

**TOWN OF BELMONT  
PLANNING BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**August 31, 2017**

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BELMONT, MA

2017 SEP 20 PM 2: 17

Present: Barbara Fiacco, Vice Chair; Raffi Manjikian; Charles Clark, Karl Haglund

Absent: Elisabeth Allison (Ms. Allison recused herself from the BDS hearing.)

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Senior Planner; Spencer Gober, Staff Planner

**1. Meeting Called to Order at 7:05 PM**

**2. Review and Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Fiacco requested an edit be made to the July 10, 2017 PB meeting minutes.

**MOTION to approve meeting minutes for July 10, 2017 was made by Mr. Haglund and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.**

**MOTION to approve meeting minutes for July 20, 2017 was made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Haglund. Motion passed.**

**MOTION to approve meeting minutes for August 14, 2017 was made by Mr. Manjikian and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion passed.**

**3. Discussion and vote on Board's position on Open Meeting Law Complaint**

Ms. Fiacco noted that there had been a draft response to the Open Meeting Law Complaint and the letter was distributed to the PB for its review. Ms. Fiacco gave a procedural summary and noted that there was an extension until next week to file the response with the Attorney General's Office.

**MOTION to approve Town Counsel's draft response on the open meeting law complaint was made by Mr. Manjikian and seconded by Haglund. Motion passed.**

**4. Continued Public Hearing:**

**a. 55 Day School Lane (Belmont Day School) Design and Site Plan Review for gymnasium building (the "Barn") and site improvements.**

Ms. Fiacco reported Town Counsel's advice on several open issues:

- With this project, the Town is not waiving its rights to exercise its easement rights and, to underscore that point; a condition could be added to note that the driveway will be constructed on land that is subject to an easement.

- The PB does not have any authority to review the project for compliance with the American Disabilities Act.

Kelly Cardoza, Agent, reviewed the changes that were made to the landscape plan as a result of comments received from the Lone Tree Hill Land Management Committee and the Cemetery Commission. Ms. Fiacco noted her agreement with the request to save the Norway maples and to remove the Tree of Heaven. Ms. Cardoza responded that BDS will replace the Tree of Heaven with a Red Oak. No further comments were made regarding the landscape plan.

Conditions for the site plan approval were discussed amongst the PB. Mr. Haglund noted that he would like to have asked the Applicant for an alternative analysis of the emergency access road rather than a road that is used all day and lit at night. He noted that it would be useful to look at the overall BDS campus to come up with an alternative. Mr. Manjikian stated that this would be a substantive change to ask for at this point. Mr. Haglund noted that it would only take a half a day for someone to analyze how an emergency access road only condition would impact the BDS. Mr. Clark agreed with Mr. Manjikian and noted “back-tracking” would not be a good idea. Ms. Fiacco stated that the proposed building requires the emergency access road. Michael Giaimo, for the Applicant, noted that the driveway improves circulation on campus and argued that it is not an option to do an emergency only road. Mr. Clark suggested that the PB move forward with the application.

Mr. Manjikian asked Mr. Wheeler to explain how the Construction Management Plan would be managed. Mr. Wheeler noted that a timeline would be put together for the PB’s review indicating when various conditions kick in and would note who is responsible for them. Mr. Manjikian asked about the details of the maintenance plans for the temporary and the permanent driveways. Ms. Cardoza noted that the construction of the driveways (temporary and permanent) will be completely different and that the stormwater management plan will address the management of the temporary driveway. Ms. Fiacco noted that the porous pavement surface should be washed regularly and inspected annually and that the maintenance report should be kept on file at the Office of Community Development. Brendan Largay, Head of BDS, noted that the Operations Manager would be working with a third party to maintain the driveway. Ms. Fiacco noted that this should be a condition of the decision.

The PB discussed the recommended edits to the draft conditions related to driveway lighting.

The PB discussed the draft conditions for the trees. Ms. Fiacco asked for clarification regarding the proposed use of holly and the highland meadow mix. Mr. Corning, Landscape Architect, noted that the seed mix is the same used by the Cemetery Commission. Ms. Fiacco noted that the caliper of the trees should be 3.5 to 4 inches each

and that the substitution of the holly should be included in the final landscape plan. She also noted an additional edit to the condition.

Ms. Fiacco briefly reviewed each of the headers of the draft conditions. Mr. Wheeler noted the specific landscaping conditions (since July 27, 2017) and reviewed the list of changes as presented by the Applicant.

Comments from the Audience:

1. Kasper Torosian, 659 Belmont Street, questioned the need to light the driveway during an emergency. He also asked how the construction information would be communicated to the Cemetery.

Mr. Wheeler noted that communication will be through the Cemetery Commission, who will let the contractor know when services will take place.

2. Tim Duncan, 699 Concord Avenue, noted that the public should have an opportunity to review the conditions. He noted that the original proposal was for an emergency access road and that the Fire Chief said that the building could be built without it. Mr. Duncan added that competing interests had not been considered.
3. Ellen O'Brien Cushman, Cemetery Commission, stated that the public should have more time to review all of the conditions.
4. Bradley Lewis, 70 Somerset Street, stated that the process has been unduly elongated by extensive public comments. He added that the purpose of the driveway is to also allow parents to safely retrieve their children in the event of an emergency.
5. Sue Bass, 530 Concord Avenue, stated that the road should be for emergency access only. She did not think it is a good idea to have the full road as it will increase the amount of traffic. She also wanted time to review the conditions.
6. Brit Dewey, Belmont Resident and President of the BDS Board of Trustees, stated that the PB was at a place where they could make a decision on this project.

**MOTION to close the public hearing was made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. The Board voted 3-1 to close the hearing, with Mr. Haglund voting "no". Motion passed.**

**MOTION to grant Design and Site Plan Approval with conditions was made by Mr. Manjikian and seconded by Mr. Clark. The Board voted 3-1 to approve, with Mr. Haglund voting "no". Motion passed.**

5. **Adjournment 8:55 PM**