TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD

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MEETING MINUTES
October 10, 2014

Present: Michael Battista, Chair; Elisabeth Allison, Vice Chair; Charles Clark; Joseph DeStefano; Karl Haglund, Barbara Fiacco (Associate Member), Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development

9:35 a.m. Meeting called to order

9:35 a.m. Defining Neighborhoods for GR Cases

Ms. Allison distributed a handout that included several options to define a neighborhood. A discussion ensued regarding these definitions and their applicability to the GR cases. Mr. Wheeler distributed maps of each of the properties currently before the Board.

318 Trapelo Road

The Board discussed what streets to include in this neighborhood and whether or not to include Trapelo Road since this is a commercial area. All agreed that 318 is part of Trapelo Road but that this proposed residential project should not be compared to existing commercial buildings. Mr. Clark suggested that the neighborhood should go beyond the 300' public hearing notification requirements. Mr. DeStefano stated that this is clearly a unique lot and that the commercial sense of Trapelo Road has to be accounted for somehow. Ms. Allison recommended gathering data from Walnut and Hull Streets, Trapelo Road between Flett Road and Beech Street and Wilson Avenue. All agreed with this neighborhood.

Discussion ensued about how to use the data. Mr. Battista stated that the data will be skewed since 318 is so big relative to lots in the surrounding area. Mr. DeStefano added that this is a unique lot that would ideally be developed as two single-family homes. All agreed that this data was important so that the developer can use this information to help him design a project that reflects that neighborhood. Mr. DeStefano questioned when the Board will evaluate the project based on aesthetics since data does not correlate into aesthetics. Mr. Battista stated that the Board will look at all characteristics as required by the Zoning By-Law. Mr. DeStefano stated that the new Zoning By-Law is a vast improvement over what was previously in place. He added that this By-law establishes a review process to make sure that new development enhances a neighborhood. Mr. Battista agreed and added that the By-Law encourages more thoughtful development.

13 Birch Street

Ms. Fiacco stated that this neighborhood is an island and that the 300' circle works for the neighborhood. All agreed.

22 Waverley Street

Mr. Haglund stated that the 300' circle works for the neighborhood but not to include White and Sycamore Streets. Mr. Clark added that the former Waverley Square church site raises

interesting questions since those lots are so much bigger than the rest of the area. All agreed with the neighborhood.

36 Merrill Avenue

Mr. Haglund stated that the neighborhood seems to go beyond the 300' circle. Ms. Allison suggested including Colby Street, Hamilton Road, part of Concord Avenue, and Baker and Blanchard Streets. All agreed with this neighborhood.

10:00 a.m. Potential Projects for Coming Year

The Board discussed potential project for the coming year: tweak the Cushing Square Overlay District, hold revising the Inclusionary By-Law until later, and review issues regarding retaining walls and HVAC equipment. The Board requested examples of retaining walls. The Board discussed additional projects that it wanted to look at including signs on awning and covered porches.

10:15 a.m. Election of Officers

MOTION made by Ms. Allison for Mr. Battista to be Chair of the Planning Board. Seconded by Mr. DeStefano. Motion passed.

MOTION made by Mr. Clark for Ms. Allison to be Vice Chair of the Planning Board. Seconded by Mr. DeStefano. Motion passed.

Board appointments to Committees included:

- Community Preservation Committee – Mr. Clark
- Traffic Advisory Committee – Mr. Haglund
- Economic Development Advisory Committee – Ms. Allison
- Belmont Housing Trust – Mr. Clark
- Capital Budget Committee – Mr. Battista

Separately from these appointments, Mr. DeStefano mentioned that he was appointed by the Town Meeting Moderator to the Warrant Committee.

Adjourn: 10:25 a.m.