

**TOWN OF AMHERST
COMMITTEE on DISABILITIES MINUTES
February 12, 2024**

Present Officers:

Erica Rodman – Chair
David Wantuck – Vice Chair

Present Members:

Dave Whalen
Barbara Robertson
Tom Roetzer
Luci Miranda
Chong Cheng
Susan (Sue) Zummo

Interpreters: Karen Gambino

ADA Coordinators:

Robert McCarthy

Excused:

Rachel Martin, Secretary

Guests:

Lisa and Bob Drdul – 92 Chateau Terrace
Guest Speaker: Laurie Stillwell, Community Development Director

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 pm.

I. Minutes

- a. October 2023 minutes approved as read
 - i. Luci – first
 - ii. Sue – second
 - iii. All in favor
- b. November 2023 minutes approved as read
 - i. Luci – first
 - ii. Tom – second
 - iii. All in favor

II. Old Business

- a. Handouts – tabling materials

- i. Erica asked that we identify items we have in stock now and put a list together, determine what we have and what we need.

III. **New Business**

a. Guest Speaker Laurie Stillwell

- i. ADU Pilot Program; Ms. Stillwell is the Director of Community Development, which oversees the town's HUD program. Her office's intentions are to assist low/moderate income and those considered vulnerable. She noted the concerns this committee has had regarding housing options for persons with disabilities. The town received \$2M from the state of New York to provide funding for prospective homeowners to build Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to their home or property, depending on the zoning. ADUs are smaller independent dwelling units often times called in-law quarters. Laurie presented a modified version of her 36-page PowerPoint, which is available on the town's website.
- ii. 99% of inquiries have been for adult disabled children or senior residences. There are guidelines and town oversight that one must meet and maintain over a 10-year period.
- iii. Questions:
 - 1. Erica: asked if owners had to comply with the Fair Housing Act.
 - 2. Luci: asked if they could be an option for persons with I/DD, noting the current residential crisis for this demographic.
 - 3. Barb: asked if there would be a list of residences so people can easily identify residences.
- iv. Laurie offered to keep the committee abreast of the program's progress.

b. New Liaison Introduction

- i. Erica introduced the committee's new liaison Angela Marinucci. She is out of town and was not able to attend. Erica met with her in advance of the meeting.

c. Membership/Term Renewals:

- i. Erica asked the four committee members who are up for renewal if they have responded to the email requesting a resume or CV and a letter indicating ongoing interest in staying on the committee. Tom R, Dave W, Barabra R, and Luci M are the members in question. Tom, Barbara, and Luci believed they replied but were not aware of the resume/CV request.

d. Meeting dates for 2024

- i. Committee reviewed the 2024 calendar, checking against the Town Board meetings and other conflicts. Each month was discussed. Dates agreed upon are the following: March 4, April 15, May 6, June 3, August 12, September 9, November 4.

e. Agenda items for 2024

- i. Erica asked what agenda items should be considered for 2024.
- ii. Dave asked the committee to serve as a version of the FEMA conceived Core Advisory Group. While these generally are separate from a committee, it would allow for the agenda items of a CAG to be addressed. These include

accessibility reviews of shelters and other emergency management sites (i.e. Disaster Recovery center), review of effective communication, transportation MOUs, among others. Bob McCarthy supported the involvement of the committee noting it would be timely with the announced retirement of Jim Zymanek, Emergency manager, and Jim Capel, Senior Dispatcher

- iii. Erica inquired about follow-up with the Amherst Police Chief/Department. Dave noted he recently received correspondence whereby the department's Training Coordinator was looking for in-service disability awareness training.
- iv. Sue introduced some books that may be of interest to the committee. Erica felt the social media site might be a good place to expose books of interest.

IV. Next Meeting

- a. March 4, 2024

V. Closing

- a. Meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm
 - i. Motion to adjourn
 - 1. Erica – first
 - 2. Barb – second
 - 3. All in favor