

# Town of Belmont

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Traffic Advisory Committee

November 1, 2007

Minutes of Meeting

Present: MaryJo Frisoli, Linda Nickens, Peter Curro, Tommmasina Olson, Laurence Macdonald, Andrea Masciari, and Ronald Sacca, Members. Also Present: Glenn Clancy, Town Engineer and Sgt. James Maclsaac, Belmont Police Department.

Absent: Philip Richmond, Committee Member.

Citizen's Present: Belmont; Robert Brown, Mary Crawford-Volk, Elinore Hildebrandt, Lisa and Peter Kaloostian, Henry Ogilby, Lydia Ogilby, Brian Goodman, and Dix Campbell. Cambridge: Betty Porter, O. Robert Simha, and Suzanne Smith.

Also in attendance: Sue Clippinger, representing the City of Cambridge.

There being a quorum present, the Chair, MaryJo Frisoli, called the meeting to order at 7:14 PM.

Laurence Macdonald agreed to take the minutes for the meeting.

The Chair (MJF) moved to table the Election, Approval of Minutes and other Administrative actions until our next meeting, which was approved.

The Chair (MJF) then summarized the proposed Truck Ban on Blanchard Road. Sue Clippinger then reported on the proposed reconstruction of Blanchard Road from the Temple to the Roundabout. There is 1 class of truck that can't negotiate the roundabout (53' Tractor Trailer Unit). City of Cambridge is recommending the use of Fresh Pond Parkway to Huron Ave to Aberdeen Ave. There was some concern about trucks going down Huron Ave to Grove St. Tommasina Olson (TO) and MJF discussed the traffic count taken in September that showed little truck traffic on Bright Rd. Most trucks use Blanchard Road. Some concern about the number of trucks owned by Mabardy using Blanchard Rd. Linda Nickens (LN) spoke about the good faith agreement between Belmont and Cambridge. Cambridge designed the roundabout, Belmont paid for the construction. Cambridge assured us that all vehicles would be able to negotiate the roundabout. However, this is not the case. There was concern expressed that trucks would use Concord Ave and Common Street to bypass roundabout. LN feels that Cambridge should fix the roundabout. Peter Curro (PC) mentioned that even 10 wheeled vehicles go over the roundabout. Glenn Clancy (GC) has reported to the BOS

about limitations and impact. The Town has widened the yellow line around the roundabout. MJF suggested using flat stamped concrete around the inside to alert drivers that they are getting to close. LN suggested an origin and destination check be made. Sgt Maclsaac (Sgt) did state that Cambridge will include traffic calming in the rebuilding of Blanchard Rd. Ron Sacca (RS) questioned whether buses would be included in the truck ban and what about trucks making deliveries. Trucks making local deliveries on Blanchard Rd would be allowed. RS expressed concern about trucks using the hills of Common St and Washington St. and safety in school zones. Sgt feels that the redesign of Blanchard Rd would probably not be truck friendly. GC reminded everyone that Blanchard Rd is a Cambridge roadway. TO suggested that Cambridge should allow input of design from Belmont and abutting residents. GC stated that the goal was to slow traffic down with a speed of 25 MPH. GC also stated that the Bright Rd incline, the raised intersection at Glenn Rd and the roundabout has slowed down traffic. PC discussed the number of UPS trucks that cut through Belmont on their way to their routes. Sgt said that a number of trucks use Brighton St. Sue Clippinger (SC) suggested that a turning movement count be made. The meeting was now opened to comments of citizens present.

Peter Kaloostian pointed out that more trucks were now coming down Concord Ave from Fresh Pond into Belmont, especially since the reconstruction of the Alewife-Fresh Pond Bridge and rotaries. A 12 year resident, he is upset about the increase in noise level and speed. He is also concerned about lack of enforcement.

MJF stated that there can be no truck ban without a posted truck route. LN spoke about history of process and fairness of truck ban. SC explained the process with State agencies in obtaining a truck ban. MJF explained the process of TAC, discussion, public input, vote and recommendation to the BOS. Any truck ban on Blanchard Rd will apply to Bright Rd.

Brian Goodman stated that truck drivers were deliberately driving over the roundabout.

Henry Ogilby stated that empty trucks start as early as 4:30am and they are noisy. He has seen an increase of box trucks on Grove St and Blanchard Rd. He claims that some truck drivers are angry and are driving over the roundabout. He observes many larger trucks are able to negotiate the roundabout. He cites the attitude of truck drivers. He observes that the roundabout has calmed traffic. He also hopes that Belmont and Cambridge can work together to resolution.

Lydia Ogilby had wanted a 4 way or all way stop sign. Instead she got a roundabout. Most people are polite and traffic is slowing down. "It's working", she said.

Steve Samuel said that Belmont people want truck ban for safety reasons. You can't walk down Blanchard Rd and it is difficult to get out of your own driveways especially at rush hours.

MJF stated that the process of notification of Public Meetings is governed by BOS regulation.

TO discussed the origin and destination survey vs. turning count. PC feels that the origin and destination should be expanded.

MJF is Belmont going to support or reject a truck ban on Blanchard Rd. What is the effect on the Town of Belmont as a whole? Need to request origin and destination survey. The vote will be tabled till December or January.

Ellie Hildebrandt observed that the reconstruction of FP Pkwy and rotaries caused increase of traffic on Blanchard Rd. She states that situation is equally bad at night as in day. Excessive speed is a problem. Detour from FP during construction has now become a destination to avoid FP Pkwy and rotaries. Construction of Blanchard Rd could take 1 year.

Andrea Masciari (AC) suggested a truck ban during certain hours. GC, Problem is enforcement. Sgt, this would create a false expectation of enforcement.

Betty Porter cited the number of accidents on this stretch of Blanchard Road, speed is the cause. She particularly noted the speed of motorcycles, trucks and buses. You can't walk on Blanchard Rd. She confirmed previous reports of truck noise starting at 4:30am. She stated that traffic backs up from Concord Ave to roundabout during 5pm rush hour. Can traffic lights at Concord Ave be timed to allow better movement from Blanchard Rd. She is also concerned about right turn from Grove St to Blanchard Rd, no stop sign. She feels that traffic calming is a "Quality of Life" issue for both communities.

Larry Macdonald asked about traffic enforcement by the CPD. Sgt responded about enforcement issues, road design, and lack of space to position enforcement vehicles safely.

Molly Crawford-Volk stated Blanchard Rd is owned by Cambridge and abutted by Belmont. Greater degree of cooperation is needed between Belmont and Cambridge. Conditions are deplorable; the road is not designed for the use and volume of traffic it handles. Address issue now – Cooperative discussion. Delaying vote now is step in right direction.

Bob Brown questions the design of roundabout. Route 16 was the designated truck route before FP Pkwy reconstruction. It should be the designated truck route now.

GC stated that there is no truck restriction on Route 60.

Bob Brown wonders why the concern about Concord Ave, Common St and School St. The hope is to use traffic calming and truck ban to keep trucks off Blanchard Rd.

Robert Simha cites the issue of accidents and the behavior of drivers. He also notes the speed of MBTA buses on Grove St. He states that traffic is bumper to bumper on Blanchard Rd at rush hour and trucks use path of least resistance. He suggests that trucks coming out of the Alewife Quadrangle change routes, maybe left turn instead of right onto Concord Ave. Consider restriction, not total ban, take easy steps and improve signage.

MJF: Is there a temporary solution? SC: With Mass Highway, you either get or don't get.

MJF: Neighborhoods and home. Blanchard Rd is more like a Belmont road than a Cambridge street.

LN: Mr. Ogilby observes same trucks going through on a regular basis. Can truck driver be made to pay for damage to roundabout if it is intentional? Can a camera be installed?

Next on the agenda:

A request that a Yield Right of Way sign at Clifton St. and Prospect St. be relocated.

Dix Campbell summarized issues with the present location of yield sign and speeds on Prospect St. He also reported on excessive speed by school buses.

After discussion Glenn Clancy recommended that a Yield Ahead be placed on Clifton Street.

Linda Nickens moved to install a Yield Ahead sign on Clifton Street where Glenn Clancy, Town Engineer, recommends.

Andrea Masciari seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously passed .

Next on the agenda:

A request that a Stop sign be installed on Lincoln St. at the intersection with Bow Road.

After discussion it as moved by Linda Nickens to install A Stop sign on Lincoln Street at the intersection with Bow Road.

The Chair, MaryJo Frisoli seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously passed.

A further discussion on Trapelo Road was tabled till next month.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurence P. Macdonald

Acting Secretary



