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Belmont Community Path Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Homer Municipal Building, 3rd Floor Art Gallery Room

26 February 2014

Committee Members present included Cosmo Caterino, Joe Noone, Amy DeDeo, John Dieckmann, Jeff Roth, Tomi Olson, Price Armstrong, Brian Burke, Sr., and Vince Stanton. Price Armstrong served as the revolving secretary for this meeting. Jeffrey Wheeler, Community Development, was present at the meeting.

Community attendees included Cindy Taylor (Channing Road), Joe White (Maple Terrace), Philip Lawrence (Aggasiz Avenue), Mike Cicalese (Channing Road), Paul Healey (Channing Road), Ed Corsino (Channing Road), Diane Corsino (Channing Road), Bruce MacKinnon (Channing Road), Paul Cobuzzi (Channing Road), Deborah Lockett (Dalton Road), Rick Macchi (Becket Road), and Grant Monahon (Snake Hill Road).

- The meeting was called to order at 7:07pm.
- The minutes from the Feb. 12th meeting were reviewed.
 - There were minor amendments and typographical corrections.
 - The minutes were then adopted as amended, and voted unanimously to approve.
- Presentation of Belmont Center Connections
 - Vince Stanton gave a presentation on potential routes through Belmont Center.
 - Utilizing the sidewalks and crosswalks to the north of the railroad bridge, there could be up to four street crossings to cross from one side of Leonard Street to another.
 - Utilizing the sidewalks and crosswalks to the south of the bridge, there is a long distance going south before the first crosswalk is reached. The reason for this is because of safe crossing standards that limit where a crosswalk can be placed on a curved roadway due to the limited sightlines.
 - Vince made the point that crossing Belmont Center using space to the north of the Fitchburg Line on the historical granite railroad bridge is the most direct, safest, and simplest option, since it has no road crossings or on-street segments.
 - The bridge area on the south side of the tracks would probably have insufficient width for a safe path, and the Lion's Club Building might be an obstacle as well.
 - Bruce MacKinnon asked about possibly building a new bicycle and pedestrian fly-over bridge above Leonard Street and Concord Ave, spanning from Concord Ave. near the hair salon/florist shops to the Lion's Club across the street. It was mentioned that this

would require a long approach ramp to meet ADA compliance to make it suitable for walking and biking, and given the limited land available for such a use may not be feasible.

- Discussion of Pro's and Con's

- Cosmo asked if the on-road Channing Road Option would be considered. It was discussed that the feedback to CPAC suggested it did not make sense to research that route any further at this point.
- Concord Ave.
 - Since the CPAC was charged to involve the Belmont community and solicit input from it, the Committee discussed the impact to businesses for that potential route along Concord Ave. if public and private parking were removed. Further communication to those businesses was suggested.
 - It was noted by Phil Lawrence that the florist and hair salon places indicated that removal of public on-street parking would be "devastating" to their businesses.
 - Price said the section of the report dealing with parking on the Concord Avenue option should be changed to, "Parking would be removed, which could be a controversial issue."
- On the McClean land route 1-A, it was asked to re-word the ADA language.
- It was voted to adopt the Pro's and Con's list as amended for inclusion in the final report.

- Preferred Routes

- Jeff Roth gave an overview of the structure of the chapter. He explained that we are choosing routes for further investigation.
- The preferred routes he discussed were:
 - On the McLean land and the Rail-With-Trail option on the DPW land.
 - ~~▪ Behind BMLD/Police station as well as the two routes through the Royal Road Woods.~~
 - Along Concord Avenue and on the former MCRR right-of-way north of the Fitchburg line.
- Tomi asked a question about the loss of parking for the on-road route options utilizing Concord Avenue.
- Tomi noted that it would be worth considering putting the path behind recreational fields on the school lands.

- Some kind of parking limit was discussed to address worries by Channing Road residents that trail users might make excessive use of public parking spaces there. Tomi expressed concerns about enforcing such parking.
 - Cosmo expressed that there could be more off-road options south of the railroad tracks on the school lands. Joe thought that the School Committee might be open to exploring additional options for using the school lands for a Community Path.
 - Vince noted that there is a landscaping project going on at Clay Pit Pond, and we should coordinate with that effort about the potential route through that area using a paved 12-foot wide paved surface.
 - Price asked what the ultimate goal of the chapter and report is. Jeff indicated that we need to be as precise as possible when discussing the various options and should give two options for all segments.
 - Vince wanted to limit the number of segments examined.
 - Cosmo noted that neighbors were divided on the potential underpass near the High School. He also noted that some Channing Road abutters wanted a wall, not a fence. He wanted to be less specific on drainage issues, and less specific about parking.
 - Jeff wanted to be as specific as possible, but Joe noted that he didn't think there was neighborhood consensus on what would need to be offered to address their parking concerns.
 - It was noted that the underpass might create parking problems around Alexander Road. It was suggested by CPAC that some parking restrictions would likely need to be included if an underpass were built.
 - Price offered that regarding parking related to the underpass, we should simply note that there is no consensus.
 - Price made a motion for the Committee to officially express a preference for the route west of the Clark Street Bridge to Waltham Town Line south of the tracks. It was adopted 5 – 4.
- A representative from the Belmont Citizens Forum (BCF), Grant Monahan, explained what funding might be available. He explained that the BCF received \$10,000 in funding from the Bikes Belong Foundation to explore an off-road path option between Brighton Street and Leonard Street. These funds could be used for future engineering feasibility or preliminary design studies done on that off-road path option. The Committee discussed that CPAC's work has not been influenced by the existence of these funds, and this was the first time most CPAC members had heard that these funds existed.
 - Brian asked if there was a right of reversion in the land titles to the land that the BCF owned. Grant responded he wasn't aware of any such provision.
 - The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.