

Old Library Accessibility Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 1, 2017

Members Present: Wendy Cote-Magan, Mark Mikitarian, Ken Swanton, Lucy Wallace

The meeting was called to order at 7 PM.

Administrative: Minutes of January 19, 2017 were approved as amended.

Meeting with MAAB: Wendy Cote-Magan reported on her meeting with Tom Hopkins at the MA Architectural Access Board (MAAB). She began by reminding the Committee that it is the expenditure of over \$100,000 in a 3-year period that triggers the need to comply with accessibility requirements. However, given the letter of December 2014 to Tim Bragan from the MA Office on Disability, she felt it was prudent of the town to address accessibility at this point, regardless of the amount that might be/had been spent on the building in this 3-year period. Before meeting with Tom Hopkins, Wendy had met with Gabe Vellante to see if he would allow use of the building as is, pending a town decision on restoring the front door as the accessible and main entrance. Gabe had indicated his preference for her to meet with Tom and see if a variance could be granted.

Wendy reported that she had reviewed the proposed options for accessibility with Tom to give him an understanding of our work to date. His advice was that we apply for a variance to continue to use the rear door entrance, with minimal improvements, for 2-3 years while we pursue our preferred option of restoring the front entrance. Minimal improvements, according to Wendy, could be installation of a push pad, a better light over the door and, perhaps changing the grate in front of the door to make it easier for a wheel chair to cross. Wendy estimated that the cost for these improvements would not be more than \$10,000. There is no need to regrade the back walkway or install handrails. The application for the variance should include the plans for the front door and other visuals to support the request. Tom felt we would be granted the variance, but further recommended we check in every 6 months or so to keep him apprised of our progress. Should we need to, we can amend the variance in the future, even requesting additional time should there be delays in our finalizing and funding the preferred option.

Wendy noted that the elevator is grandfathered, given its size exceeds the minimum of 4' x 4' (just at 4'1" x 4'2"). The control buttons may need to be replaced to be lower and include braille.

Wendy reiterated that the MAAB wants to work with communities, but that it is important for us to establish a relationship with them.

Wendy is willing to do the graphic portions of the variance and take it in to Tom, but does not have the time to do the written part. Lucy Wallace offered to help with the written sections of the application. The MAAB schedule is for submittal of applications 3 weeks prior to a meeting of the MAAB. The MAAB meets every 2 weeks to review applications. We would submit our application to Tom who would present it to the Board. Our goal is to submit the application in April.

Town Meeting: Lucy suggested we have a handout for Annual Town Meeting reporting on our work to date and recommended option. All were in agreement about the need for a clear explanation to voters regarding the importance of both articles passing.

The meeting was adjourned at 8 PM. The next meeting will be on March 8th at 5 PM.