

Approved by Select Board:  
September 18, 2023

**Minutes of the  
Town of Belmont  
REGULAR SESSION  
of the  
SELECT BOARD  
August 30, 2023**

**RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: October 10, 2023  
TIME: 8:59 AM

To view the recording of the meeting, please click [HERE](#).

**Call to Order:** Mr. Epstein called the meeting to order at 8:10am.

| Select Board Members                                     | Present | Staff Members                               |     |
|--|---------|---|-----|
| Roy Epstein, Chair                                       | Yes     | Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator          | Yes |
| Elizabeth Dionne, Vice-Chair                             | Yes     | Jay Marcotte, DPW Director                  | Yes |
| Mark Paolillo, Member                                    | Yes     | Glenn Clancy, Dir. of Community Development | Yes |
| <b>Others Present</b>                                    |         |   |     |
| Holly Muson, Community Path Project Committee            | Yes     |   |     |
| Amy Archer, P.E, PARE Corporation                        | Yes     |   |     |
| Kathleen Ogden Fasser, Landscape Architect, Toole Design | Yes     |   |     |

## **WORKING SESSION – Community Path**

### Phase 2 – Review and discussion of proposed route alternatives

Mr. Epstein reviewed the history of the project, the recommended route, and the purpose of the meeting. Of particular concern is the impact of the route on the existing uses of the land including Belmont Housing Authority (BHA) and the DPW.

Mr. Epstein then discussed a letter sent to the Select Board by the Belmont Housing Authority, which stated the BHA was not willing to allow a path alignment using Belmont Village land based on the current plan. The BHA owns the parcel, not the Town. He explained their request to receive a detailed drawing showing how the path will be laid out on their property, including elevations. BHA may seek to construct a new building on the current parking lot.

Also, the path interfering with the DPW operation could be an issue and needs discussion. Mr. Epstein pointed out that some of the land being used by the BHA for parking is actually on the DPW parcel. He stated the need for detailed drawings to establish where the proposed route would reach ground level from the proposed bridge over the MBTA tracks and what the options were for a spur to Midland Street. DPW would consider a spur hugging the BHA property line if it did not otherwise interfere with DPW operations.

Items for discussion:

- Whether or not the path can cross DPW property without interfering with DPW operations.
- Can a spur leave the path at the intersection of the DPW/BHA land to get to Midland Street.
- The requirement that DPW property needs to be fenced at night for security.

Mr. Paolillo asked if BHA had been involved in discussions before this time.

Ms. Muson said the Community Path Project Committee (CPPC) had been in contact with BHA since before the feasibility study and reviewed their interactions with BHA and DPW. There was a discussion of the BHA's letter and concerns.

Ms. Archer spoke about discussions with the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) and was told that Sherman Gardens was being prioritized and that there is no plan for the BHA property. She explained what had been presented to CHA of the proposed plan, their discussions, and issues with the plan in that area.

Mr. Paolillo shared his concerns about the situation.

There was further discussion about the issue and challenges with the plan.

Mr. Paolillo said the Select Board would like to see a letter from the BHA Board of Commissioners supporting the plan for the path at the BHA property.

Mr. Epstein asked how a connection to the BHA would work given the height of the path through that area.

A sketch of the spur to Midland Street from the CPPC project website was shared and discussed. There was a discussion of this slide and the impact of the plan on the DPW and Water Departments. Ms. Fasser stated the path would reach ground level by the DPW property line.

There was a discussion of how to proceed to ensure all stakeholders are in agreement with the plan.

Ms. Archer stated that the CPPC has not spoken to any abutters along Midland Street.

Ms. Muson pointed out that the west end of the path is in question because Waltham has not completed their path for a connection. Ms. Archer explained what is being considered to address this issue.

There was further discussion on how to proceed.

Mr. Epstein stated the Town does not have a survey of the DPW parcel. He discussed property line information from Grayco, a firm that handles real estate issues for the MBTA, that raised questions about existing encroachment by DPW on MBTA land and whether there was sufficient clearance for the path to traverse the DPW parcel without impeding other DPW operations.

Mr. Clancy explained that when there is a proposal for work for Phase 2, there will likely be some survey work included. He suggested that a survey be done now, before a route is chosen, to avoid paying for future survey work that will ultimately have to be duplicated if there is a problem with the DPW land. There was a discussion of funding this suggestion.

Mr. Epstein summarized what is needed to proceed:

- Drawings to meet BHA's request.
- A survey of the DPW land.
- More detail on how a spur would reach the main part of the path at Midland Street.
- Resident engagement on Midland Street if the spur to the street is feasible.
- Access to BHA's recent survey or a survey of BHA land to accommodate the ramp.
- Proposed workable spur.

There was a discussion of timing for State funding of this phase of the project.

#### Phase 1 – Review and Discussion of Request for Additional Funds

Mr. Clancy explained that Nitsch Engineering has requested an additional \$492,855 and outlined the specifics of the request. This additional expense would exceed the current available budget for Phase 1. There was a discussion of the services that will be provided, the request, and overall costs. Mr. Epstein suggested that Mr. Clancy ask Nitsch to make some concession in their fee to help cover this expense.

Mr. Clancy stated there was still money in the Phase 1 budget to keep work moving for now. Ms. Garvin identified ARPA and CPA as potential additional funding sources.

#### **Next Meetings & Upcoming Topics**

- a. Thursday, September 7, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Public Input Session – Civil Service
- b. Thursday, September 14, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Public Input Session – Rink Operations
- c. Monday, September 18, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Regular Session
- d. Monday, September 25, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Regular Session
- e. Thursday, September 28, 2023 – 7:00 PM – Public Input Session – Budget Override

#### **Adjournment**

*A motion was made to adjourn the meeting of the Belmont Select Board Committee, and the motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:03am.*

Respectfully submitted by,  
Susan Peghiny, Recording Secretary