

Town of Belmont, MA

Traffic Advisory Committee (T.A.C)

Minutes of Meeting May 12, 2011

Members present: Linda Nickens, Laurence Macdonald, Don Mercier, Tommasina Olson, and Matt Sullivan.

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

Also present, Residents: Andrew McLean, David Flewelling, Sheila Flewelling, Pratap Malik, Suzanne J. Bere, Ann Kulenkamplammers, Tom Neel, and Dianna Peterson.

Absent: Michael Bair, Peter Curro, and Dana Miller.

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM by Linda Nickens, Chair.

Minutes: Tommasina Olson moved, and Matt Sullivan seconded a motion to approve the April 14, 2011 minutes. The Committee VOTED: To accept the minutes as presented.

Butler School Traffic Proposal Discussion:

Glenn Clancy addressed Traffic Issues, Parking Problems, Employee-Commuter parking, Butler School Staff and Teacher parking and enforcement of existing parking regulations. He also presented a proposed Butler School Plan and a Neighborhood Parking Plan which included a text summary and a map with the proposed changes of parking regulations in the surrounding neighborhood.

The Butler School proposal addresses issues on:

White Street

Sycamore Street

Maple Terrace / Dante Avenue

The Neighborhood Parking Plan addresses issues on;

Sycamore Street – Trapelo Road to White Street

Sycamore Street – White Street to Lexington Street

White Street – Sycamore Street to Trapelo Road

A copy of the text and map/diagram will become a part of the record.

Sgt Shea pointed out that the DPW takes down the school restriction signs when the schools close for the summer.

Glenn Clancy would like a trial during the month of June in order to evaluate and tweak.

Tommasina Olson likes the idea of 1 way traffic on Dante Ave / Maple Terr. She has reservations about the White St plan – drop and go – school buses.

Sheila Flewelling, a resident, made some observations about current use and parking of school bus vans and regular school buses trying to use the allocated. The vans prevent the larger buses from pulling into the school bus parking area. The first large bus is able to pull in. By the time the second large bus arrives the vans are already parked there. The special needs students need assistance in getting from the vans into the Butler school.

Suzanne Bere, a resident, has concerns about the number of cars parked at a nearby residence for developmentally challenged people. 7 cars seem to be the number at this location. GC said that the restricted parking signs could be moved.

Pratap Malik, a resident, has concerns about Sycamore St parking. GC said that the DPW would stripe out the lanes for the school vans. Sgt Shea stated that is enough room for emergency vehicles to get through.

Sheila Flewelling stated her support of the plan and Glenn Clancy's efforts in creating the proposed plan. GC said that Sheila Flewelling has been a great resource in the process.

Suzanne Bere asked about a wintertime parking prohibition on White St. She suggests that Butler staff and teachers double park or stack in the Butler School lot.

TO spoke about a proposal that the Butler School has about doing the playground and parking lot over – a concept plan provides for additional parking.

Don Mercier suggested that a stacking procedure be included in the new plan.

GC said that TAC suggests better management of parking.

David Flewelling has concerns about the 3 houses on the north side of Sycamore St between Trapelo Rd and White St being able to turn right from their homes to get to White St, avoiding Trapelo Rd, despite the "Do Not Enter" restriction posted on Trapelo Rd.

Larry Macdonald suggested a second "Do Not Enter" sign be placed on the opposite side as was done on Washington St and on Chester Rd for the Chenery Middle School.

Don M suggested a one way sign and no left turn be placed by those houses.

Glenn Clancy then spoke about the parking problems in and around Waverley Square. Employees of both Wheelworks and the taxi company dominate the parking in the residential areas. Two years ago some parking on Trapelo Rd and Thayer Rd were made no marking before 8:30AM spaces to keep commuters out and provide parking for employees.

Glenn Clancy then spoke about the pros and cons of Permit Parking. Sycamore St Concerns are that you have school staff, local employees, business and commuters parking are all competing with residential needs for parking. The BOS want problems resolved.

Sgt Shea also expressed concerns about permit parking. The Belmont Police Department and Police Chief McLaughlin are opposed to permit parking.

Sheila Flewelling expressed concerns about enforcement policies by BPD and Parking Control officers in the area. She and other neighbors are asking for the Town's assistance in addressing these issues and concerns.

Don M pointed out the high density of the neighborhood. Permit parking should analyzed - resident permits and visitor permits – staff and teacher permits as well.

There followed a general discussion on permit parking. TO suggested that criteria needs to be established for permit parking.

Sheila Flewelling suggested a 2 hour posting on Sycamore St – a trial period with a dash or other permit for residents and Butler School staff. GC talked about how upper Concord Avenue residents, the Day School, the Hill Club worked out a system of color coded sheets of paper were used to identify vehicles so that the detail police officers would know who had access to the area during the reconstruction.

Sheila Flewelling would like a residential character for the neighborhood on nights and weekends and after 5PM on weekdays. Do not negatively affect parents and teachers.

The proposal to make White St from Sycamore St to Trapelo Rd 1 hour parking rather than unrestricted was favored. It was felt that mostly Wheelworks and Taxi employees were parking there. The taxi company does have a small lot off Thayer Street.

David Flewelling asked about the use of bank parking lots after hours.

Tommasina Olson moved to accept the Butler School Plan as proposed by Glenn Clancy - with 1 hour restricted parking on Sycamore Street between Lexington Street and Trapelo Road – with exemption for teachers, residents and their visitors. Matt Sullivan seconded.

It was **VOTED** unanimously to accept the proposal as presented.

Winn Brook School Discussion:

A brief discussion on traffic flow was held. Andrew McLean, a Winn Brook resident, has offered to help in the process by getting neighbors and Winn Brook School administration on board. No action taken at this time, tabled for further study.

Glenn Clancy announced that a meeting with the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for June 6, 2011 to discuss the Belmont Center Improvement Proposal.

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for June 14, 2011

Matt Sullivan moved and Tommasina Olson seconded a motion to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurence P. Macdonald, Clerk Pro-Tem



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MEMO

MEMO TO: Board of Selectmen
Thomas G. Younger, Town Administrator

FROM: Glenn R. Clancy, P.E.

SUBJECT: Daniel Butler School Traffic and Parking Plan

DATE: May 26, 2011

Background

Traffic during drop-off and pick-up hours at the Daniel Butler Elementary School has been a problem for years. With no sign of the problem improving Lt. Chris Donahue came to the Traffic Advisory Committee asking for help with solving the problem.

Three primary areas were identified as problem locations:

Sycamore Street along the school is congested with parents parking and walking students into the school. This segment of road is one way towards Trapelo Road and has residential properties across from the school. These residential properties are impacted by parked cars which restrict an owner's ability to get in and out of their driveway. Also, traffic has a difficult time getting down Sycamore Street because of the number of vehicles parked on the roadway.

White Street has the same congestion problems but there is an added element of concern since many cars trying to get down White Street have trouble getting past vehicles parked near the school. There is inadequate space along the school side of White Street to accommodate the vans, busses and parents during drop-off and pick-up hours.

Maple Terrace and Dante Avenue is congested with parents dropping off and picking up. This makes this two-way road almost impossible to drive down during these times.

Winter conditions make all of the problems much worse.

Traffic Advisory Committee Recommendations

Sycamore Street

Sycamore Street will be designated for van pick up and drop off only. Vans bring students who require escort to and from the building. There are a limited number of vans each day. By making Sycamore Street the exclusive location for van activity, congestion is eliminated since parents will no longer be allowed to

drop off and pick up in this area. This also takes the vans off of White Street helping relive some of the problems there as well.

A white edge line will be painted at the edge of road along the school to help keep the vans on the road and off of the sidewalk. In the future, consideration should be given to installing curbing in this area as a safety measure. New signs will be added to existing No Parking signs along the school side indicating the area is for Van Drop off and Pick up Only from 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM Mon – Fri.

White Street

White Street will be designated for drop off and pick up and roll and go allowing parents to either stay in their vehicles or park and walk to the school. The existing parking lane on White Street along the school side will be designated for drop off and pick up. The turn in area in front of the school will serve as the roll and go location.

Signage will be placed along the parking lane thru #118 White Street restricting parking before 8 AM Monday thru Friday. This will keep these spaces free for parents in the morning. Signage will be erected stating Student Drop off and Pick up Only - 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM Mon – Fri. Between drop off and pick up hours the spaces will be signed for One Hour parking. This addresses a need expressed at the public meeting that there is no convenient place to park when one has business in the school during the day.

Butler School staff will control traffic in front of the building at the turn in by placing orange cones along the area to help guide parents along during roll and go operations. Parents opting for roll and go will bypass the drop off and pick parking lane, turn in, in front of the building, drop off or pick up and pull away.

Maple Terrace / Dante Avenue

Maple Terrace and Dante Avenue will become a temporary One-Way street from 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM Mon – Fri. Traffic will only be allowed to enter from Maple Street and exit onto Beech Street between these hours Limited one way approaches have proven successful at other schools and the hope is making Maple Terrace and Dante Avenue one way during drop off and pick up hours will eliminate the congestion and make the road easier to travel on.

A sign will be added on Beech Street at Dante Avenue stating Do Not Enter 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM Mon – Fri.

Neighborhood Parking Plan

Parking issues near the school were also discussed and a plan to address this issue is also being recommended. Demand for parking spaces around the Butler School comes from teachers and parents during the school day but also comes from commuters, employees of businesses in Waverley Square and the customers patronizing those businesses. The TAC has attempted to balance all of these needs acknowledging that enforcement of any plan will be extremely difficult given the staffing limitations in the police department. The TAC does not usually involve itself with parking matters however the parking problems around the Butler School are closely related to the traffic problem at the school so TAC thought it prudent to comment on the parking problems.

Sycamore Street – Trapelo Road to White Street

Currently parking is not allowed along the school and parking is unregulated along the residential properties across from the school. The TAC recommends keeping the restriction along the school side except for the Van drop off and pick up as detailed above. Across from the school TAC recommends one hour parking with an exemption for teachers and residents.

Sycamore Street –White Street to Lexington Street

This section of Sycamore Street is residential on both sides. Currently parking is not allowed along the south side of the street and parking is unregulated along the north side. The TAC recommends keeping the restriction along the south side. On the north side TAC recommends one hour parking with an exemption for teachers and residents.

White Street – Sycamore Street to Trapelo Road

This section of White Street is predominantly residential on both sides. There is a commercial property on the easterly corner at Trapelo Road. Currently parking is not allowed along the west side of the street and parking is unregulated along the residential properties on the east side. A one hour parking restriction exists along the commercial building at Trapelo Road. The unregulated spaces along the residential properties are currently being used primarily by employees of the taxi cab company located on Thayer Street. The TAC recommends keeping the restriction along the west side. On the east side TAC recommends extending the one hour parking restriction up to Sycamore Street for use by patrons of the Waverley Square businesses. The taxi cab employees can park at the taxi cab company after the cabs have been removed from this lot.

An Additional Alternative for Consideration

Several days after the TAC vote additional information was gathered. It was determined that the taxi cab company could not use their lot for employee parking due to operational constraints. According to the taxi cab company owner transportation vehicles are regularly going to and from the parking lot. Employee vehicles would need to be relocated constantly in order for the scheduling to work. However, the taxi company is eager to cooperate with the town and is willing to direct employees to park where ever the town would like them to park.

Also, I attended a meeting at the police department. Understandably the police have concerns with the burdens of enforcing permit parking exemptions near the Butler School. A similar proposal was implemented on Hull Street several years ago with limited success. Ultimately the program on Hull Street was dropped. There is a concern that lack of staff will put the department at a disadvantage and will prevent them from meeting resident expectations.

In light of the additional information the following is an alternative the board could consider. Please be aware the TAC has not discussed this alternative and therefore it is not part of their recommendation.

Sycamore Street – Trapelo Road to White Street

Keep the restriction along the school side except for Van drop off and pick up as recommended by TAC. Across from the school keep the existing conditions.

Sycamore Street –White Street to Lexington Street

Keep the restriction along the south side. On the north side post a two hour parking restriction with no exemptions. This will prevent people from parking all day.

White Street – Sycamore Street to Trapelo Road

Keep the current conditions in place. Teachers will be encouraged to park along the east side of the road. Some commuters may also find their way here as well.

In addition to parking on Sycamore Street and White Street near Trapelo Road teachers will have the option of parking on Trapelo Road, White Street near Beech Street and in a limited capacity on Maple Terrace.



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, Vice Chair
Dana Miller, Clerk

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

Date: May 6, 2011
To: Members – Traffic Advisory Committee
From: Linda Nickens, Chair
Subject: Agenda for Meeting on **Thursday, May 12, 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 – 7:45 Butler School Traffic Proposal
7:45 – 8:00 Winn Brook School Proposal
8:00 – 8:05 New Business
• No Known Items
8:05 – 8:10 Old Business
• No Known Items
8:10 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