

***Traffic Advisory Committee minutes for Thursday, February 3, 2005.***

In attendance: M.J. Frisoli, P. Curro, L. Nickens, A. Masciari, T. Riley, T. Turner, T. Olsen

Also attending: G. Clancy, S. Clippinger, Ken Hamilton, Jeff Maxtutis, Juan Avendano; ~10 residents.

7:02 p.m. Meeting called to order

Administrative Matters: Minutes from January 6, 2005 were reviewed. After amendment, TR moved that the minutes be accepted as amended. AM seconded: TAC voted unanimously to accept.

Trapelo Road was the topic of an administrative meeting to develop a “plan of action” to move forward on the project. The plan consists of hiring a consultant to help get the project onto the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). GC Stated that the BoS wants to endorse the TAC’s plan so that there will a consensus for moving forward. The town will issue a Request for Proposals document to solicit the best candidate for the role of Consultant. While BSC Group may win the bid, but the OCD would like to entertain other possibilities. A document from OCD was provided to TAC members explaining how projects are accepted to the TIP.

An additional TAC meeting was scheduled for Thursday February 17, 2005. However, later in the meeting, it was decided that this added meeting would be unnecessary and accordingly was cancelled.

The Pleasant St. project bids have been unsealed, and two bids met the criteria, and Roads Corp. appears to have won the bid. Final word will come from the Mass Highway in the near future.

(7:26) Bright/Blanchard/Grove design: At the January meeting, the TAC asked for additional information on several issues related to the BBG design.

- Fire department: MF consulted the Belmont Fire Department Assistant Chief, who felt that his department had no reservations on any of the three designs.
- Driveways: Mr. Maxtutis presented an analysis of the impact of the various designs on driveway access/egress. Individual driveways of properties abutting the intersection. Some discussion ensued regarding use of STOP signs to regulate the intersection. The expert opinion was that STOP signs would degrade vehicle flow and increase cue length.
- Vehicle Speeds: Concerns that a single lane entering the intersection would increase cues compared to the current configuration. However, adding an additional lane would necessarily increase speed through the intersection. Ms. Clippinger recommends against a multi-lane configuration to keep speed lower and to maintain short pedestrian crossing distances.

MF summarized the discussion on the additional information by stating that all the factors that had been asked for had been covered. MF asks the committee for a vote on which Option to recommend. Harold Washburn (5 Blanchard Rd.) asks the Traffic engineer about the models on traffic flow. He was informed that the different plans had been modeled, and the model predicts better management with the roundabout (Option C). Ben Wilson (265 Grove St.) expressed his concern that pedestrian safety be the primary consideration. Mr. Avendano reports that Cambridge experience is that traffic calming greatly enhances drivers courtesy to pedestrians. Diane Washburn (5 Blanchard Rd.) asked for clarification from Sgt. Hamilton on the STOP sign violation at town line.

AM has a report of her research into roundabout functioning. In brief, the roundabout has a large, significant positive impact on traffic safety.

(8:41) TO made a motion that the TAC adopt Option C for further work at the BBG intersection. TR seconded. TAC voted 6-0 in favor of the motion.

MF asked GC about the level of detail (e.g., 25% design) will be necessary. Further design work will be needed before we can move forward. Concerns still center around driveway access/egress. MF states that this is a really nice neighborhood, and that she doesn't want to decrease property values.

MF asked what is next on the agenda for this work. JM suggested that an accurate site survey will be needed (weather permitting) and some further work on drainage (catch basin placement). These may be available by the April meeting, for construction during summer 2005.

PC asked about nighttime illumination. GC stated that there is no clear standard as to lighting, but this will be considered later in the design process.

Po-Shang Chen ((17 Frost Rd.) expressed concern about safety of other user modalities (bicycles, strollers, wheelchairs). Ms. Clippinger states that in design, all these modalities were taken into consideration.

Ben Wilson suggests that the crosswalk be a textured surface. Also, asked whether Cambridge is planning to build a sidewalk on Blanchard Rd. to connect Belmont to Concord Ave. (not likely anytime soon). He also suggested that adjacent residents could share driveways to create a circular drive.

Henry Ogilby (306 Washington) opposes shifting the rotary, and encourages the town to consider a safer driveway configuration.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:12 p.m.