

Town of Belmont  
COMMUNITY PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, December 4, 2013  
Homer Municipal Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor Art Gallery  
MEETING NOTES

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The community Path Advisory Committee (CPAC) meeting was called to order at 7:06 P.M. by it's Chairman Jeffrey Roth.

**Attendance**

Committee Members: Jeffrey Roth Chairman, John Dieckmann Co-Chairman, Brian Burke Sr. Revolving Secretary, Cosmo Caterino, Price Armstrong, Amy DeDeo, Charlie Conroy, Vince Stanton and Tommasina Olson. Constituting a quorum with nine members present.

Town Official: Jeffrey Wheeler, Planning Coordinator

State Representative: Dave Rogers

Community members in attendance at the meeting were:

Yvette Tenney, Judith Ananian Sarno (Waverley Terrace), Jarrod Goentzel (Agassiz Avenue), Philip Lawrence (Agassiz Avenue), Cindy Taylor (Channing Road), Mike Cicalese (Channing Road), Holly Muson (Temple Street), Deborah Lockett (Dalton Road), George Kokoros (Agassiz Avenue), Bob Mountain (Orchard Street), David Chase (Waverley Terrace), Duane Bronson (Goden Street), Ed Corsino (Channing Road), Diane Corsino (Channing Road), and Kevin R. Shea (Channing Road).

**Approval of Minutes from November 6<sup>th</sup> 2013 and November 20<sup>th</sup> 2013 Meetings** Both sets of minutes were approved with minor changes. Motion made by Vince, seconded by Price, and both were unanimously approved.

**Survey Open Ended Questions** This discussion was continued from a previous meeting. Charlie had reviewed the list and suggested redacting details from only six entries (from the total of more than 600 responses) that gave personal information such as addresses, phone numbers and names. It was agreed upon Vince's suggestion to redact them in our release on the CPAC webpage. The motion was made by Charlie, seconded by Price, and then voted unanimously to publish them.

**Continued Belmont Path Route Discussion** This discussion was opened by Chairman Roth bringing everyone up to date on the negative vote on the CPA (Community Preservation Act) application for \$50,000 to fund a design and engineering feasibility study for a safety pedestrian/bicycle underpass beneath tracks near the High School sports fields and near Alexander Ave. The community as well as the Board were keenly interested in why this application was voted down. Chairman Roth continued and outlined the three main objections cited:

1. Our committee was not a permanent Committee, although the application was made jointly with the Community Development Office;
2. The School committee didn't know the final layout of the High School design and in the absence of their data, and they could not say how an additional exit from the field adjacent to the High School might possibly impact the future planning;
3. The MBTA sent an e-mail of their support of the concept of a tunnel, but did not explicitly say it would support a specific design, because a preliminary design did not yet exist. (That was the purpose of the study.) The funding authority still wished to see a paper letter with explicit support, in spite of the fact that a design does not yet exist.

Given that the Town decided against funding this study, and since the study is needed to determine basic feasibility information about the underpass, the Committee agreed that it would not suggest routes that critically depended on this underpass connection. Vince pointed out that the CPA rejection seemed more bureaucratic than substantive. The Committee agreed with this, and in general believed that all the reasons for the underpass were still valid. The Committee would therefore still include such an underpass in its recommendation, but mainly as a path connection or access point, rather than a critical link within the Community Path.

Chairman Roth continued with the proposed segments of routes on Channing Rd., Concord Ave., on the Fitchburg abandoned Rail Line, and on Leonard St. to both sides. The raised cycle track on Channing Rd. was objected to by some of the neighbors and the Committee as a whole didn't see the viability given the safety issues and traffic impact. Some residents had volunteered previously to find out about the right of way at the church and behind the French Property on Brighton St. end of Channing Rd. It was noted that such information had not been reported to us.

Committee member, Cosmo Caterino and a resident of Channing Rd. took the effort of preparing sketches of four different routes and outlined them to the Committee. One segment along Concord Ave. proposed to push the fences back onto the ball field, and use the sidewalk and a raised cycle track, eliminating the on-street parking. The next segment went on-road and eliminated the parking in front of the Post Office, florist and office buildings in favor of an expanded path with a concrete barrier separating the traffic from the path. It continued on under the Concord Avenue Railroad Bridge, eliminating the right lane as you go under the tunnel, then turning to the right and making a turn back to the Fitchburg rail bed property through the Coldwell-Banker property. The third segment utilized the Fire Lane roadway behind the High School and parking lot around the Tennis Courts, and then went on-road with the widening of the sidewalks and an eminent domain taking of the private Purecoat Plating Company and Crate Escape near Brighton St. The final segment had the route to the Cambridge side of Brighton St. under the road and rail by building a tunnel on an angle through Brighton St. However, it was determined that this underpass suggestion was likely unfeasible. Cosmo agreed that his route suggestions would only be further discussed after he does further due diligence on his ideas and discusses them with stakeholders, in order to achieve a basic level of investigation on these proposals. He would also need to address the numerous user safety hazards that were discussed with this approach. Cosmo said he would investigate further and report back to the Committee at a later date. Some of the stakeholders that would need to be contacted included the Purecoat Plating Company, Crate Escape, the Florist, the Post Office, the Mobil Gas Station, the Belmont High School entities, and the Belmont Municipal Lighting Department for right-of-ways and removal of car parking.

**Forum for potential Abutters** It was noted that the forum would be held on Wednesday January 22, 2014 at the Beech Street Center. Notification methods were discussed and some residents question who were considered abutters. Chairman Roth explained the list actually extended beyond direct abutters because of the on-road raised path options that were presented. Notice was to property owners of record by 1<sup>st</sup> class mail with a prepaid postage envelope enclosed. Selectmen requested the form be modified to include a wall/sound barrier. Cosmo objected to the notice heading which was designed by the Selectman. Chairman Roth with Planning Coordinator Jeffrey Wheeler would contact

office Selectman's office to see if they wished to change the meeting title. This meeting will be a combined CPAC/Board of Selectmen hearing. Further discussion was halted because of lack of time, and was planned to be continued at the next meeting.

**CPAC Schedule and Event Calendar** The updated calendar was distributed and is on-line for community participation.

**CPAC Mission Statement** The CPAC Mission Statement was discussed. A motion made by Price to adopt and publish this on the CPAC webpage. The motion was seconded by John and voted unanimously to approve.

**Action-Item Review** Cosmo is to do further due diligence on his Concord Ave sketches. Charlie is to work on language and edits to the questionnaire open-ended responses going on the webpage. Brian and Amy to work on Senior Center hospitality plans for the Public Forum. It was pointed out that the Committee will meet there for the regular meeting on January 15. An Environmental Notification Form was filed for the Mass Central Rail-Trail development west of Belmont. This discussion was postponed to the next meeting. It was noted that the next two meetings are on December 18<sup>th</sup> 2013 and January 8<sup>th</sup> 2014.

**Adjournment** The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm. The motion to adjourn was made by Amy, and seconded by Brian.