

**TOWN OF BELMONT  
PLANNING BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES  
September 12, 2006**

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BELMONT, MA.  
SEP 28 3 40 PM '06

**6:45 p.m.** Meeting called to order.

Attendance: Karl Haglund, Chair; Andrew McClurg; Jennifer Fallon; Sami Baghdady; Andrew Rojas; Jay Szklut, Staff; Christine McVay, Consultant

Committee Updates

Belmont Center Planning Group (BCPG) - Mr. Baghdady reported that the Committee would like to meet with the Planning Board at the Board's September 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Harvard Lawn Fire Station Reuse Committee (Lawn) - The Committee met with the Selectmen and addressed concerns that had been raised on preserving the historic structure. Mr. Rojas noted that the RFP clearly rated reuse of existing building higher than tear down. The RFP was approved by the Selectmen.

Transportation Advisory Committee - Andy McClurg noted that the Trapelo-Belmont corridor is not on the TIP but the Committee is working to get it back on. The Committee is also interested in looking at the zoning changes proposed for Cushing Square and how those might impact traffic through the Square. Committee is also finalizing the survey for the 25% design changes.

Capital Budget Committee - Ms. Fallon noted that the Capital Budget Committee is meeting with the Board of Selectmen, the Warrant Committee, and the School Committee to look at possible structural changes in the town government that might have the potential to save money but no real Planning Board concerns.

**7:15 CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING PROPOSED SENIOR CENTER BUILDING**

**Motion by Fallon to continue the hearing to October 24 at 7:15 PM**

**Second by McClurg**

**Approved Unanimously.**

**DISCUSSION - CUSHING SQUARE OVERLAY ZONE**

Chris McVay presented to the Board a draft zoning article incorporating discussions and recommendations of previous Board meetings. The Board was concerned with reference to "village" style development in the purpose and other sections of the draft and agreed to remove that terminology.

The Board then entered into a discussion on whether the two residential properties in the Home-Williston block should be included within the proposed overlay district.

**Motion by Fallon to include the properties in the overlay district.**

**Second by McClurg**

A neighborhood petition to not include the properties was presented to the Board. Discussion ensued on the potential development benefits of including the two properties. Mr. Haglund was

concerned with the impact on the residential character of the neighborhood should the properties be included and subsequently become commercial uses. Ms. Fallon withdrew her motion and the Board agreed to return to this discussion later in the meeting.

The Board was then asked whether existing uses such as Banks would be allowed to continue if the existing building was redeveloped under the overlay zone. Consensus of the Board was that existing uses including banks would be allowed to continue but no new banks would be included under the overlay. This prohibition included an existing bank seeking to move to a new location developed under the overlay.

Mr. Baghdady again raised his concern over projects allowed by right in the LB1 zone applying under the overlay to gain the benefits of reduced parking requirement. Staff would modify language of the by-law to specifically exclude by-right development applying under the overlay. The Board further considered whether office and retail uses should be restricted to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors only. Allowed office use was expanded to the third floor.

Board discussion then focused on allowing a fourth floor by Special permit. A resident noted that neighborhood sentiment was opposed to any four story buildings. Ms. Fallon commented that a fourth floors are only allowed in special situations and then only via special permit. Mr. Haglund noted that while in general he agreed with not having four story structures, that in certain locations they would have little or no detrimental impact. Ms. Fallon further noted that the overlay zone permitted and encouraged stepped back buildings making upper stories more unobtrusive. General consensus was that allowing the potential of a 4<sup>th</sup> floor may provide greater benefits to the square and outweighed a blanket prohibition.

The Board also discussed parking requirement reductions related to distance from parking facility and distance from bus stops. The requirement for bicycle parking was included in the proposed by-law.

At this time, the Board returned to the discussion on the boundary of the overlay motion.

**Motion by Baghdady to remove two residential properties from the overlay zone.**

**Second by Rojas**

**Approved Unanimously**

Jay noted that this zoning amendment would generate lots of discussion and time needed to be allotted for a full public discussion prior to Town Meeting. Therefore, staff would revise the document based on tonight's discussion. The revised document would be sent to Board members who would submit their individual comments back to staff with staff then preparing the final proposed overlay language and to advertise the public hearing. Date of hearing to be October 10, 2006.

#### **DISCUSSION - OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE**

Jay provided the Board documents from the Town of Hull's plan as a guide for potential thoughts around local goals and needs. Due to the lateness of the hour, there was no discussion and Jay requested that members submit their comments on Belmont's Open Space and Recreation goals and needs as soon as possible.

Town Planner's Report

McLean Zone 6 - An application for special permit has been submitted. A public hearing has been scheduled for September 26. A zoning amendment will be advertised in the September 21 Citizen Herald.

Concord Ave Meeting - meeting with residents delayed to October 24.

10:45 Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 26, 2006  
Town Hall, Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room  
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

9/26/06 Approved Unanimous