



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
57 Inman Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
349-4692 (Voice) 492-0235 (TTY/TDD)

Gail M. Enman, Executive Director

Michael Rocha, Chairperson
Sondra Korman, Communications
Gloria Cartagena
Eric Dietrich
John Fernandes
Carol McLaughlin
Rose Medeiros
Robert Nichols
Robert Patterson
Paul Schlaver
Marie Wright

MEMO

TO: Robert W. Healy, City Manager
FROM: Gail Enman, Commission for Persons with Disabilities
RE: Handicap Access at the Manning Apartments
DATE: October 16, 1991

In response to City Council Order #38, dated 8/7/91, I undertook an access review at the Manning Apartments in conjunction with Councilor Sheila Russell and Gloria Leipzig, representing Dan Wuenschel of the Housing Authority. The results of that review are enumerated in the enclosed letter to Councilor Russell.

Subsequently, I met at the site with Commissioner Dave Haley and Assistant Commissioner Jeff Nutting of the Department of Public Works, and Ms. Leipzig, to evaluate how the Cambridge Housing Authority and the City of Cambridge can work together to improve the unsafe pedestrian travel conditions at the Manning Apartments before the winter months.

The outcome of that meeting was a joint venture wherein the Cambridge Housing Authority will purchase the necessary materials (handrails, grates, lighting, etc.), and Public Works and the Electrical Department will install them at the site. In addition, Public Works will regrade the brickwork at the top of the ramp to eliminate the settling condition which represents a significant hazard in the path of travel. Bob Keating was on vacation at the time of our meeting, but upon his return he was to begin to remedy the problem.

The proposed improvements at the Manning Apartment still do not eliminate the most serious access violation, and also the most costly: the ramp itself. To regrade the ramp would require substantial excavation which is not financially feasible for the Housing Authority at this time due to state and federal funding cuts. Therefore, although the agreed-upon modifications at the site will improve accessibility and should enhance safety, the ramp remains excessively steep and continues to represent a hazardous pedestrian route from Green Street to the Manning apartments and the neighborhood beyond.

Please let me know if I can provide further assistance in this matter.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
57 Inman Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
349-4692 (Voice) 492-0235 (TTY/TDD)

Gail M. Enman, Executive Director

Michael Rocha, Chairperson
Sondra Korman, Communications
Gloria Cartagena
Eric Dietrich

John Fernandes
Carol McLaughlin

Rose Medeiros

Robert Nichols Councilor Sheila Russell

Robert Patterson Cambridge City Hall

Paul Schlaver 795 Massachusetts Avenue
Marie Wright Cambridge, MA 02139

August 14, 1991

Dear Councilor Russell,

Our site visit to the Manning Apartments earlier today revealed the following access problems:

- The ramp leading from the Manning Apartments to Green Street exceeds the requirements for slope, has no handrails, and represents an extremely hazardous means of access for the elderly and disabled residents of Manning Apartments and all pedestrians who use that passage as a rite of way.
- The storm drains at the top and bottom of the Green Street ramp and adjacent to the entrance to the Manning Apartments have become recessed and exceed slope requirements for walkways, inviting pedestrians to slip, especially in inclement weather.
- The grates over five storm drains in the path of travel from Green Street to the Manning Apartments exceed width requirements for grates and are especially dangerous for persons who use canes, crutches or walkers.
- The lighting at the base of the Green Street ramp is inadequate and fails to meet site access requirements for a "well-lit path of travel."
- The ramp leading from the Manning Apartments towards Franklin Street and the Central Square branch library has one non-complying handrail which is not secured and therefore unsafe, and it lacks the required second handrail.

Since the passageway from Green Street to Franklin Street is so heavily traveled, these non-complying conditions represent not only a very real danger to pedestrians, but a significant liability. At the time when the passageway was constructed, site access requirements did not exist; however, by current standards, the

site conditions leading from Green Street to Franklin Street constitute serious violations of Architectural Access regulations. Contributing to the problem is the fact that in the course of the twenty years since the passageway was built, the brickwork has settled and become a further obstacle in the path of travel.

To resolve the access problems as enumerated above would require extensive regrading of the Green Street ramp, including the installation of level platforms at the top and bottom of the ramp and adjacent to the entrance to the Manning Apartments where the sunken storm drains are currently located; the installation of complying handrails at the Green Street and Franklin Street ramps; lighting improvements at the base of the Green Street ramp; and replacement of five storm drain grates.

Temporary measures to improve pedestrian safety should be taken until the problems can be resolved permanently. These include the installation of complying handrails at both ramps and the leveling of the surfaces at the top and bottom of the Green Street ramp with a porous material to permit drainage.

I appreciate the opportunity to work with you to improve pedestrian safety in Central Square.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gail Enman".

Gail Enman, Executive Director
Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities

cc: Daniel Wuenschel
Gloria Leipzig

*Wendell
Lamar
May*

IN CITY COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR RUSSELL

WHEREAS: The ramp leading from the entrance of the building going towards Green Street is filled with hazards for handicapped people, such as indentations in the bricks which cause holes, a sunken area around a storm drain cover, general sinking of the bricks towards the garage area, and drain covers which are bars which cause the wheel chair wheels to become stuck; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the Executive Director for Persons with Disabilities along with the Commissioner of Public Works to inspect this area and repair this situation quickly before the onset of winter when ice and snow make this already hazardous situation even worse, and report back to the City Council at our next scheduled meeting as to a timetable for these repairs.

In City Council August 7, 1991.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

Joseph E. Connor

Joseph E. Connarton
City Clerk



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL. 349-4300

FAX. 349-4307

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

October 21, 1991

To The Honorable, The City Council:

With reference to Awaiting Report Item No. 27, regarding repairs to the handicapped ramp at Manning Apartments, please find attached a response from Gail Enman, Executive Director of the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities.

According to Deputy Commissioner Jeffrey Nutting the temporary measure to improve pedestrian safety will be completed by the Public Works and the Electrical Departments by the end of November, assuming the materials ordered by the Cambridge Housing Authority arrive as scheduled.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Healy", is written over a horizontal line.

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mev
attachments

5-1122
CONSENT AGENDA

14.

Transmitting communication from Robert W. Healy, City Mnager, relative to Awaiting Report Item No. 27, regarding repairs to the handicapped ramp at Manning Apartments.

In City Council,

October 21, 1991

Placed on file