

**TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES
June 13, 2006**

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7:05 p.m. Meeting called to order

Attendance: Karl Haglund, Chair; Andrew McClurg; Jennifer Fallon; Sami Baghdady; Andy Rojas; Jay Szklut, Staff; Jeffrey Wheeler, Staff

The May 30, 2006 minutes were approved.

Correspondence received from a Town Meeting member was tabled to the discussion on the Barn By-Law.

Committee Updates

Capital Budget Committee - Jenny reported that the committee was looking at ways to increase revenues including looking at economic development potentials in the Town.

Belmont Center Planning Group (BCPG) - Sami reviewed the June 8 presentation of Fire Station redevelopment proposals. He also requested on behalf of the Committee to postpone a joint meeting until BCPG finishes their review of the Fire Station proposals and can adequately prepare for a meeting with the Planning Board. The Board agreed.

Harvard Lawn Fire Station Reuse Committee (Lawn) – Andy Rojas noted that the Committee held a public meeting at which approximately 15 - 20 residents attended. There was interest in preserving the structure and concern with any type of multi-family structure.

7:35 CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING: SITE PLAN REVIEW 495 COMMON ST.

Draft conditions of approval were presented to the Board and the applicant. Andy McClurg commented on condition 7 noting that spaces would need to be leased prior to CO for the building and would not be leased pro rata with tenant occupancy.

The applicant then raised concerns over condition 7. Applicant expressed concerns that condition may prevent any action at site until Spring of 2007. Board reworded condition 2b as follows: "If, a published warrant for a Special Fall 2006 Town Meeting containing an article pertaining to the rezoning of Cushing Square is not published by December 8, 2006, this condition is waived."

Moved by McClurg to change wording of condition as proposed.

Seconded by Fallon

Voted unanimously.

The applicant then raised concerns over condition 9, the use of basement space. The Board made it clear that they were not waiving the parking requirement for the proposed building but were allowing the applicant to use off-site parking to meet the requirements subject to the basement used as storage. Should the use change, the new use would need to satisfy then current parking requirements. Board reworded condition 9 as follows: "The proposal includes the use

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of the basement as storage. Should that use change, the change of use would be subject to the then current zoning by-law.”

Moved by McClurg to change wording of condition as proposed.

Seconded by Fallon

Voted unanimously.

Moved by Fallon to approve the site plan for 495 Common Street as presented in revised plans and subject to conditions as amended.

Seconded by Rojas

Voted unanimously.

8:15 p.m. Discussion – Smart Growth Overlay

Members of the Olney St. Neighborhood Association discussed with the Board the future of the Our Lady of Mercy Church and whether or not the Board should propose a smart growth zone for the properties. The Association said that they had several discussions concerning future use of the property and that their priorities were: 1) Nothing changes, 2) a different church, 3) single family, 4) a 40R zone, and 5) a 40B project. There was some discussion on costs and benefits of each option along with the reasonableness/likelihood of each option. Other topics included a possible mixed use development and/or a combination of single family and two family homes. The Association requested that the Board continue to investigate the feasibility of a 40R zone and should such a zone be feasible that the Association be allowed to work with the Board and staff to develop appropriate regulations and guidelines for a 40R zoning district. Staff will report back to the Board on the eligibility of the site for a 40R zone.

9:15 p.m. Barn by-law debriefing

Jeffrey noted that since the article had a favorable recommendation from the Board that it could be brought back before Town Meeting. It did not need to wait two years.

There was a general discussion on whether the resulting vote would have been different if not for the late hour and limited discussion. Several members felt that there needed to be an improved presentation if the by-law was to be brought forward again. Karl suggested that information on other communities and specifically impact on property values should be researched. Sami was concerned that any presentation would not overcome the resistance by the Warrant Committee.

Staff was requested to develop a chart identifying key issues of a barn by-law as they have been identified in other communities.

9:30 p.m. Discussion - Site Plan Review for Cell Towers

The Board discussed the need for site plan review on cell tower applications. Clearly there were certain circumstances where a site plan review was warranted, but just as clearly, there were circumstances where a review was a mere formality. Board members felt that the by-law should be amended to remove planning board review from free standing cell towers. The Board also felt that the site plan review by-law needed to be reviewed and in particular to strengthen the design review aspect. Staff would conduct a review and return to the Board with recommendations.

9:55 p.m. Discussion - Site Plan Review of Municipal Buildings

Board members unanimously agreed that municipal and school building projects should be subject to site plan review by the Planning Board. Karl will develop a presentation for the July meeting to present to the Board of Selectmen to reinforce the current by-law and detail the benefits of planning board review.

Town Planner's Report

Cushing Square Rezoning – Met with approximately 20 residents on June 1. Size of stores and concerns with height raised. General consensus is that 3 stories is height limit. Centralized parking area preferred. Want to see quality shops and improved buildings. Also, smaller good quality restaurants. Chris is scheduling meetings with business and property owners to discuss what are the needs/requirements to attract good stores

Open Space Plan Update – Stew Sanders is moving to Plymouth. Miriam Weil and Carolyn Bishop will be working on the plan. Currently revising Ch. 3 which will be distributed by this weekend.

McLean Update – As ARC begins marketing of its units, Housing Trust sent a letter regarding pricing and marketing of affordable units. Met briefly with ARC. They are downsizing the number of units (482 to ~290) and believe that this also means fewer affordable units. Other major issue is whether the monthly service fee is factored into the affordability rate.

10:30 Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 27, 2006
Town Hall, Conference Room 2
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm

Approved 7/12/06
Voted Unanimously