

# Town of Belmont, MA

## Traffic Advisory Committee

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Minutes of Meeting February 10, 2011

Members present: Linda Nickens, Laurence Macdonald, Don Mercier, Dana Miller, Michael Bair, Tommasina Olson, Matt Sullivan, and Peter Curro.

Ex-Officio members present: Glenn Clancy, PE, Sgt. Kevin Shea, BPD

Also present: Sami Baghdady, Planning Board; Lt. Chris Donahue, BPD; Joe White, TMM Precinct 4; and Ron Sacca, resident.

The meeting was called to order at 7:005 PM by Linda Nickens, Chair. She welcomed new member of TAC; Don Mercier.

**Minutes:** Dana Miller moved, Michael Bair, seconded a motion to approve the January 13, 2011 minutes. The Committee VOTED: To accept the minutes as presented. Both Glenn Clancy and Linda Nickens, Chair thanked the Clerk for his minutes of the last 4 Public Forums on Belmont Center.

### **Belmont Center Discussion:**

Linda Nickens stated that this is a TAC working meeting to discuss Belmont Center.

Glenn Clancy gave out several documents and copies of slides and diagrams needed for our discussion including a list of Belmont Center – Outstanding issues, a copy of which will become a part of the record. Also, included was a memorandum from the Planning Board to TAC with ideas and recommendations which were discussed at their meeting of January 9, 2011. A copy of this memo will become a part of the record as well.

### **Parking Configuration at Locatelli Property:**

GC said that business would like more parking. Angle parking not safe movement and would conflict with bike lane. Planning Board feels that angle parking in combination with parallel parking would be disjointed and disconnected. Dana M feels we should try to increase parking. GC hopes that added parking could be made on Concord Ave. Don M feels that bicyclists should

walk their bikes through the Center on the wider sidewalks. GC said that the bicycle activists want bike lanes. Sgt. Shea feels that the travel lane on Leonard St. should be narrowed. CC said that the right of way should be wide enough for both bike lane and motor vehicles. GC thinks that more timed parking may be needed. (15-30 min) Don M feels that the number of new restaurants requires more parking. GC said that the parking management should be left to the Parking Study group when formed. Don M questioned the need for a paid consultant. GC stated that in past history the Town has always required/preferred professional consultants and studies rather than in house planning. Sgt. Shea said that the Police Chief and BPD are not in favor of angle parking.

### **Town Green near Belmont Savings Bank:**

Sami B spoke to the Planning Board's concept for Town Green and access to Belmont Savings Bank garage. The Planning Board wishes to maximize green space. Don M is concerned about loss of parking spaces by the BSB. TO asked about HP parking and access to BSB. GC spoke of tradeoff for desire to have a more viable Town Green. SB said having more green space is more attractive and pedestrian friendly as well as community gathering place. LN would like to see more parking on Concord Ave. GC said that with additional parking on Concord Ave there would be a net loss of 3 spaces. Don M feels that the current parking is an asset to BSB. BSB indicates that they are in favor of additional green space. PC asked about the lineup of Concord Ave. /Channing Rd. /Leonard St. LPM asked about retaining wall and grade of proposed Town Green. GC replied that it needs to be somewhat level for accessibility. LN feels that more people will use the Town Green if it is welcoming. She also feels the need of widening Concord Ave. for more parking. What will it cost? MB thought the design didn't look much different in scale. SB asked about phasing in the project. GC said nail down concept then phase it in. TO asked about the use of CPA funds. GC replied that there are restrictions on use of CPA funds. Dana M favors green space – a good opportunity. MS agrees. Don M feels the need to keep the parking spaces. LPM agrees with the proposal to improve the Town Green. PC agrees with the concept. Sgt. Shea wonders about the impact on traffic funneling toward the bridge and Concord Ave. TO favors widening Concord Ave. to gain some of the lost parking by the BSB. A brief discussion on the relocation of the T bus stop and taxi stand followed. A majority of TAC members like the idea of expanding the Town Green and widening Concord Ave. to create added parking spaces. TAC feels a need to look at the proposed 3 space parking and access to the BSB garage to make safe and accessible.

### **Clafin Street at Channing Road:**

Don M asked about who would be responsible for maintaining added green space. GC responded that abutters are usually asked and most are willing to do it. If they are not, then concrete it. SB, Planning Board favors safer pedestrian crossing. The PB has concerns about legal

parking on curves. GC said that we have to acknowledge both motor vehicle traffic and pedestrian traffic. A brief discussion on urban vs. town, where Belmont is in the mix. Cambridge/Somerville has denser population, more foot accessible centers. Belmont is more of a town, but with certain urban characteristics. A cut through to the Claflin St. lot was also discussed. What would it take to convince the Locatelli property owners to provide one? GC said "Quid Pro Quo". Don M asked about parking for restaurants. SB said that waivers had been given to allow them to open. SB also mentioned that we should be charging more for premium spaces than in the back. A brief discussion on parking, Leonard St. vs. Claflin St. lot followed. TO pointed out the retail possibilities of a cut through such as kiosks. Don M wondered about the radius for turning trucks into the narrowed down Claflin St. and Channing Rd. intersection. For now the issue of Claflin St. and Channing Rd. will be tabled so that GC can work out a compromise design.

#### **Concord Avenue at Leonard Street:**

Don M feels that current configuration meters traffic flow. GC pointed out that there are only 3 places in town to cross the railroad tracks. GC likes the channelization of approach the new design gives. Also, the design provides safer pedestrian crosswalks in this area. Sgt Shea agreed. SB asked about plows. GC said that signage and yield to pedestrian signs would guide the plow operators. Also the BSC concepts allow for turning trucks. GC discussed priorities of DPW with respect to crosswalks and snow removal. He stated that the Architectural Access Board had e-mailed all cities and towns asking them to plow all HP crosswalks and ramps. MB asked about roundabouts. GC responded that BSC Group and TAC had looked into the possibilities and had decided to rule them out.

#### **General Discussion:**

SB said the PB suggests timed loading zones in the center. (8AM to 11AM) TO suggests discussing the possibilities and concerns with the BCBA. Don M is concerned about double parking of trucks and the crossing over the double yellow line on Leonard St. If implemented we could gain 2 more parking spots. (3 if fire hydrant is moved) LN asked about new time frame. GC suggested we meet on March 10. BSC Group could have a final concept for March 10. GC will be meeting with BCBA. A discussion with BSB should be held about concept of green space and loss of parking on the Leonard St. extension. Don M brought up some concerns about the Channing Rd. /Cross St. intersection. LN, Chair, said that TAC is not inclined to redo unless there is a serious issue.

#### **Old Business:**

School Traffic Problems – Winn Brook and Butler

Lt. Chris Donahue, BPD; spoke about Community Policing and particularly traffic congestion around schools. Right now there major issues at both the Winn Brook and Butler schools. Public hearings will be held, abutters notified and these should be scheduled for March 10. Both school Principals will be invited. Previously, a proposed plan for Sherman Street was in place for the Winn Brook School, but was turned down due to opposition from a few of the neighbors. Joe White, TMM Precinct 4 spoke about safety and tension issues as well as snow removal. Sgt. Shea spoke about traffic restrictions in place around the High School, Middle School and the Burbank School. TO asked about snow removal on Dante Ave. Ron Sacca said that the crosswalks on White Street and Walnut Street are not clear. He stated that the Town is not clearing crosswalks. He is also concerned about placement of crosswalks.

RS did ask about double parking of trucks forcing cars over double yellow lines. He also questioned the use of BSC Consulting. GC replied that he had addressed that question earlier, before Ron arrived.

**New Business:**

TO said that she talk about LexPress in April.

Chris Arthur email.

1. This intersection is part of the Trapelo Road Project.
2. Slade and Upland Intersection – Can we meet warrants to install 4 Way Stop? GC to look into.
3. Outside of scope of TAC
4. Money issues
5. Sgt Shea
6. By law for Commercial – No By law for residential
7. Glenn Clancy – 1<sup>st</sup> part Sgt Shea – 2<sup>nd</sup> part

Elections: Linda Nickens, Chair, called for election of officers for TAC.

Tommasina Olson, moved and Dana Miller, seconded the nomination of Linda Nickens to be Chair of TAC

Linda Nickens, moved and Dana Miller, seconded the nomination of Laurence Macdonald to be Vice Chair of TAC

Linda Nickens, moved and Laurence Macdonald, seconded the nomination of Dana Miller to be Clerk of TAC

All were unanimously VOTED to their respective positions by the members of TAC present.

Tommasina Olson moved and Dana Miller seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurence P. Macdonald, Clerk

## Clancy, Glenn

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**From:** Clancy, Glenn  
**Sent:** Monday, February 07, 2011 1:01 PM  
**To:** Clancy, Glenn; larrypmacdonald@yahoo.com; sinasina30@yahoo.com; lcnickens@verizon.net; pfcirro@gmail.com; kshea@belmontpd.org; Dana Miller; mattsull74@yahoo.com; michael.s.bair@gmail.com  
**Cc:** Daniels, Pauline; Younger, Thomas; Castanino, Peter; McLaughlin, Richard; 'Karl Haglund'; Russakow, Stefan  
**Subject:** TAC - February Meeting Notice  
**Attachments:** TAC Agenda 02-10-11.pdf  
Folks:

Please note the meeting location is [Town Hall Conference Room 2 \(located in the basement\)](#).

There have been some new developments regarding School parking issues. Kevin can get us up to speed.

Thanks,  
Glenn

### Here is the Chris Arthur e-mail:

From: Chris Arthur <cmarthur1994@yahoo.com>  
Subject: Fw: traffic advisory committee  
To: sinasina30@yahoo.com  
Date: Wednesday, January 19, 2011, 11:14 AM

Tomi, Thanks for looking at these. These are cumulative from a few years.

I was wondering about a few traffic issues and thought you might be able to point me to an answer.

1. The light on Lexington st near the Dunkin Donuts has a 15 second delay. Why? I am often at that light at a late hour, and still, I am waiting 15 seconds for really no reason- could it be put on a blinking red/ yellow after 9 pm when traffic is really slow? Could we get rid of the 15 second delay at all times.
2. The intersection of Slade and Upland is downright dangerous, and yet we have our children crossing that intersection every morning to get to school. There is a sign that says it is dangerous- it seems dangerous because of the setbacks at the corners and the curve of Slade and many cars speed around that curve. What can be done about that intersection? I believe it needs a 4 way stop.
3. My daughter has taken an eco vow this year and plans to walk to and from school as much as possible, no matter the weather. Is there any way that the traffic advisory committee could promote a walk to school day each week, or bike to school weeks in the spring? Could you find the safest routes to school for a majority of people and come up with a parent lookout plan? Parents wait for their kids outside the schools with the car turned on so the AC or heat can run on high. This is simply disgusting on so many levels.
4. I walk all the time, and have found that there is a lack of accessible routes throughout Belmont if you had a stroller or are wheel chair bound. I would be glad to take photos along my walks of the areas that need to provide an accessible curb cut

along a route that already seems partially accessible. Would this be helpful documentation?

5. The crossing guard at the intersection of Beech and White never helps my daughter across the street since she is no longer in Butler. I think she should help any pedestrians who are at that corner when she is working as a crossing guard. She mostly sits in her car, and even when we were at Butler, we would have to wait for her to get out of her car and help us across the street. I wonder that a 4 way stop needs an attendant either there or on the other Beech crossing. The one at White was once not a 4 way stop, so it really needed a crossing guard. Do I bring this up with her personally. What can be done about this? The other crossing guards seem to work with all pedestrians, are out of their cars and actively engaged in helping people cross traffic.

6. In the winter, the snow along Trapelo Road between White St and Sycamore, and in other places along very public routes never seems to get shovelled. It is absolutely dangerous to walk on the street in that area. Do the property owners know that it is their requirement? What can be done about it?

7. On Lexington St the pedestrian crossing at Beech is downhill and from Beech St, making the sight lines less than adequate and sometimes dangerous. Why isn't the crossing right at Beech St? Also along Lexington, there is no way to cross close to Belmont St, either across Lexington or across Belmont St. and I see many almost accidents by pedestrians and young bicyclists. Also, cars rarely stop for pedestrians at the crossing at the Waldorf School. Is there a way we can have a temporary sign posted to remind people to stop for pedestrians? My daughter often bikes to school, and she comes home with many tales of derelict driving, even at lights, like the one at Wheelworks, people talking on cellphones, wizzing by her while the light is fully red. How can we make our streets, especially those with heavy commuter traffic, safe for our children?

Thanks. Let me know who to talk to if you can't answer the questions. I figured you are tapped in and would know who to turn to. THX. Chris



# Traffic Advisory Committee

## TOWN OF BELMONT

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Linda Nickens, Chair  
Laurence Macdonald, Clerk

Committee Members  
Michael Bair  
Peter Curro  
Dana Miller  
Donald Mercier  
Tommasina Olson  
Matt Sullivan

**Date:** February 7, 2011  
**To:** Members – Traffic Advisory Committee  
**From:** Linda Nickens, Chair  
**Subject:** Agenda for Meeting on **Thursday, February 10, 2011 at 7:00 PM** in the **Town Hall Conference Room 2**. If you cannot attend the meeting, please contact Linda via e-mail.

### Agenda

**7:00** Call to Order  
**7:00 – 7:05** Minutes  
**7:05 – 8:30** Belmont Center Discussion  
**8:30 – 8:40** New Business

- Chris Arthur E-mail

**8:40 – 8:45** Old Business

- School Traffic Problems – Winn Brook and Butler

**8:45** Adjourn

**Cc:** Board of Selectmen  
Tom Younger, Town Administrator  
Glenn R. Clancy, Town Engineer  
Sgt Kevin Shea, Belmont Police Department  
Richard McLaughlin, Belmont Police Chief  
Peter Castanino, Director, Department of Public Works  
Karl Haglund, Planning Board