

# Town of Belmont, MA

## Traffic Advisory Committee (T.A.C.)

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Minutes of Meeting March 10, 2011

**Members present:** Michael Bair, Peter Curro, Laurence Macdonald (Vice Chair), Don Mercier, Dana Miller (Clerk), Linda Nickens (Chair), Tommasina Olson, and Matt Sullivan.

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

**Also present:** Lt. Chris Donahue BPD and residents: Suzanne Bell, David Flewelling, Sheila Flewelling, Sandy Kendall, Michael Kenneally, Laurie Lentini, Tom Neel, Theresa O'Connor, Lisa Oteri, Dianna Peterson, Michel Poylice, Rosairo Sacco, Camille Westover, Emily Westover, Sarah Wheaton, and Joe White.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm by Linda Nickens, Chair.

**Minutes:** Dana Miller moved and Matt Sullivan seconded the motion to approve the February 10, 2011. The Committee voted to accept the minutes as presented.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the T.A.C. will be held at 7pm on Thursday, April 14, 2011

### **Belmont Center Traffic:**

Proposed changes included:

- Slight curb extensions at the intersection of Clafflin and Channing combined with an island in the middle of the intersection to shorten the road area to be traversed by pedestrians;
- Possible enlargement and development of the green space in front of the bank to allow for an environment that would be more attractive to shoppers; while some are concerned that Belmont Center's retail businesses would be hurt by the loss of parking spaces that could be absorbed into this green space, the Planning Committee supports the development of a larger green area and many Belmont residents voiced support for the plan;
- Narrowing of the east-bound lane of traffic on Leonard Street from the intersection of Moore Street to the railroad bridge; The Belmont Public Works department is going to test the effects of the proposed road narrowing by placing barrels in such a way as to simulate the road narrowing;
- Possible Zip Car location in Belmont Center;

- No Left Turn from Pleasant Street onto Moore Street, to prevent traffic from jumping the cue at the intersection of Pleasant and Concord;
- Conversion of the current no parking zone in front of the fish store into a 15-minute parking area.

**Lexington and Sycamore Streets:** In response to a written inquiry from a concerned resident, Glenn and Kevin will conduct a traffic study. Glenn will communicate with the resident and Kevin will report back to the committee with study results.

**Royal Road and Clark Street:** Don suggested that the stop sign be removed. Lt. Donahue explained that, without the stop sign, traffic would be unsafe and that the residents have made the importance of the stop sign very clear.

**Thomas and Waverly:** Tommasina referenced a resident that has asked that the traffic light at the intersection be removed. The committee will await a written communication from the resident.

**Butler School Traffic:**

The Butler School population has increased. The previous principal was outside every morning to greet arriving students and facilitate the efficient and safe arrival of students being discharged from cars. The new principal greets students too. A resident suggested that volunteers could be organized to help facilitate the student arrivals in a safe and efficient manner.

Another resident explained that many students live on the other side of Trapello Road from the school and there is no safe crossing of this major road. There is no crossing guard. In addition, there is confusion with the proximity of the Hawthorne cross walk to the bus stop.

According to several residents, traffic backs up on White and Sycamore streets. Maple Street/Dante Terrace becomes impassible with traffic backups. When the road is not backed up, drivers speed on Maple Terrace. When it snows, cars lean into the sidewalk and children are forced to walk in the street to get to school. When it snows, consistent plowing and clearing of sidewalks would help. One resident observed that, as a possible remedy, a flashing sign in front of the Butler School might be helpful--such a sign seems helpful in front of the Watertown middle school. Linda explained that Belmont was unable to secure funding for such a sign.

Glenn suggested that a one-way traffic restriction on Dante and Maple might alleviate some traffic problems.

Another resident observed that traffic tends to funnel from Lexington, White and Beech onto Sycamore Street. Some of this might be alleviated if school drop off were allowed on White, Sycamore and Maple Streets. Tommasina observed that such decisions are under the purview of the School Department.

While the town is approximately two years away from fixing problems on Sycamore Street, some short-term fixes that were suggested include painting cross walks for pedestrians, filling potholes near the school, and traffic enforcement. Glenn will look into the possibility of temporary curbing.

Residents are also concerned about parking for the traffic control officer. Currently, the officer parks illegally.

Another problem on Sycamore Street is the line of commuter parking across from the school. There is no coherent, complete sidewalk on Sycamore Street; cars can pull up to the fence where kids walk on a slope. Emily Westover's son was hit by a car door opening at the school and required stitches.

According to multiple residents, White Street parking is occupied by commuters. Parents double park to discharge their children. Neighborhood parking is further complicated by taxicabs that park on the street instead of in their lot. Neighborhood residents also sometimes park in the street, when they could use their own driveways. This leads to unnecessary congestion.

A resident recommended the assignment of resident parking stickers to eliminate commuter parking. Another resident suggested that, as an alternative, parking might be prohibited prior to a certain hour. Glenn observed that both of these remedies require parking enforcement that Belmont cannot afford.

Residents suggested that, as the school plans to rebuild its playground, the administration might consider allocating some space to parking needs of the staff and parents. A neighborhood resident asked if lawn space of Sycamore Street might be used for parking. Linda observed that in other communities, including Needham, school neighbors partner with the school to allow school staff parking while the neighbor residents are out during the day.

St. Shea observed that one-way street signage has been used successfully at the Cheney and Burbank schools to relieve traffic problems. The Police Department is examining such options for use in the areas around the Winn Brook and Butler schools.

### **Winn Brook School Traffic**

Looking to alleviate traffic problems in the neighborhood of the Winbrook School and seeking to implement traffic patterns consistently around all Belmont schools, Officer Donahue suggested that Sherman Street be restricted to one-way traffic from Waterhouse to Broad during the hours of 8-9am and 2-3pm. Linda commented that, while the T.A.C. supports this proposal, neighbors have objected in the past. One neighborhood resident voiced his support for the proposal. Another resident expressed his frustration with the School Department's apparent failure to address the traffic problem caused by school activities. This resident asked why the School Department didn't even send a representative to this meeting. Linda explained that in the past the T.A.C. had addressed letters to the School Department and that these have gone unanswered. Officer Donahue concluded that the town cannot wait any longer for the School

Department to become involved. A resident asked that the Town Selectman be informed of the School Department's uncooperative conduct. Glenn volunteered that he will develop traffic proposals for both the Butler and the Winbrook schools and that these will be discussed at the next T.A.C. meeting.

Dana motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Matt seconded this motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:20pm

Respectfully submitted, Dana Miller, Clerk

## Clancy, Glenn

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**From:** sofia giogas [sgiogas@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 17, 2011 11:50 AM  
**To:** Clancy, Glenn  
**Cc:** kshea@belmontpd.org; Younger, Thomas; Selectmens Mailbox  
**Subject:** Re: Lexington st traffic accidents - too numerous to count

Mr. Clancy -

Thank you for your response and I appreciate this matter being looked at in detail by the town. I look forward to having some resolutions to the matter. I cannot tell you the number of near fatal incidents I have witnessed at the intersection and I believe a fair number of them are not reported.

Concerned Lexington st resident,  
Sofia Stefanis

On Wed, Feb 16, 2011 at 10:45 AM, Clancy, Glenn <[gclancy@belmont-ma.gov](mailto:gclancy@belmont-ma.gov)> wrote:

Dear Ms. Stefanis:

The Town of Belmont does not install speed bumps in the public right-of-way. There is case law that suggests the Town could be liable for accidents that occur as a result of the presence of speed bumps. I will speak to the traffic sergeant in the police department about this intersection and Lexington Street itself to see if there is anything that can be done by way of enforcement or public education.

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention.

Sincerely,

Glenn R. Clancy, P.E.

Director, Community development

Town Engineer

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**From:** sofia giogas [mailto:[sgiogas@gmail.com](mailto:sgiogas@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 15, 2011 12:38 PM  
**To:** Clancy, Glenn  
**Subject:** Lexington st traffic accidents - too numerous to count

I am a resident of Belmont and specifically I live on the corner of Lexington and Sycamore st. Since I have been living there I have seen numerous accidents at that intersection and specifically drivers simply driving carelessly on Lexington st. I would like to request the town to have permanent speed bumps put on Lexington st for safety reasons.

Kind Regards,  
Sofia Stefanis  
[sgiogas@gmail.com](mailto:sgiogas@gmail.com)



# Traffic Advisory Committee

## TOWN OF BELMONT

19 Moore Street  
Homer Municipal Building  
Belmont, Massachusetts 02478-0900  
Telephone: (617) 993-2650 Fax: (617) 993-2651

Linda Nickens, Chair  
Laurence Macdonald, Clerk

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

**Date:** March 4, 2011  
**To:** Members – Traffic Advisory Committee  
**From:** Linda Nickens, Chair  
**Subject:** Agenda for Meeting on **Thursday, March 10, 2011 at 7:00 PM** in the **Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room**. 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 – 8:00** Belmont Center Discussion  
**8:00 – 8:45** Butler School Traffic Discussion  
**8:45 – 9:30** Winn Brook School Traffic Discussion  
**9:30 – 9:35** New Business

- Lexington Street / Sycamore Street (resident request)

**9:35 – 9:45** Old Business  
**9:45** 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