

**Board of Selectmen
October 7, 2002
Regular Session**

Call to Order

The Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Monday, October 7, 2002 at 7:30 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at the Belmont Town Hall. All members were in attendance.

Mr. Brownsberger noted the many residents already in attendance for the senior center discussion later in the evening, and reviewed the agenda of the meeting.

Questions from Town Residents

There were none.

Action by Appointment

Barry Gaiman re: Adult Swim Program

Mr. Gaiman appeared before the Board of Selectmen to discuss his concern for the limited hours of programming for adult swimming in the Town's recreation programs and the closure of the indoor pool for two months during the summer. He is appealing the Recreation commission policy of not allowing for a rebate of the adult swim fees for that period.

The Board agreed to refer this matter to the Recreation Commission for its review.

*Public Hearing on Utility Petition
Keyspan - Little Pond Road*

The Board convened a public hearing on a petition by Keyspan to open Little Pond Road to install conduit. A representative of the company was present to support the petition.

There were no residents present.

The Board moved: to approve Keyspan's petition to open the street to install conduit along Little Pond Road.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Discussion of McLean Land Transfer (Potential Executive Session)

Mr. Brownsberger expressed his desire to discuss this matter in executive session given the negotiating position of the Town with the possibility of acquiring land.

The Board moved: to enter executive session to discuss the value of land relating to the negotiation of land transfer at McLean Hospital. The Board shall return to open session within 15-20 minutes.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0), by roll call vote.

Planning Board re: Trapelo Road Zoning

The Board met with members of the Planning Board to discuss the proposed rezoning of the site of the former Belmont Volkswagen dealership on Trapelo Road. Roberta Sydney, development specialist representing the property owners of this site, provided an overview of the rezoning request.

Mr. Barrell and Mr. McClurg, of the Planning Board summarized the Planning Board's review of this proposal.

There was substantial discussion over the appropriate land use of the parcel and its relationship to the concept plan for a Walgreen's retail operation.

Residents of the area stated their concerns about the proximity of the proposed development to the existing homes abutting the property.

Discussion of Belmont Volkswagen MOU (Potential Executive Session)

The Town Administrator reviewed the elements of a draft Memorandum of Understanding that has been negotiated relating to this property involving the acquisition of land for a fire station in exchange for rezoning and zoning permits.

A general discussion ensued relative to the merits of the zoning and its implications on the acquisition of land and development of a fire station. Several abutters and members of the public participated.

The Board expressed an interest in reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding with the property owners in an effort to move this project forward.

The Board agreed to schedule a special session of the Board of Selectmen for a public discussion of the Memorandum of Understanding on October 15.

The Board agreed to put the rezoning proposals on the warrant for the Special Town Meeting as currently articulated, recognizing the Town's ability to make it more restrictive if desired.

The Board tabled further discussion of this matter until later in the evening when it would enter executive session for such purpose.

Discussion of Special Town Meeting Warrant

The Board engaged in a discussion of the upcoming Special Town Meeting.

The Board discussed its options with respect to the long range planning of large capital building projects in the Town.

Dr. Solomon praised the planning process undertaken by the Cluster Planning Task Force, but he felt it did not sufficiently include public input or consider political realities important for any plan to move forward successfully. He felt the proposed Cluster plan would delay the construction of a Senior Center for at least five years, when Belmont is one of only a couple communities in the Boston metropolitan area without a permanent Senior Center. He did not consider the wait acceptable. He supported the construction of a Senior Center at the Kendall site.

Mrs. Mahoney reiterated the importance of the cluster study being done to identify synergies that may exist, but also acknowledged the constraints of that proposal given the School Committee's unwillingness to turn over field space to support the proposal, given the school's current limits on field space. She expressed her support for a permanent Senior Center for the Town, and acknowledged the Kendall site as the one place in Town available upon which to place it, but is concerned about the funding issues surrounding the Senior Center.

Mr. Brownsberger expressed his support for locating a permanent Senior Center on the Kendall site. He stated that he felt that all major projects undertaken by the Town should be funded by borrowing through voter authorization to tax over the 2½% property tax limit through the passage of a debt exclusion for each project.

Mrs. Mahoney voiced her reluctance to support the Wellington School project within the next five years because of the additional tax burden it will place on the taxpayers that she believes will hinder the Town's ability to gain public support for the passage of a debt exclusion for the fire stations. She also indicated that despite her opposition to the use of the funds from the Kendall insurance settlement to fund the construction of the Senior Center, she is uncertain that both the fire stations and the Senior Center would gain approval of the taxpayers if both projects are placed on the ballot for a debt exclusion.

Mr. Brownsberger recommended that the Board support the inclusion of a warrant article for the schematic design of the senior center utilizing the Kendall insurance proceeds.

There were several advocates for a senior center in attendance who spoke in favor of construction of a new Senior Center.

Ms. Dreyer of the Library Trustees spoke in support of the Concord Avenue plan for a library and other public projects. The Board spoke in support of a longer term planning process for Concord Avenue.

There was discussion relative to the scope of the Senior Center project with the possibility of introducing other municipal and/or community uses.

The Board moved: to support the construction of a new senior center on the Kendall site and to place an article for the appropriation of funds for the schematic design of a senior center on the Special Town Meeting warrant and to use the proceeds from the Kendall insurance settlement to fund the schematic design.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board agreed to discuss further the issue of the senior center project at their special meeting of October 15.

The Board had further discussion on the Special Town Meeting Warrant. The Board supported the proposed articles as outlined by the Town Administrator.

Traffic Advisory Committee re: Committee Charge

The Board deferred this matter to a future meeting.

Approval of Committee Appointments

The Board reviewed a letter from the Conservation Commission recommending the appointment of Michael Flamang to the McLean Land Management Committee.

The Board moved: to appoint Michael Flamang to the McLean Land Management Committee.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Action by Writing*Proclamation re: United Nations Day*

The Board reviewed a proclamation for United Nations Day.

The Board moved: to proclaim October 24, 2002 as United Nations Day.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Report from Police Department re: Traffic Safety at Intersection on Davis Street

The Board raised questions about the report and requested this issue be referred back to the Police Department to seek further clarification of the Police Department's recommendation.

Copy of Letter to Town Administrator from Chair, Traffic Advisory Committee re: Request for Parking Delineations on Grove Street

The Board reviewed a letter from the Chair of the Traffic Advisory Committee requesting the installation of parking delineations on Grove Street.

The Board moved: to approve the recommendation to install parking delineations on Grove Street.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Letter from Chair, Traffic Advisory Committee re: Request for Traffic Study at Washington and School Streets

The Board reviewed a letter from the Chair of the Traffic Advisory Committee requesting a traffic study of the intersection of Washington and School Streets.

The Board moved: to approve the recommendation to conduct a traffic study of the intersection of Washington and School Streets.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Letter from Resident re: Tree at 6-8 Townsend Road

The Board reviewed a letter from a resident at 6-8 Townsend Road regarding a concern about a Town tree in the vicinity of her property.

The Board moved: to refer this letter to the Tree Warden and Highway Superintendent, for their review and recommendation.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Correspondence re: Douglas Road Zoning Violations

The Board reviewed correspondence from the Office of Community Development regarding zoning violations at 38 Douglas Road that the Town has mandated to be brought into compliance.

The Board agreed with the recommendation of the Community Development Director.

Letter from Former Resident re: War Memorial Concept

The Board acknowledged the thoughtful letter of a former resident proposing a design for a Veterans war memorial.

The Board requested this letter be referred to the Allied Veterans Council with a copy sent to the Lions Club for their review and recommendation.

Correspondence re: Cable License Transfer Settlement

The Board reviewed a draft cable license transfer settlement.

Mrs. Mahoney expressed her reluctant approval of the settlement, indicating her continued displeasure with AT&T Broadband.

The Board moved: to support the draft settlement.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Memorandum from Town Administrator re: Scheduling of Selectmen Issues

The Board discussed the scheduling of the issue of a public review of the Pleasant Street reconstruction plan and the Board's proposal to utilize Royal Road for on-street parking during the Town Hall Complex renovations.

Selectmen's Issues List

The Board received an updated Selectmen's issues list.

Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed draft minutes of the Board's meetings of September 18, 19, and 23, 2002.

The Board moved: to approve the minutes as written.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Other

The Board discussed the scheduling of the LOWV night to be held prior to the Special Town Meeting.

Mr. Brownsberger reported a call from a resident complaining of reckless parking in the vicinity of the Town's play fields.

The Board requested a letter be sent to the Soccer Association requesting they communicate with all participants the need for safe parking in the vicinity of the Town's soccer fields.

The Board moved: to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing potential litigation related to the Town Hall renovations and for the purpose of discussion of the value of land related to the potential acquisition of land to locate a fire station. The Board will not return to open session.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0), by roll call vote.

The regular meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Melvin A. Kleckner, Town Administrator
Clerk, Board of Selectmen