, there is no money owed.

## 5. Committee Reports

Ms. McConville thought about inviting Linda Mason who works for Hart and with the North Haven DJ to our next meeting, and then we can start planning for the Spring Fling. It would be a good idea to discuss plans with a representative from North Haven. The Commission's October dance had fewer attendees that usual because of an event the same night in North Haven for the same population. Giovanni's donated pizza for the October dance. A thank you to Giovanni's was published in the newspaper. Some commissioners felt that a personal thank you should be sent to Giovanni's, but it is probably too late. It was suggested that if someone can find the article that appeared in the newspapers, it would be a good idea to place it in a frame and give it to Giovanni's.

Ms. Carpinella has been talking with Mimsie Coleman of the Arts Commission about a May date for the Sprout Film Festival.

6. Old Business

7. New Business

8. Adjournment

**Ms. Delaney made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Dwyer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.**

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk