

Town of Belmont, MA

Traffic Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting January 13, 2011

Members present: Linda Nickens, Laurence Macdonald, Matt Sullivan, Michael Bair, Dana Miller, Tommasina Olson.

Absent: Peter Curro, Don Mercier.

Ex-Officio members present: Glenn Clancy, PE.

Also present: BSC Group representatives: Peter J. Briere, PE; Charles A. Kalauskas, PE; Marybeth T. Murphy, RLA, LEED AP. Many residents and business representatives were in attendance. The BSC Group had a sign in sheet which will become a part of the record.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Linda Nickens, Chair. She welcomed the new members of TAC; Matt Sullivan and Michael Bair.

Belmont Center Public Forum 4:

Glenn Clancy, PE; discussed process. Some points he reviewed:

Leonard Street: Angle vs. Parallel parking.

The involvement of other town departments in the project.

Taxi and "T" bus stops.

School Bus pickup on Leonard Street extension.

Green space-concerns-utilization by community.

BSB parking - access to garage

Phasing and cost estimates.

Claflin Street and Channing Road - shorten pedestrian crosswalk.

Concern about in and out parking at lunch time at Claflin St. and Channing Rd.

Create island at Claflin St. and Channing Rd. intersection.

Roundabouts put to bed

BSC GROUP:

Peter Briere then reviewed process,

Streetscape - Process

Proposed Plan – Overview

Proposed Plan – Details

Marybeth Murphy then spoke about Streetscape,

Belmont Center-Old photos-postcards Leonard Street.

Images – New improvements around Town Hall.

Existing trees are not in good shape.

Look at new trees and plantings conducive to environment.

Streetscape Concepts:

Wide sidewalks – Planters – New furnishings – Bumpouts with planters.

She exhibited photos of Pittsfield and Derby Street.

Sidewalk cafes – Street furnishings – planters – ornamental lighting – pedestrian lighting – banners – planters on light poles

Furnishings – Benches – Bike racks – Bus shelter – Bollards – and planters.

Street paving – include Banding and Pavers in Parking lane.

PROPOSED PLAN:

Peter Briere, Project Area: Leonard St. /Pleasant St. /Alexander Ave. /Channing Rd. /Concord Ave.

He mentioned that the Central Massachusetts Rail Trail (Boston-Northampton) will pass through Belmont adjacent to the railroad tracks.

Option 1: Parallel Parking (Lose a few spaces due to bump outs and crosswalks)

Option 2: Angle Parking (Gain 5 spaces)

Review of Proposed Plan:

Channing Road: Concord Ave. to Cross St.

Existing and Proposed design show 4 parking spaces. New curbing, sidewalks and shortening up of crosswalks by installing an island or tightening up of intersection at Claflin St. S. Rosales, former resident of Claflin St. suggests the plan would create new issues. What would effect be on landscaping and contracting trucks and lunch crowd on parking and traffic issues? Parking spaces and enforcement? Kevin Foley, property owner, in favor of installing curbing and island for pedestrians to make it safer for crossing. Steve Marlin, resident, would like to see intersection closed in or tightened up. Peter Schilling, resident, is concerned about parking of landscaping trucks at lunch time, which spills over to no parking zones. He questioned the lack of enforcement of parking regulations. Tommasina Olson, TAC, feels that people should be able to buy lunch without being penalized. Glenn Clancy, PE, feels a compromise can be reached to satisfy the needs of crosswalks and traffic at both intersections. (Cross and Channing, Claflin and Channing) Jean Mooney, TMM, concerned about safety island and effect on DPW and Public Safety (Fire) vehicles access. Glenn Clancy feels that DPW can plow and maintain crosswalk. Ron Sacca, resident, spoke about accident statistics, and prior TAC, BSC studies of Belmont Center. Glenn Clancy stated that there is no logical plan to signalize the intersection of the Bridge, Concord Ave. and Channing Road. He also pointed out that the pavement in Belmont Center needs repair and the BOS suggested that now is the time to look at Belmont Center for a facelift and upgrade to make it safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. A resident of Common Street, expressed concern about the effect of new restaurants on parking and why the Town didn't buy the Colwell Bankers lot. Glenn Clancy replied that there too many environmental issues on that site. (Previously a gas station) He also stated that better management of parking is needed. Parking would be looked at separately. Also, there is no control over property owners and how or to whom they lease their properties. Ron Sacca questioned the cost of \$95,000.00 the BOS authorized to pay the BSC Group for their study. Tommasina Olson, TAC, mentioned how TAC had come up with a plan to make the intersection of Cross Street and Channing Road safer for pedestrians and how it was implemented. Mary Kennedy, resident, asked about charging facilities for electric vehicles in Cushing Square. Glenn Clancy responded that at present Mass Highway does not include those facilities in the current plans for Trapelo Road. Steve Rosales expressed a concern of impact on Farnham Street and the neighborhood. Recently, Farm Road and Channing Road residents had 2 hour restriction placed on their streets. This action has shifted the parking of employees to other streets in

the neighborhood. Glenn Clancy said that a Parking study will be made before construction in Belmont Center begins and will include residential streets. Kevin Foley said that Channing Road used to be long term parking, we need to compromise.

Leonard Street: Pleasant St. to Alexander Ave.

Add two spaces.

New Sidewalks.

Leonard Street: Moore St. to Alexander Ave.

11 Ft Travel lanes

5 Ft Bike Lane

Sidewalks 8.5 Ft today – 14 Ft Proposed widths

Bump outs at crosswalks

Identify HP spaces

A cross section view of modified Leonard Street was then shown.

Marybeth Murphy then spoke about Streetscape: Banding, Street Trees, Bump outs and Planters. Trees would size to building size. An opportunity for an amenity strip by Macy's would be created. Ron Sacca asked about the effect people waiting for parking spaces, loading and delivery vehicles would have with the narrower lanes. Karl Haaglund, Planning Board, said that there would be room to maneuver. Tommasina Olson asked about large trucks moving through Leonard Street. Glenn Clancy replied that there is an 11 ft travel lane in each direction. A brief discussion about delivery trucks, loading zones followed. Jean Mooney asked about location of bus stops and the possibility of a bus route between business centers in town. Tommasina Olson said she would look into Lex-Press, a community shuttle in Lexington. Peter Briere said that with angle parking we would gain 6 spaces on Leonard Street. Marybeth Murphy said that angle parking would reduce the sidewalk width to 10 ft. Parallel parking gives you a width of 14 ft. Peter Briere cited angle parking issues; crash rate is 1.3 times greater, parking spaces harder to find, distracts drivers attention and encourages u-turns. Kevin Foley asked about reverse angle parking. Paul Bell, resident, is opposed to angle parking. Ron Sacca asked about inventory of parking spaces. Peter Briere said that angle parking gives you 6 more spaces on Leonard St. Tommasina Olson feels that parallel parking favors more parking out back (Claflin St. Lot) than in front. Kevin Foley feels a way balance while maintaining business and beautifying Belmont Center is necessary. Jean Mooney feels that Leonard Street should be a local commuter route where people will come to shop and be in community. Encourage people to park in back.

Concord Ave: Leonard St. to Pleasant St.

Views of Existing and Proposed modifications were shown.

A widening of Concord Avenue with additional parking by the BSB would be created. On the opposite side by the commuter rail platform better pedestrian access by changes to the ramps, sidewalks, access to the pedestrian tunnel and better HP accessibility. Steve Rosales asked about the "Dick Betts Plan" about creating parking on the railroad platform land. Glenn Clancy said that the BOS has turned that plan down due to cost and loss of trees. Karl Haaglund likes the green space and trees at the RR land. Ron Sacca mentioned the power wash of the walls and part of the bridge that was done a short while ago. Glenn Clancy mentioned that the Town does not own the land on the bridge and RR platform.

Leonard St: Concord Ave at Channing Road

A view of existing conditions was shown.

Ron Sacca wants curbing by delta and horse trough preserved. Jean Mooney asked about location of taxi stand and bus stops. Karl Haaglund asked about islands and curb width on Concord Ave.

Marybeth Murphy then spoke about removing Leonard Street Extension by the BSB. Create sitting areas, plantings and focal points for the community to enjoy. Preserve horse trough and build a small retaining wall. Tommasina Olson is concerned about grade at the delta/common.

Concord Ave. at Common St

Proposed crosswalk on Concord Ave. by bridge.

Jean Mooney expressed concern about access to the Unitarian Church. Peter Briere proposes a flashing light for crosswalk. Marybeth Murphy would like to see Concord Ave. median extended. Dana Miller, TAC, concerned about 2 lanes turning left under bridge to Cambridge and the effect on the crosswalk. Also, the issue of sightline from Common Street was raised.

BSC Group;

Redefine Overall Plan

Proposed Cost Estimate: Design and Cost

Present to BOS

Glenn Clancy said that traffic coming under bridge toward Cambridge should be single file. Kevin Foley asked about percentage of parking in relation to percentage of green space. Glenn Clancy would like to see a crosswalk at Leonard St. /Concord Ave. /Channing Road by the bridge. Matt Sullivan, TAC, says that when campaigning by the bridge he sees a lot of issues. Linda Nickens, TAC Chair, we need to balance between pedestrian and traffic safety to benefit the whole community. "Keep an Open Mind"

End of Public Forum

Minutes: December 9, 2010

Dana Miller moved and Matt Sullivan seconded a motion that the December 9, 2010 minutes be approved. It was unanimously VOTED: To approve the December 9, 2010 minutes.

Motion to adjourn: Laurence Macdonald moved and Dana Miller seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurence P. Macdonald, Clerk



Traffic Advisory Committee

TOWN OF BELMONT

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Linda Nickens, Chair
Laurence Macdonald, Clerk

Committee Members

Michael Bair
Peter Curro
Dana Miller
Donald Mercier
Tommasina Olson
Matt Sullivan

Date: January 11, 2011

To: Members -- Traffic Advisory Committee

From: Linda Nickens, Chair

Subject: Agenda for Meeting on **Thursday, January 13, 2011 at 7:00 PM** in the **Town Hall Auditorium**. If you cannot attend the meeting, please contact Linda via e-mail.

Agenda

7:00 Call to Order

7:00 – 7:05 Minutes (December 9, 2010)

7:05 – 8:30 Belmont Center Public Forum

8:30 – 8:35 New Business

8:35 – 8:40 Old Business

8:40 Adjourn

Cc: Board of Selectmen
Tom Younger, Town Administrator
Glenn R. Clancy, Town Engineer
Sgt Kevin Shea, Belmont Police Department
Richard McLaughlin, Belmont Police Chief
Peter Castanino, Director, Department of Public Works
Karl Haglund, Planning Board