

BRAINTREE COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
Meeting Held Via Zoom
Monday, September 8, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE: Crystal Evans, Treasurer
Robin Torpey, Member
Scott Lamphere, Member
Kelly Ormsby, Member

NOT PRESENT: Mary Russo, Member

ALSO PRESENT: Marybeth McGrath, Director of ML & I
Kristina Ziniti, ADA Coordinator

Call to Order:

Crystal Evans served as Acting Chairperson for this meeting.

Meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes;
Robin Torpey-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes; Kelly Ormsby-yes

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of July 7 and August 4, 2025 were reviewed.

Motion made by Robin Torpey to approve the meeting minutes of July 7, 2025. Motion seconded by Kelly Ormsby. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes; Kelly Ormsby-yes

Motion made by Robin Torpey to approve the meeting minutes of August 4, 2025. Motion seconded by Kelly Ormsby. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes; Kelly Ormsby-yes

Discussion of Bike Racks

Ms. Evans stated this is a continued discussion of possibly purchasing bike racks to be placed in various locations in Braintree. She invited Braintree resident Michelle Hinthorne to participate in this discussion, as she had originally raised this issue. Ms. Evans reviewed a PowerPoint presentation outlining the role of the Commission and what they are allowed to spend their funds on. She reviewed purchases and projects the Commission has funded in the past. She also reviewed potential future projects and purchases being discussed by the Commission.

Michelle Hinthorne addressed the meeting. She stated her son is 16-years-old and has several disabilities which impact his daily living skills. She stated they would like to

teach him how to responsibly ride a bike, including locking it. Unfortunately, there are not many accessible bike racks in the areas he commonly frequents, between Sunset Lake, Pearl Street and Grossman Drive. Because of this he is forced to leave his bike in the middle of sidewalks and walkways, and in the lobby of Shaw's supermarket. This also raises the possibility of his bike being stolen.

Ms. Hinthorne suggested if there were bike racks available using them could be incorporated into his training and eventually he would know to use them consistently. Ms. Ziniti asked if there are specific areas she would like to see bike racks installed. Ms. Hinthorne stated anywhere in the area of Shaw's, Grossman Drive and South Braintree Square. Ms. Ziniti stated she will pass these locations on to Engineering for further discussion. Ms. Evans stated the state has an electric bike incentive program for low income residents, and she has noticed more electric bikes in Braintree. She reviewed factors which need to be considered when determining placement of bike racks.

Ms. Evans reviewed locations in Braintree which currently have bike racks, including: Thayer Public Library, all schools, East Braintree/Weymouth Landing, Sunset Lake, Braintree Highlands, Mattulina Park, MBTA properties, and Target. She proposed the Commission consider installing bike racks at town hall near French's Common, 74 Pond Street where Park and Recreation is located, and South Braintree Square. She provided examples of the various styles of bike racks that can be utilized. She emphasized the Commission can only install racks on public properties, however, they could approach the private sector and ask if they would consider placing bike racks on their properties.

Ms. Evans opened the discussion to public comments. Ms. McGrath stated Councilor Maglio had been present and left a comment thanking Ms. Hinthorne for sharing her story and noted that bike racks can provide crucial accessibility and are also an important amenity. Bethany Brown commented she utilizes an electric bicycle and she hopes the racks will be accessible to tricycles and would keep her bicycle safe. She would appreciate bike racks all around.

Chris Hall commented he is an E-Bike technician and the E-Bike person for the New England Electric Auto Association. He offered to assist Ms. Hinthorne if she needs anything for her son's bike. He stated bike racks are needed and there are electric bicycles that are larger than traditional two wheel bikes. He stated there are a lot of children under the age of 16 that are riding electric bicycles, which is not allowed under the law. Ms. Ormsby asked if the racks being discussed would fit Mr. Hall's needs, or are there further designs they should be considering. Mr. Hall stated these designs will accommodate tricycles but may not accommodate velomobiles. He stressed that any racks installed should include surveillance as some racks can be cut through and the bicycles stolen.

Discussion: Commission on Disabilities Members

Handicapped funds/potential items to purchase: Ms. Evans continued the PowerPoint presentation and provided information on the importance of benches as a disability issue. She provided locations of existing benches in Braintree, and reviewed the benches that

need replacement due to disrepair. She reviewed bus stops which would be in need of benches. She showed photographs of the Monatiquot Riverwalk to review areas where they could install benches, as discussed at the prior meeting.

At their prior meeting the Commission had discussed purchasing AAC Communication Boards for parks. Ms. Evans stated the playground company Braintree uses for their playgrounds does manufacture an existing board, with the cost being \$2,756. She suggested printing an AAC board on banners and placing them in the playgrounds in town. They would not be as durable, but would be lower cost and could be placed in multiple locations.

Another item discussed at the previous Commission meeting was purchasing a wheelchair accessible podium for town hall. Ms. Evans provided examples of these podiums and stated the cost would be \$5000 to \$10,000.

Continued discussion, MassDOT

Ms. Evans stated there is not enough time to discuss this item. Ms. McGrath stated members can draft a letter to send to MassDOT but it would have to be discussed at the next meeting for endorsement and approval. Ms. Ormsby stated she would assist Ms. Evans in drafting a letter.

Other Business:

Ms. McGrath stated the agenda items not covered at this meeting will be added to next month's agenda, including the MassDOT letter and the update on audible crosswalk signals.

Next Meeting: October 6, 2025

Adjournment:

Motion made by Robin Torpey to adjourn the Commission on Disabilities meeting at 8:01 p.m. Motion seconded by Kelly Ormsby. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes; Kelly Ormsby-yes.