



**Commission on People with Disabilities
Meeting Summary Minutes
April 12, 2023**

**** MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM ****

Welcome and Approval of March 2023 Meeting Minutes

Trish Gallalee, Chair, convened the meeting. A motion was made to approve the March 2023 Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the March 2023 Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved as written. Approved minutes are available online at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cpwd.

Crosswalks and Pedestrian Safety – Wade Holland, Vision Zero Coordinator, and Khursheed Bilgrami, Sidewalk Program, Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT)

PowerPoint: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/CPWD/MCDOTSidewalk_Presentation_R1.pdf

MCDOT will be hosting a community meeting tomorrow April 13 via Zoom to hear from residents about the difficulties they experience in navigating the County and areas where they would like to prioritize improvements. This is part of an effort to update the County's Accessibility Guidelines to improve the design of transportation facilities and make sure that we are building projects that represent the best practices of accessible design and that go above and beyond the ADA requirements wherever possible.

The floor was opened to questions.

- **Is MCDOT proactive in reviewing and surveying areas that need sidewalk improvements?** Field staff review areas of new construction as well as areas within the vicinity of a sidewalk request. MCDOT also takes a proactive approach in the [Renew Montgomery program](#), which addresses the backlog of infrastructure repair needs in matured neighborhoods. The majority of the work centers around the repair of sidewalks and curbs. The program helps to assure safe and attractive vehicular and pedestrian access to business districts, public facilities, and recreational opportunities.
- **Does the sidewalk program include striping or crosswalk hatching in front of the ramp?** The program does clear obstructions and builds ADA ramps with access to public facilities and residential connectivity everywhere in Montgomery County except in independent jurisdictions (City of Rockville, City of Gaithersburg, etc.). The MCDOT Division of Traffic Engineering and Operations determines if a crosswalk is needed. Crosswalk requests can be made via MC311 or emailed to mcdot.trafficops@montgomerycountymd.gov. Requests will be reviewed and assessed for volume and pedestrian traffic. Smaller residential streets tend not to have crosswalk hatchings.
- **Does the County use the Access Board's proposed public rights of way accessibility guidelines?** Wade reported that the County cannot officially adopt the draft, but it has largely been adopted by the County in terms of ramps and slopes.
- **How much does it cost approximately to bring a non-ADA compliant sidewalk into compliance?** It was noted that the cost of concrete and contractors has increased. Installing an ADA ramp can cost between \$7,000 to \$8,000. One proposal for 800 feet of sidewalk was \$95,000. The general budget allows the County to construct between 5 to 6 miles of sidewalk per year. Sidewalks can be very expensive based on existing conditions such as utility poles, retaining walls and slopes, right-of-way issues, or having

to rebuild a bridge. One of the new projects to build a new sidewalk new Blake High School on Norwood Road is projected to cost \$4 million.

- **Is there a system in place for ensuring audible pedestrian signals (APS) are functional?** The County heavily relies on its residents to notify them if audible pedestrian signals are not working properly. Individuals can file a request through 311 or online by creating a service request: www3.montgomerycountymd.gov/311/Solutions.aspx?SolutionId=1-88AYCQ.
- **Is the County able to use mapping technology to identify particular areas that may not be ADA compliant or an automated self-checking system that may be able to alert the County if an APS is no longer functional?** The County uses a geographic information system (GIS) for mapping. Sidewalk surveys help to identify gaps and that information can be input into GIS. The Safe Walk to School Program also helped to identify critical gaps near elementary schools. In terms of APS, there is a back-up system that will continue to produce a lower decibel signal for functionality, but the APS still needs to be fixed by a technician. Signals at intersections can be fixed remotely as video of intersections is viewed by MCDOT.

Commission Meetings and ADA Compliance with Title II – Karen Goss, Commissioner

PowerPoint: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/CPWD/Title II of the ADA.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/CPWD/Title%20II%20of%20the%20ADA.pdf)

The floor was opened to questions.

- **Does a company that requires individuals to submit documentation via a mobile app that is not accessible for persons who are blind have to provide an accessible mobile app, even if the company does offer a phone option?** The company should be providing the same level of access to all users. The company should be contacted and notified that the mobile app is not accessible for persons who are blind.
- **Issue with assistance on Amtrak.** Member of the public detailed issues with unavailable assistance at an Amtrak station late at night after arriving via train as well as being charged an additional fee for an accessible seat. Karen will provide some information after the meeting.
- **Question on reasonable accommodations provided by businesses and employment.** Under the ADA, persons with disabilities need to have full and equal access just as everyone else. In terms of employment, the individual must be qualified for the job regardless of an accommodation.

County Executive Recruitment of Applicants for the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission – Eric Salzano and Karen Morgret, Co-Chairs, Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee (DDAC)

DDAC did not meet in April due to MCPS being on leave. . Karen reported the new Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission (IDDC) was approved by the County Council on March 28. A vacancy announcement seeking applicants to fill 18 vacancies was posted on April 10. The application deadline is May 8. Interested individuals must apply online: <https://cexbcc.montgomerycountymd.gov/board/5022>. Once the vacancy announcement closes and applications are processed, an Interview Selection Committee will convene to interview applicants. Betsy and Carly Clem, Staff, created a website that includes the vacancy announcement and legislation: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/iddc. Betsy Luecking, Staff, reported that the IDDC will have a voting member representative from this Commission. Trish will appoint a Commissioner to serve in this role. There is funding included in the proposed FY24 operating budget for a part-time staff person for the new Commission. Betsy and Carly will not be providing staff support for IDDC. A part time broker will be hired.

Updates

Teresa Villani, Commissioner, announced April is “Limb Loss Awareness Month”. Adventist Healthcare Rehabilitation in Rockville will be hosting a 5K on April 23 for amputee awareness.

Trish reported NRC is hosting an in-person Career Expo on May 11 at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel and Conference Center (5701 Marinelli Road, Rockville, MD) from 1pm to 4:30pm. This event will provide the opportunity for conditional job offers (via letter of intent).

Sammi Hampton, Commissioner, reported Independence Now is hosting a spring fling picnic on April 21 from 12pm to 3:30pm in Hyattsville.

Public Comments

None

Meeting Adjourned – 7:29pm

Submitted by: Carly Clem, Administrative Specialist I
Betsy Tolbert Luecking, Community Outreach Manager

Attendees

Commissioners Present: Myra Coffield; Kaylee Davis; Patricia Gallalee, Chair; Tonya Gilchrist; Karen Goss; Michael Greenberg; Sammi Hampton; Karen Herson; Samuel Korper; Cindy LaBon; Ricardo Lopez; Karen Morgret, Vice Chair; Eric Salzano; Avner Shapiro; Richard Shermanski; Jeneva Stone; Teresa Villani; John Whittle; Najla Wortham; Melissa Wyman

Commissioners Absent: Angela Hughes Byrd; Coni Nepomuceno; Lisa Quinn

Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members Present: Matthew Barkley, ADA Title II Compliance Officer, Department of General Services; Simone Geness, Montgomery County Public Schools; Rebecca Grayson, Housing Opportunities Commission; Bob Green, Montgomery Parks; Candace Groudine, Human Rights Commission; Karen Hochberg, Office of Human Resources; Angela Luskey, Department of Recreation

Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members Absent: Angelisa Hawes, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Denise Isreal, Department of Transportation (DOT)

County Staff Present: Odile Brunetto, Chief, Aging & Disability Services, Department of Health and Human Services; Wade Holland, Vision Zero Coordinator, and Khursheed Bilgrami, MCDOT; Walton Harris, (DOT); Beth Shuman, Office of Councilmember Gabe Albornoz; Tara Clemons Johnson, County Council

Commission Staff Present: Betsy Luecking, Staff Liaison; Carly Clem, Administrative Specialist I

Public: Jenni Jackson (Sign Language Interpreter); Jenny Carver (Sign Language Interpreter); Seth Morgan; Anne Peyer; Marybeth Cleveland; Cindy Buddington; A. Torres; Francie Gilman

Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities May 2023 Meeting and Events Calendar

Full Commission Meeting – Wednesday May 10

6pm to 7:30pm to be held via Zoom – link to be announced

Steering Committee Meeting – Wednesday May 17

5:15pm to 6:15pm to be held via Zoom – link to be announced