

**TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD**

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**MEETING MINUTES
June 19, 2018**

2018 JUL 12 PM 2:57

Present: Steve Pinkerton, Vice Chair; Sandy Sanderson; Karl Haglund; Ed Starzec

Absent: Charles Clark, Thayer Donam

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

1. Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 PM

2. Adult Use Marijuana By-Law Forum

Mr. Pinkerton began by noting that there were two possible outcomes of the September 25, 2018 marijuana vote; one of the options would allow for unlimited marijuana businesses and the other would limit to two retail establishments. He added that the PB must be prepared for either outcome. As a result of the vote, he stated that there will be a Special Town Meeting in November 2018 to vote on the zoning by-law put forward as a result of the vote. To start the zoning discussion, he noted that the PB needs to make decisions on location, buffer, signage, and permit process.

Mr. Pinkerton reviewed the commercial districts in Belmont, he noted that an overlay district or a selection of those districts would be chosen. He reviewed the K-12 public and private school buffer zones; 500-foot zone - the max the state will allow and the minimum buffer zone could be 100-feet. He reviewed the state signage regulations and noted that the PB would need to decide on the permitting process for marijuana businesses.

Comments from the audience:

1. Al Turco, 78 Radcliffe Road, asked the PB to explain the purpose of the buffer. Mr. Pinkerton noted that the state regulation says you could buffer K-12 (this does not include preschools) private or public schools up to 500 feet. The idea was that it protected the school children and banned sales of the product near the children.
2. Linda Turco, 78 Radcliffe Road, noted that the buffer did not capture Belmont Center and stated that marijuana should not be allowed in Belmont Center.
3. A local resident, noted that he was much more fearful of cigarettes for his children.
4. A resident from Channing Road, noted that the buffer zone would not cause a significant reduction in use and he was not concerned about a buffer around the schools.

5. A resident from Alexander Ave., noted that that it was too early to say whether marijuana would have an affect on a child's brain, studies are inconclusive. Belmont Center should not be included as a place to sell marijuana.
6. Saskia Kovac, 132 School Street, noted that there was a 750-foot buffer around schools in the Netherlands and they were moving it further away from the schools because it had an adverse effect in the Netherlands. She would like to see the 500-foot buffer zone enforced.
7. Resident, 123 Winter Street, previously lived on Telegraph Avenue and noticed that foot traffic and traffic to marijuana retail shops altered the businesses.
8. Judith Arnenian Sarno, 30 Waverly Terrace, noted that the traffic and parking in Waverly Square was already too busy. She liked the idea of the South Pleasant Street location and the Loading Dock location. She was also in support of the tax revenue from the marijuana sales.
9. Julie Crockett, 232 Trapelo Road, asked the PB to consider distances from residences. All three of the business districts were overwhelmed with parking and traffic already.

Mr. Wheeler summarized the three different permit processes for the audience:

1. By right – no public input.
2. Design and Site Plan Review - public review process and the use is already an allowed use in that district.
3. Special Permit Process - is a 6-9-month review process depending on how much public input there was. Notification and abutters notices are sent out. This process allows the PB to say yes or no to the proposed business. Restaurants are all under Special Permit. Special Permits allows for conditions to be placed on the Permit.
10. Jenn McMullin, 103 Country Club Lane, asked about how much enforcement there will be. She was concerned that people may eat a product in public.
11. Tomi Olson, 10 Bay State Road, noted that she was in support of the Special Permit process because the conditions can be applied for parking, traffic, etc.
12. Susan Feinberg, 101 Hammond, asked if the establishments could be dual use? She noted a loop hole – an 18-year-old with a medical marijuana license could get in the door.

Mr. Pinkerton shared a document from the Cannabis Control Commission: A Guide for Municipalities. He said he only had one copy but that it could be viewed online.

13. A resident from Cross Street, noted that the anecdotal input should be taken carefully. She asked if the PB could decide something now and then change it in a couple of years. Mr. Wheeler noted that the PB can tweak the By-Laws at Town Meeting.

3. Review Belmont High School Building Project MOU:

Mr. Wheeler noted that the plans that the PB was reviewing were the current plans. Mr. Haglund stated that there was significant work to be done on the landscape plan. Mr. Sanderson noted that the costliest program should be presented to the MSBA and the details can be addressed in the Site Plan Review process.

Mr. Wheeler noted that the Memorandum of Understanding was to summarize the PB's position and documents the PB's decisions so far and included issues that needed to be addressed. Mr. Pinkerton reviewed the outstanding PB issues. Mr. Wheeler noted that the Open Meeting Law advisory from Town Council changes how the PB circulates and make documents available to the public. He will review the rules with the PB at its next meeting.

Bonnie Freidman, Precinct 3, noted that she would like to see the PB encourage more biking and pedestrian options and supported charging for parking and lower prices for buses.

Fred Paulson, asked the PB to explain if there was any chance for changes to the design if this plan was to be approved. Mr. Starzec noted that the submission to the state was for establishing the budget and the design of the site can be altered but cannot be made more expensive. Mr. Paulson noted that there ought to be more pedestrian and biking access and that Walk Boston could be very helpful. He also noted that he was concerned about the PB working with the other committees and asked the PB to take the lead on this project.

Mr. Sanderson noted that the Town was doing a Town-wide traffic study and the TAC was in charge of looking at the drop-off locations.

The PB agreed to submit comments to Planning Staff by Friday, June 29, 2018.

4. Neighborhood Determinations were reviewed for the following addresses:

The PB approved the neighborhood determinations for 32-34 Wilson Avenue and 136 Blanchard Road.

5. Updates on Potential Cases and Planning Board Projects, and Committee Reports

6. Review and Approval of Minutes

Due to the lateness of the meeting, no further business was discussed.

7. Adjourn 9:18 PM