

# Town of Belmont, MA

## Traffic Advisory Committee

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Minutes of Meeting November 4, 2010

Members present: Linda Nickens, Laurence Macdonald, Dana Miller, Ron Sacca, Tommasina Olson, Peter Curro.

Ex-Officio members present: Glenn Clancy, PE

Absent: Sgt. Shea, BPD

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.

Belmont Center Public Forum 2:

Linda Nickens introduced the BSC Group.

Peter Briere, of the BSC Group reviewed the process and schedule. (See October 2010 minutes)

7 or 8 Patterns, their pros and cons will be presented and discussed, with the aim to select 2 preferred alternatives, which could be a combination of patterns. Analysis tools are traffic patterns, traffic operations, parking supply, bicycle accommodation, pedestrian access and streetscape opportunities.

To be considered are traffic patterns: Existing north side of bridge, south side of bridge, One-way pairs north of bridge, closing of Leonard street to MV traffic, and installation of roundabouts on either side or both sides of the bridge. Other possible alternative traffic patterns may be considered. There are 14 traffic conflicts in Belmont Center.

Marybeth Murphy, BSC, spoke about streetscape and landscape. More 10' to 12' sidewalks, benches, plantings would offer more café opportunities and be more pedestrian friendly.

Don Mercier, resident, walks to center, he wants no bump-outs, utilize lanes, 2 lanes and bicycle lane, crosswalks at bridge. Parking is #1 priority. Arlene Davis, resident would like Moore St made one way from Pleasant St to Leonard St. Reduce and disperse traffic through Belmont Center. DM said weigh the visual vs actual impact. PB will address one way scenarios. Ron Sacca asked what is the purpose – are we trying to move traffic or get rid of traffic? GC said that the roads in Belmont Center meet the Pavement Management criteria for repair, the BOS suggested that this is the time to look at Belmont Center. GC spoke about identifying and analyzing traffic – only 3 ways to cross town – Brighton St, Belmont Center and Waverley Square. We need to come up with a plan to aid pedestrians in getting under the bridge safely. RS stated that no fatal pedestrian accidents have occurred by the bridge. He questioned the use of bike lanes and the conflict they may cause. GC responded that we need to make it easier to bike and walk. This is an opportunity to have bike lane, we'll take it – share the road. 2 lanes are not necessary for MV through Belmont Center. Ray Miyrds said people will not use the bridge intersection for pedestrian crossing. He encourages other ways to get through. RS asked about crosswalks by the bridge. GC stated that there are no proper sight distances for pedestrians. Evan Malirus, resident, asked about if another tunnel under the bridge/railroad for bicyclists and pedestrians. GC suggested using the existing tunnel if we can get bicyclists safely to the Lion's Club tunnel. EM would like an additional tunnel with bike lanes. John Beatty, resident, asked about Concord Avenue being 2 lanes down from Pleasant Street. Brian Burke, property owner, asked about raised crosswalks. Roger Colton, resident, prefers sidewalk over parking. He noted that Waltham has wide sidewalks on Moody St. Don Mercier asked about parking by the old MLD building and the Police station.

Lydia Ogilby, resident, asked about parking on Royal Rd. Ron Sacca questioned the location of the taxi stand in Belmont Center, they are in the middle of nowhere. Joan Beatty, resident asked about pedestrian access to the bridge by Paradise Florist, there is a paved walkway on the bridge. Marybeth Murphy, BSC, spoke about landscaping south of the bridge, benches and adjacent parking by the War Memorial and improving walkways around the area. Jeff Wheeler, CDC, mentioned that often both lanes are turning left under the bridge to Concord Avenue. John Beatty is concerned about the merging under the bridge. GC said "Free for all under bridge" He suggested channelize all lanes. PB, BSC, thinks this would only back up traffic. GC proposed that the center lane be for trucks and buses and side lanes for cars. Marybeth Murphy, BSC, suggested that the bridge be cleaned. (As a small section has been)

LM asked if under this proposal, would the Claflin Street section of the parking lot be returned to full street status? Ron Sacca asked about financing of these proposals and changes in the Center. PB, BSC, replied that there are no dollar estimates yet. TO asked about planters and streetscape, and sidewalk width. Don Mercier suggested painting markings first before permanent installation.

A general discussion on roundabouts followed. Don Mercier feels that roundabouts are environmentally unfriendly. Marybeth Murphy, BSC, feels roundabouts add greenspace. TO and RS feel that this is a beautiful area and does not require roundabouts. Carl Haaglund, Planning Board, asked about why 2 lane roundabout vs 1 lane roundabout. Should there be roundabouts on both sides of the bridge or only one side of the bridge. Pros and cons of each. Ron Sacca feels that any construction should have a minimum effect on business. GC thought that existing traffic pattern and 1 small roundabout might work. Traffic signalization would not work on either side of the bridge. LN suggested that a small roundabout by the Lion's Club might work by making all traffic turn right under the bridge. RS asks will roundabout move traffic or back up traffic? Jeff Wheeler, CDC, feels we need to maintain the Town Green as a social area that is now. Marybeth Murphy, BSC, do we preserve or recreate? Carl Haaglund suggested use of jersey barriers. GC suggested that a roundabout could have tables for social use. LM suggested we look at Leonard as it is – widen sidewalks - narrow travel lanes. Roger Colton – preserve greenspace. Marybeth Murphy, BSC, - look at sidewalks. GC says we should treat both sides of Leonard St the same – laying groundwork for the future. Also, we need to consider a loading zone. Don Mercier states a 12' lane is needed for delivery trucks. Ray Miyrds feels we need to consider public transportation. Jeff Wheeler, CDC, states that the T must give up a route to extend or add a route to its system, especially if we would like to extend the Belmont Center bus to Alewife or create a new route. Other possibility, have the Waltham 128 Council consider a Belmont Center-Alewife Shuttle.

Public Forum Ended

Tommasina Olson moved and Ron Sacca seconded a motion to approve the October 14, 2010 minutes.

VOTED: Unanimously to accept the October 14, 2010 minutes.

New Business: Brettwood Road, residents concern about speeding after repaving of road. Sgt Shea, BPD, will conduct a traffic and speed count.

Old Business: LN suggested we revisit Fairview Ave and Grove St signage. "Slow Sharp Curve"

TO moved and RS seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:53 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Laurence P. Macdonald, Clerk