

- **MINUTES**
- **TOWN OF BELMONT**
- **BOARD OF SELECTMEN**
- **SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM**
- **SPECIAL SESSION**
- **Thursday, October 9, 2008**
 - **8:00 AM**
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- **CALL TO ORDER**
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- A special meeting of the Board was called to order in open Session at 8:03 am by Chair Firenze in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. All members were present. Town Administrator Tom Younger and Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti were also present.
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- **CUSHING SQUARE PARKING LOT**
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- The Board discussed the process of evaluating the single bid that was received for the Cushing Square parking lot. Planning Director Jay Szklut appeared before the Board along with members of the Cushing Square Neighborhood Association.
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- The Board stated that Town Meeting's approval to sell the property is contingent upon any development project for the site successfully obtaining a special permit from the Planning Board. It needs to be clarified whether that applies to the parking lot only or to the entire project. Town meeting's understanding seemed to be that it was the latter.
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- The next step for the Town now is to accept the single bid and to designate the bidder as the developer that the Selectmen will negotiate with. The parties can then proceed to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement. However, the actual conveyance of the property would have to wait until the full project is approved. The ultimate scope of the project could impact the value of the parking lot parcel and require final negotiations on price. The Town is also concerned about maintaining public parking availability during project construction.
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- Don Becker, speaking for the Neighborhood Association, said the group feels the Selectmen still have a role to play in evaluating whether the project meets the goals stated in the RFP. Chair Firenze responded that it is entirely the job of the Planning Board to address project design issues. Mr. Szklut explained that the Selectmen can ask to see the plans and make an initial determination as to whether they are within the scope of the RFP, then let the Planning Board take over in reviewing the details. Chair Firenze said the Board would ask Mr. Szklut and Town staff to determine if the plans are or are not consistent with the requirements of the Cushing Square Overlay District.
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- It was clarified that the Board still has the right to decline to sell the property.
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- The Board agreed it does not want to get involved in the planning process. Mr. Szklut recommended that the Board designate the bidder, but demand a full set of plans before entering into negotiations on a purchase and sale agreement.
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- The Neighborhood Association asked that they be informed, through Mr. Becker, of any meetings between the Board and the developer that they would be allowed to attend.
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- The developer, Smith Legacy Partners, has submitted a proposal of \$850,000 for the parking lot which will be the basis of negotiations.
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- The Board moved: To designate Smith Legacy Partners Series LLC as the successful respondent for development of 116 Trapelo Road, with whom the Town will negotiate the execution of a purchase and sale agreement pursuant to terms and conditions agreed upon by the Board and the designee.
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- Discussion: Mr. Becker said the bid is inadequate to the terms and asked that this move be delayed until the plans have been submitted. The Board felt this was unnecessary as all the information will be required before concluding the purchase and sale agreement. The Board agreed with Mr. Szklut that the bid meets the terms of the RFP.
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- There was discussion of the possibility of leasing the property rather than selling it. It was noted that revenue from a lease is not restricted for capital uses the way revenue from a sale is.
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- Mr. Becker suggested the Town avail itself of expert advice on this matter to maximize the return to the Town. The Board asked Mr. Younger to get advice from Town staff on whether any consulting should be done.
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- The Board listed its concerns about the project as: 1) Who are the partners that will join in developing the project? 2) What is the plan for providing public parking spaces? 3) How will the phasing of the project be handled? 4) The need for more detailed information as required in the RFP.
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- It was agreed that the Board will conduct negotiations with the developer as a whole.
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- Motion passed unanimously (3-0).
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- **OTHER**
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- The Board discussed a list of charitable gifts that have been made to the Town. The Board suggested that the list be expanded to include any gift of \$500 or more as well as any large in-kind gifts in the past 3-4 years, before the list is published.
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- The Board noted that the Legislature has passed the Town's home rule petition regarding a club liquor license for the VFW. In accordance with the legislation, the Board will place the question before the voters. If it passes, the VFW may apply for a liquor license, assuming they have finalized a lease on their building with the Board. Town Meeting would still have to approve funding for the payments associated with the lease, which the Selectmen will recommend. There remains a question as to whether the Light Department can write off its portion of the VFW's debt.

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- The Board will meet in a special joint session with the Board of Assessors on Thursday, October 21 at 8:00 AM.

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- Selectman Jones has resigned from the Warrant Committee effective October 1.

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- The state has certified the Town's free cash at approximately \$2.6 million. The Selectmen agreed that this money should not be allocated for now pending political and financial developments over the next few months.

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- There was discussion of possible uses for proceeds from the sale of the Woodfall Road property. The money could only be used toward a capital project.

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- The Board moved: To appoint Marty Cohen as an Associate Member of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

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- Motion passed unanimously (3-0).

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- The Board moved: To enter into executive session to discuss value of real property and not to return to open session.

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- Motion passed unanimously (3-0). The Board entered executive session at 11:02 AM.

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- *(During executive session, no substantive motions were made. The Board adjourned at 11:30 AM.)*

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- Thomas G. Younger, Town Administrator