

Metuchen Accessibility Committee

Meeting Minutes, February 23, 2022

Present: Audra Sbarra (chair), Jason Delia (Borough Council liaison), Tara Matise, Avnee Patel, Michael Geschlecht. No members of the public attended.

Unable to attend: Robin Brown, Todd Pagel

1. Opening:

- Audra read the MAC mission statement
- Audra announced that Tara Matise volunteered to be secretary.

2. Identifying improvements needed for the Metuchen Borough Website

- MAC committee will help identify accessibility issues on the website, especially simple items that could be corrected easily enough on the current website.
- MAC committee can identify features that will be important to incorporate into a revamped Metuchen borough website coming in 2023.
- Jason commented that councilman Joel Branch and Borough Admin Deb Zupan are also very interested in improvements to the website. Jason will convene a small group to start discussions.
- Jason directed us to this website for doing an accessibility review:
https://developers.google.com/web/fundamentals/accessibility/how-to-review?utm_source=lighthouse&utm_medium=devtools

3. Ways to bring in more groups under “inclusive” and “equity”

- Audra proposed doing a Spring Conversation, Avnee and Michael will help.
- Audra, Michael, and Audra brainstormed topics for a Spring Conversation.
- MAC could help make Metuchen more liveable for our aging population. Tara inquired about collecting or considering demographics to see to what degree seniors are moving into the newer apartments or buildings that are being built in the Borough.

4. MAC now has a student intern from Metuchen High School

- The intern will help improve the MAC social media presence.

5. The Human Relations Commission is having an April conversation for Autism Awareness month

- Human Relations Commission is having an April conversation for Autism Awareness month. Members of MAC can support HRC in promoting the event or providing speakers as more details become available.

6. Prioritizing accessibility improvement priorities the MAC can work on

- Many sidewalk corners still need curb cuts
- Not all of the crosswalk lights have audio
- Not all of the automatic door openers work consistently (e.g. library)

7. Update from Council President (Jason)

Metuchen received 2 New Jersey grants:

- **Transit Village:** will provide many additional bike racks, locations under discussion.
- **Safe Streets to Transit Program will fund:** improvements to New Street sidewalks, intersection at New and Pearl will have push-button crosswalk lights, other improvements.

Next meeting - Wednesday, March 23:

- Meetings return to in-person in Borough Hall, 2nd floor conference room, starting in March.
- Jason will briefly describe the work planned for the grant received in 2017.