

**Vision Implementation Committee Minutes**  
**October 20, 2005, 7PM – 9PM**  
**Approved November 3, 2005**

**Present:** Austin Bliss, Donna Brescia, Meg O'Brien, Sara Oaklander, Ann Rittenburg, Paul Santos, Paul Solomon.

**Absent:** Vincent DeNovellis, Victoria Haase, Jennifer Page

1. Administrivia:
  - a. Austin Bliss will be the recorder for the meeting
  - b. Minutes from 10/6/2005 meeting were reviewed. Paul Santos moved approval of the minutes.
  - c. VOTE: by a unanimous vote of the committee, the minutes were approved
  
2. Paul Santos reported that Anne Paulsen would like us to try to attend a meeting on Friday the 28<sup>th</sup> with the Central Transportation Planning Staff to look at the pedestrian issues right around the Belmont Center railroad bridge. The meeting is at 8:45 am in the Selectman's Room and includes a plan to walk to the intersection and back.
  
3. Sara Oaklander reported on the Belmont Center Planning Group (BCPG).
  - a. They met with the Board of Selectmen and had a lively discussion. The thrust of the conversation was about 'process.' The Selectmen approved the process and the draft planning document. Selectman Firenze was interested in a piece that would happen right away, focusing on the immediate concern of the use for the old fire station. Some short-term recommendations to improve the Center immediately were also developed. These have been drafted, but have not been finalized.
  - b. The BCPG meets every Wed at 7:30 AM, if anyone wants to join them.
  - c. The BCPG toured the Leonard St. firehouse and drafted a set of criteria for redevelopment which for the most part was adopted. Sara handed out a document that details these criteria that will be distributed at Town Meeting. Paul Santos asked about the pink building next door, and it was explained how that could not be combined to the fire station plot. He also asked if this planning process is just about the buildings along Leonard Street, or a bigger area. Sara clarified that there is a bigger area and will send a document around on it. BCPG is having a charette for interested townspeople and will be covering many issues.
  - d. Paul Solomon reminded us that the committee meets every week and is working on a huge mandate. This is the sort of stuff that should be done by the town planner, but we don't have one currently. He views the committee as an integral part of this process. He emphasized that the document Sara handed out is just a summary of the RFP, not the RFP.
  - e. Meg O'Brien thought it was a great step forward that citizens will be able to offer their opinions on several development options.
  - f. Paul Solomon announced that a town planner will be selected a week from tomorrow. This means we should have a planner on board by the first of the year. The title of the job is "Director of Planning and Economic Development". The Selectmen are considering two very strong candidates.

4. Sustainable Belmont Forum – Paul Santos
  - a. There was a keynote speaker plus three other speakers. The focus was on how to save energy.
  - b. It was a very successful event - by the time the evening was done, there were more than a hundred attendees and Belmont Light Department reported that almost 50 people signed up for energy audits
  - c. Paul Solomon pointed out that this forum is a wonderful example of how the VIC can move things forward. It is exactly the model that had been discussed some five years ago, where there are planning groups involved in many different activities. It really seems that Sustainable Belmont is self sustaining and going to continue.
  - d. Sara pointed out that the secret is hinging the group on solid leadership.
  - e. Paul Santos pointed out the advantage of an umbrella structure. It is a big help to have VIC as the parent organization.
  - f. Meg O'Brien pointed out the importance of communicating what you are doing. The event last night was taped and will be available on Channel 8
  - g. We all congratulated Paul on a very successful meeting.
  
5. Donna Brescia updated us on the initial meeting of the Belmont, Lexington, Waltham Sub-Area Study (Trapelo Road Corridor) that took place on October 18, 2005.
  - a. A copy of the minutes from that meeting was distributed.
  - b. The group reviewed the developments that have already been permitted and how they will impact current traffic infrastructure as well as potentially what will happen if things continue. It is an eighteen month study with a team of people representing the three towns.
  - c. The team will continually post new materials on the website [www.mapc.org/transportation/trapelo.html](http://www.mapc.org/transportation/trapelo.html)
  - d. Paul Solomon pointed out how this underscores the need for a regional look at things. He emphasized the need for the communities to work together as much as possible.
  
6. Criteria for selecting initiatives
  - a. Meg recapped that at our last meeting we pulled out the key words of our vision statement and then visually mapped the connections between them.
  - b. Tonight we want to look at the criteria that we would use to select and evaluate our projects.
  - c. Criteria identified through brainstorming:
    - i. Self-sustaining
    - ii. Measurable
    - iii. Reportable
    - iv. Achievable
    - v. Easily understood
    - vi. Selectmen support
    - vii. VIC internal Champion
    - viii. Consensus of VIC
    - ix. Belmont-wide impact

- x. Issues not yet addressed
  - xi. Not being addressed by other groups
  - xii. Relate to Vision
  - xiii. Reasonable timeline
  - xiv. Not require lots of resources
  - xv. Impactful
  - xvi. Diverse projects
  - xvii. Benefits from our unique position as Town committee
  - xviii. Potential to engage townspeople
  - xix. Leverages our expertise
  - xx. Model that can be reapplied
  - xxi. Pressworthy
- d. Ann Rittenburg asked for clarification... Do we need to get selectmen's approval for our initiatives? Paul Solomon pointed out that it was a good idea, as you can get good publicity and it is nice to have a stamp of approval. He later referred us to our Charge, which states we should get approval on our areas of activity.
- e. A lively discussion ensued involving the implementation of these criteria. We decided there were some terms that were 'tests', what would fit the sentence "it has to be", versus others that are "it would be nice if...". When reviewing the terms, it was clear that "Relate to Vision" was a required criterion.
- f. Paul Solomon suggested that we remove "Selectmen support", as Selectmen will support any initiatives that meet the other criteria. We agreed it could be pulled.
- g. The question was raised by several regarding the use of these criteria, and if it was to select projects or areas of focus, or both. We decided it was primarily to select projects.
- h. A number of people feel like we need to take the list and put it into a more usable form. Meg O'Brien offered to try to pull it together.
- i. Sara pointed out that it will be an interesting test to see if these terms are understood by people not in the meeting.
7. Paul Solomon moved to adjourn at 9:04pm. VOTE: by a unanimous vote of the committee, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Austin Bliss,  
Secretary Pro Tempore