

MINUTES

Livable Communities Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 28, 2019 @ 7:00 pm

Seymour Town Hall

Members Present: Sandra Gesek, Elizabeth (Betty) Musto, Thomas LaPaglia and Suzanne Reilly.

Absent: Jennifer Saksa

1. Suzanne called the meeting to order @ 7:05 pm.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** all present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **Public comment:** Our scheduled Presenter Joseph Luciano was unable to attend the meeting but sent a Public Comment via email to Suzanne, the Chairman. The Public Comment was read to the group and is attached following these minutes.
4. A **Motion** was made by Sandra to approve the January 24, 2019 meeting Minutes and 2nd by Betty. Motion Carried.
5. **Members' comments:** After discussion on the Public Comment sent in by Joseph Luciano, the committee decided to order 200 free copies of the technical assistance materials from USDOJ by calling the ADA Info Line. Suzanne will check with Town Hall to see if we can have them mailed there, and the committee was to ensure that copies were made available for the taking at the following locations: Town Hall, Police Station, Community Center, Senior Center, Library and the Down Town Associates office (if the group is still active).
6. **New business:** None
7. **Old business:** Tom asked if there was further communication from the town whether volunteers interested in helping transport residents to Doctor's appointments would be allowed to do so. Suzanne will check with Mary McNelis to inquire if the Town Council has made a decision.
8. The **Agenda** for **Thursday, March 28, 2019** meeting. Suzanne will contact Joseph Luciano confirm his availability for our March meeting since he was unavailable today; he offered to educate committee members on ADA requirements - "ADA ed".
9. **Public comment:** None
10. A **motion** made by Tom 2nd by Sandra to **adjourn the meeting**. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted by, **Suzanne Reilly, Chairperson**

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PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE / PUBLIC COMMENT 2019-02-28 Page 1 of 3 Thursday, February 28, 2019 To: Suzanne Reilly, Chair, Seymour Livable Community Advisory Committee suzanne.reilly2011@gmail.com From: Joseph A. Luciano Disability Rights Action Group of Connecticut DRAGconnecticut@yahoo.com 33 DeForest street, Seymour CT 06483-2894 203/463-8323 PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE /PUBLIC COMMENT

Long overdue is an EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN to educate and inform Seymour business operators, property owners, and Seymour PD about their responsibilities under not only Town of Seymour ordinances (especially 14-6 & 1-9)¹ but also federal law (ADA 1990) to provide reasonable accommodations to customers/persons with disabilities. Seymour business operators, property owners, and Seymour PD are the “targets,” or “audience” of this campaign. I propose that this Livable Community Advisory Committee conduct this campaign and I volunteer to provide significant assistance. WHY? (Intended targets may not know they are obligated to accommodate customers with disabilities. Moreover, they may not know how.) “More than 50 million Americans – 18% of our population – have disabilities, and each is a potential customer. People with disabilities are living more independently and participating more actively in their communities. They and their families want to patronize businesses that welcome customers with disabilities. In addition, approximately 71.5 million baby boomers will be over age 65 by the year 2030 and will be demanding products, services, and environments that meet their age-related physical needs. Studies show that once people with disabilities find a business where they can shop or get services in an accessible manner, they become repeat customers. “People with disabilities have too often been excluded from everyday activities: shopping at a corner store, going to a neighborhood restaurant or movie with family and friends, or using the swimming pool at a hotel on the family vacation. The ADA is a Federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities and opens doors for full participation in all aspects of everyday life.” ADA Update: A Primer for Small Business, page 1 METHOD 1. By a concise letter sent via USPS mail, inform business operators, property owners, and Seymour PD that they will be contacted personally and given technical assistance materials to help them understand their obligations. These materials are comprised of “free” publications published by USDOJ: • ADA Update: A Primer for Small Business, and • ADA Update: A Primer for State and Local Governments. ¹ It has been my experience that even call-takers at Seymour PD headquarters and members of the Seymour Board of Police Commissioners are uninformed about 14-6 obligations. More than that, Seymour PD has been and continues to be in dereliction of duty by defying Ordinance 1-9, which mandates—not suggests—fining flouters. Seymour PD, essentially, has been teaching flouters they can get away with it. Both police and citizens need education.

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2. Obtain free copies of the technical assistance materials from USDOJ by calling the ADA Info Line: 800 514 0301 Order 200 or more of each. They are free. 3. Become informed yourselves. Study both technical assistance materials. 4. Make a list of targets. See below. 5. Visit each, handing out copies of the appropriate publication. Engage persons in conversation, pointing out issues that must be addressed in order to achieve compliance (and avoid investigation and fines by Department of Justice U.S. Attorneys). 6. Let time go by and visit again to assess compliance. Ask why compliance has not begun. Ask when it shall be done. 7. Publish in newspapers campaign results, identifying targets that complied and those in arrears. TARGETS IN NEED OF CONTACT² (How are the following required to accommodate customers?) Boxcar 145 (this business deserves accolade, having an ADA restroom and has barrier-free entrance. But aisle widths between some tables are insufficient) First Street Pizza (narrow width entrance, 3 high tables, high chairs) Flashbacks (recently upgraded threshold entrance; but width of aisles prevents shopping with assistive mobility devices, 4 also hangs flags outdoors that are in violation of ADA height standards) Glass Source (has wooden portable ramp at rear entrance, but vertical rise at top exceeds maximum height) Heavenly Donuts (double inline entrance doors in violation of ADA architectural standards) Key Bank (deserves accolade, is only downtown business that provides a doorbell for disabled customers to ring for help opening doors) Klarides Village Shopping Center (noncompliant ramps, absent signage indicating accessible entrance) Lizzie's Corner (an alternate entrance has a ramp but it's in ruins and a noncompliant vertical rise exists at the threshold. But landlord resists replacing the ramp and making the threshold compliant) McDonald's (deserves accolade for ADA restrooms, wide aisles between tables, workers attentive to needs of disabled customers, new kiosk for ordering has handicapped mode) Post office (postmaster refuses to provide signage at the mountain of steps explaining how disabled customers can obtain "sidewalk service." Often no one answers phone calls requesting outdoor service. Customers arriving after you've given your order are taken care of before you, resulting in unreasonable waits outdoors.) Ro & Betty's Attic & Consignments (carpets not affixed to floor as ADA requires) Seybridge Pharmacy (double inline entrance doors in violation of ADA architectural standards) Seymour PD (has yet to provide itself with ADA education and disability sensitivity training that it promised it would begin a year ago! Seymour PD has had no training on how to interact respectful of the civil and ADA rights of persons.) Seymour PD needs to be persuaded or ordered to end its abuse of discretionary power not to fine flouters of 14-6. (Ordinance 1-9 "mandates" fines.) Seymour PD needs to be persuaded to ticket & tow vehicles 2 Not a complete list 3 Minimum clear width for a wheelchair is 36 inches for a hall and 32 inches for a door. Minimum clear space for a T-shaped turn of 180 degrees is 36 inches in all directions. Minimum passage width for one wheelchair and one ambulatory person is 48 inches. 4 Wheelchairs, crutches, canes, walkers

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blocking access to the ADA accessible walkway at the Fishway, or Paul Pawlak Sr. Fish Bypass Channel & Park at Tingué Dam. Strand Theater (currently under USDOJ investigation for restroom and outdoor ramp compliance) Tea with Tracy (no formal or equivalent outside table service) Tickled Pink (deserves accolade for wide merchandise aisles, wide entrance door) Town Hall of the Town of Seymour (often “forgets” to turn on the power for the automatic electric door opener at the handicapped entrance; located the handicapped parking space not opposite the handicapped entrance but at the end of the block; when disabled visitors intuitively park opposite the handicapped entrance, there is no curb ramp for them to access the sidewalk. Most outrageous is Town Hall’s recent misguided, thoughtless decision not to restore the 4 (four) handicapped parking spaces on Columbus and Bank Streets. That decision is disrespectful to and harms the senior disabled.) Uncommon Peacock, The (this business deserves accolade, having affixed carpeting to floor—and does not hang flags outdoors that are in violation of ADA height standards) Wildflour deserves accolades for prompt outdoor service. Woodland Package Store (narrow, cluttered aisles) Zois Pizza Palace (deserves accolade, having ADA restrooms)5 Joe Luciano Sr. Joseph A. Luciano Sr., 33 DeForest Street A24, Seymour CT 06483-2894 Home 203/463-8323 Tenacious Advocate for Elderly, Persons with Disabilities, Universal Design, & Livable Communities through Full ADA compliance& Enforcement A federal witness in ADA/USDOJ enforcement actions FOUNDER: Disability Rights Action Group of Connecticut DRAGconnecticut@yahoo.com <http://www.nhregister.com/opinion/20170729/james-walker-barriers-lets-get-behind-joe> 5 Note that both Zois and Haroula’s Coffee Shop have entrance ramps that are extremely sloped from ADA standard of 8 degrees.