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Town of Belmont

COMMUNITY PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7:00 pm - Wednesday, January 8, 2014

Town Hall Annex, 3rd Floor Conference Room (Art Gallery)

MEETING MINUTES

The Community Path Advisory Committee (CPAC) meeting was called to order at approximately 7:08 pm by Chairman Jeffrey Roth.

Attendance

CPAC Members present at the meeting: Jeffrey Roth (chair), John Dieckmann (vice chair), Price Armstrong, Brian Burke, Cosmo Caterino, Charlie Conroy, Amy DeDeo, Joseph Noone and Vincent Stanton, constituting a quorum, with 9 of 11 members present. Absent were Kevin Sullivan and Tomi Olson. Minutes were submitted by Vincent Stanton, revolving secretary.

Also present was Jeffrey Wheeler, Planning Coordinator, Town of Belmont.

Also present were community members, including:

Cindy Taylor (Channing Road), Philip Lawrence (Agassiz Avenue), Judith Ananian Sarno (Waverley Terrace), Sheila Flewelling (Sycamore Street), Jerrold Goentzel (Aggasiz Avenue), Deborah Lockett (Dalton Road), Holly Muson (Temple Street), Kim Slack (Taylor Road), Yvette Tenney (Bow Road), and Steven Kundrot (Fairview Avenue).

7:13 pm Approval of Minutes from December 18, 2013 Meeting

The draft minutes from the Dec. 18th CPAC meeting were approved with minor edits on a motion by Mr. Armstrong, seconded by Mr. Stanton, and voted unanimously.

7:15 pm Discussion of January 22, 2014 Public Forum

The Committee discussed the organization of the upcoming public forum. The purpose of the forum is to hear the concerns of citizens who own and/or live in properties abutting potential routes for a Community Path. Mr. Roth said that, per the Selectmen, abutters will be invited to

Speak first at the forum. Non-abutters (including non-Belmont residents) will be allowed to speak only after all abutters interested in speaking have done so. Speakers will be allotted two minutes, however this may be shortened or lengthened depending on the number of people who wish to speak. There will be a sign-in sheet for those interested in speaking, on which they will record their name and precinct number so that there is a balance of voices from different areas of town. (It was noted that only precincts 1, 3, 4 and 8 actually include potential Community Path routes under consideration by the Committee.) All citizens interested in commenting will be invited to submit written comments as well, which may be included in an appendix to the Committee's final report. All comments received will be treated as public information.

Next Wednesday the Committee will meet at the Beech Street Center to go over the arrangements for the public forum on site.

7:45 pm Preview of CPAC slide presentation at Public Forum

Mr. Roth showed the slides that he plans to present at the January 22 public forum. The schedule for the forum calls for introductory remarks (~10 minutes) by the Selectmen and CPAC starting at 7 pm, followed at 7:10 pm by a 20-minute presentation describing the work of CPAC to date and framing the public's feedback on the specific potential routes that the CPAC is currently focusing on and therefore seeking feedback on.

Committee members offered suggestions on how to improve the presentation, including fewer slides, less text and more emphasis on the routes. Mr. Noone suggested that a route around Clay Pit Pond be indicated on one of the route maps. After some discussion it was agreed to add (as a dotted line) a Clay Pit Pond route.

In other discussion about the forum Mr. Roth noted that abutter survey forms, mailed in December, are being returned to the Community Development department after which the results will be tabulated.

8:22 pm Pros and Cons of Potential Routes

Mr. Roth noted that there had been requests for a narrative account of the Committee's analysis of different route options. {Background: In October and November 2013 Committee members scored approximately 30 route options using a rating scale involving 37 criteria. That process resulted in numerical scores for each possible route. However the scores, and the complex evaluation criteria used to produce them, would be difficult for non-Committee members to interpret without a long explanation of the criteria and close study of the scores.} Therefore the committee will be generating a narrative account of the primary pros and cons of the route options considered. Mr.

Roth distributed a spreadsheet showing how the information could be organized. He will email the spreadsheet to Committee members soon, and requested they submit comments by next Tuesday, January 14, 2014.

Mr. Stanton proposed that some of the numerical scores be referenced in the narrative accounts, to insure that the two methods of explaining the Committee's deliberations are consistent. Mr. Stanton also suggested that the spreadsheet include a column where design features could be mentioned, to indicate that certain routes were recommended in concert with certain design elements (e.g. hedges, fences, barriers, etc.).

8:35 pm CPAC Final Report

Mr. Armstrong agreed to take responsibility for writing section 10 of the CPAC final report, describing next steps. (Previously Mr. Conroy had responsibility for that section.) Mr. Armstrong also expressed concern that the CPAC final report – currently conceived as a collection of chapters by different committee members – would need some editing to insure a consistent authorial voice. Mr. Armstrong volunteered to help with editing.

8:40 pm Other matters

Mr. Roth distributed an announcement about a meeting of people interested in the Massachusetts Central Rail-Trail (the Mass Central line used to pass through Belmont) that will take place in Clinton, MA on April 12, 2014. Mr. Dieckmann said he would represent CPAC at this meeting, and provide an update to that group on the status in Belmont. Mr. Roth also distributed a recent post from State Senator Will Brownsberger's website commenting on a Community Path in Belmont and clarifying his former and current positions on certain potential route segments.

8:45 pm MBTA to review route options on their property

As discussed at a previous CPAC meeting, Mr. Roth and several other CPAC members met with the MBTA in December 2013 to discuss an underpass at Alexander Avenue Extension and other matters relating to a Community Path in Belmont. Mr. Roth noted that in that meeting the MBTA volunteered to look at route segments that involve MBTA land, and to provide feedback from relevant department heads. CPAC needs to provide the MBTA with maps of the affected route segments. Most of the current route maps provide minimal detail about exactly where the path would go *vis a vis* MBTA land. Mr. Roth invited feedback from CPAC members, including more detailed maps, by Thursday January 16, 2014.

8:45 pm Adjournment

Mr. Burke moved to adjourn, Mr. Armstrong seconded and the meeting was adjourned. Prior to adjournment Deborah Lockett expressed her thanks to the CPAC for its work, which was followed by an applause from the audience.