

Farmington Human Relations Commission
Minutes
May 2, 2016

Commission Members Present: Ruth Grobe, Ray Elling, , Christine Mergenthaler, Donna Mambrino

Town of Farmington: Nancy Parent
Dan Aparo

Ruth Grobe called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

Minutes: *Upon motion duly made by Ray Elling and seconded by Ruth Grobe, the minutes of November 9, 2015 were accepted as written on a unanimous vote.*

Update from Department of Community & Recreational Services

Nancy Parent provided an update of the plans that she has commented on through the Public Works department. She notified the committee that the bench will be part of the Route 177 sidewalk project and the cement will be laid as they are completing the sidewalks.

Update from Police Department

There was nothing new to report. Commissioner Ray Elling suggested that all police departments be overseen by elected citizen boards similar to municipal Boards of Education.

Accessibility Issues

Gateway Planning Process

The committee has chosen a finalist whom they will be bringing in one more time. The Human Relations Commission is encouraged that this finalist is the one who spoke most about universal design. Furthermore, they are willing to work with the disabled community. After the planning process is complete, the Town will be looking at Route 6 as the next location for improvements.

Unionville Issues

New Horizons Village is considering an application to the Town Planning and Zoning department to construct new buildings. One item they have discovered is that the double units are not as desirable – people would prefer individual units. These new buildings will include individual units which may allow for separation to have individual units, as well units for new tenants.

Ruth Grobe gave an overview of the sidewalk project and the committee will take part in the public comment meetings for the intersection of Railroad Ave. and New Britain Ave.

Revisiting the TPZ ordinance regarding enhanced accessibility standards

The commission had a discussion on the enhanced ordinances for the Town Planning & Zoning. It has come to their attention that they may be difficult to enforce.

A motion was made (Elling) and seconded (Mambrino) to request that the Town Manager work with the Town Plan & Zoning Commission and Town Council to review the enhanced ordinance for two purposes. 1) To assess how workable they prove to be, and 2) To identify whether to amend or change them to be more useful and/or enforceable. Unanimously approved.

Commissioner Elling spoke about his CC=A's advocacy work to have all public buildings require equal access. He reported that all 7 members of the State of CT are asking the president to take executive action to push Concurrent Resolution 37. He also reported that the Bishops Corner Post Office is being investigated and there may be some leverage because they may not be consistent with Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Commissioner Elling announced that there will be a meeting with both the deans & the president of UCONN Health to discuss improving care and access for people with disabilities.

Upon motion duly made by Christine Mergenthaler and seconded by Ray Elling, the meeting was adjourned at 7:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Parent, Secretary

DRAFT