Town of Belmont, MA
Traffic Advisory Committee (T.A.C.)

Minutes of Meeting August 11, 2011

Members present: Peter Curro, Larry Macdonald (Vice Chair), Dana Miller (Clerk), Linda Nickens (Chair), and Matt Sullivan.

Ex-Officio Members present: Sgt. Kevin Shea, BPD.

Also present: Susan Carey, 124 Orchard Street; Ann Celi, 69 Hillcrest Road; Madeleine Cronin, 111 Orchard Street, Ian Findlay, 93 School Street; Anne Paulsen, 90 School Street; Jason and Stephanie Tournet, 100 Orchard Street; Margaret Waters, 106 Orchard Street.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Linda Nickens.

Orchard Street: Linda explained that the Committee was happy to better understand the concerns of the Orchard Street neighbors and would listen to their comments tonight, but that there would be no voting or recommendations on these issues this evening. Linda clarified that the Committee's charge is to improve pedestrian safety in Belmont while taking into account drivers' needs. She further clarified that the Board of Selectmen is not currently approving funding for traffic calming because the Belmont budget does not allow for this expenditure.

Anne Paulsen asked after the implementation of the approved four-way stop sign at the intersection of Goden and School Streets. Anne also asked after the implementation of signage to indicate the approved street restrictions during school hours. Linda explained that the intention was to have all signage installed after School Street paving was completed and before the new Wellington opened for classes.

Jason Tournet expressed his concern that traffic is too fast on Glendale and Orchard Streets. Margaret Waters told of an incident in which a neighborhood child was almost hit by a vehicle on Goden Street. Anne explained that Belmont had received a Walk Boston grant for walking maps and that pedestrians need to be protected. Multiple residents addressed the critical importance of a raised crosswalk on School Street by the new Wellington. Residents suggested additional raised crosswalks on both Glendale and Orchard Streets. Another resident pointed out that the town of Lexington redirects traffic throughout the entire school day (not only during the morning and afternoon commutes) and suggested that Belmont do the same.

Margaret asked that access to Orchard Street be restricted to residents only. Susan Carey asked for raised crosswalks on both sides of the new Wellington school. Susan explained that parents currently park in the cross walks and don't obey parking or driving guidelines and restrictions.

Larry suggested that, as has been done at other local elementary schools, the PTO and the school administration could collaborate on a package of information on driving and parking and an educational program aimed at parents/caregivers. Linda referenced previous T.A.C. efforts to engage the School Committee in an effort to increase student safety in the areas around the schools. Linda indicated that the T.A.C. would issue another invitation to the School Committee to work together to address these concerns.

Ann Celi and Ian Findlay talked about the get-to-school highways and the walking school bus. They both addressed concerns about student safety. Parts of Goden are dangerous for student pedestrians. Sargent Shea discussed the Safe Routes to School literature and will forward this to the Committee.

Minutes: Larry moved and Matt seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2011 meeting. The Committee voted to accept the minutes as presented.

No New Business. No Old Business.

At 9:10pm, Dana motioned and all seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Dana Miller, Clerk

Need to establish standards for Raised Crosswalks and other related features.

First have to identify what the goal is

- Reduce speed?
- Reduce volume?
- Make crossing safer?

Determine what data is necessary

- Speed study
- Volume count
- Accident history
- Pedestrian volume

Establish evaluation criteria

- Is there a certain percentile speed that is acceptable?
- Is there a minimum volume required?
- Are there certain characteristics in the neighborhood that make these treatments sensible?

Solutions

- Raised crossing
- Raised intersection
- Are speed tables an option?
  - These are essentially elongated speed bumps.
- Do nothing.

Things to consider:

- There is a difference between a raised crosswalk and a speed table.
- Raised crosswalks are primarily for pedestrian safety not speed control.
- No matter where the standard is set everyone will want a treatment
- They cost money to install and maintain
- They can cause delays for emergency vehicles
- These should be treated the same as a one-way street meaning surrounding streets should be part of the process in case traffic decides to seek an alternate route.

Past Improvements – Where and Why

White Street – Raised Intersection

6200 ADT
Crossing point for Butler School
Straight-away
Significant thru traffic movement during school hours

The level of ADT combined with pedestrian activity makes the potential for conflict more likely. Straight-away allows for improved visibility of pedestrians in the intersection. Thru traffic creates conflict with stop and go school traffic.

Bright Road – Raised Intersection

6300 ADT
Crossing point for Chenery School
Straight-away

The level of ADT combined with pedestrian activity makes the potential for conflict more likely. Straight-away allows for improved visibility of pedestrians in the intersection.

Cross Street – Raised Crosswalk

5400 ADT
Crossing point for Winn Brook School
Straight-away
Significant thru traffic movement during school hours

The level of ADT combined with pedestrian activity makes the potential for conflict more likely. Straight-away allows for improved visibility of pedestrians at the crosswalk. Thru traffic creates conflict with stop and go school traffic.

Concord Avenue – Raised Crosswalk

4100 ADT
Crossing point for open space
Straight-away
Poor visibility of Somerset Street and Cemetery.

This was a new crossing point. The level of ADT combined with pedestrian activity makes the potential for conflict more likely. Vehicles traveling on Concord Avenue can be distracted by blind access points from Somerset Street and the cemetery. Straight-away allows for improved visibility of pedestrians at the crosswalk.

Traffic Advisory Committee

TOWN OF BELMONT

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Linda Nickens, Chair
Laurence Macdonald, Vice Chair
Dana Miller, Clerk

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

Date: **August 4, 2011**

To: **Members – Traffic Advisory Committee**

From: **Linda Nickens, Chair**

Subject: Agenda for Meeting on **Thursday, August 11, 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 – 7:30	Orchard Street Traffic Discussion – Resident Request
7:30 – 8:00	Discussion – Developing Guidelines for Implementation of Raised Traffic Elements
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