

COMMUNITY PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Town Hall, Conference Room 4

Town of Belmont

July 23rd, 2013

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MEETING NOTES

The community Path Advisory Committee (CPAC) meeting was called to order at 7:06 P.M. by its chairperson Jeffrey Roth.

*Attendance*

Committee Members: Jeffrey Roth Chairman, John Dieckmann vice-chairperson, Brian Burke Sr. revolving Secretary, Cosmo Caterino, Charlie Conroy, Amy DeDeo, Vincent Stanton and Tomi Olsen, constituting a quorum with 8 members present.

Town Official: Jeffrey Wheeler, Planning Coordinator

Others present: Community members Hank Thiedman, Judith Ananian Sarno, Sheila Flewlling, Cindy Taylor, and Fran. The ladies are town meeting members.

**Visit with Police Chief, Richard McLaughlin**

Jeff Roth introduced Chief Richard McLaughlin and provided a summary of the committee's efforts to date. Chief McLaughlin spoke about the minimum design specifications of 12 feet width, required to allow access for patrol. Patrol can be done via foot, motorcycles, bicycle, or police cars. Police are interested in procuring a gator (beyond the scope of the path but haven't been able to identify funds), but specific equipment needs cannot be forecasted without knowing where a path will be and how a path would look.

The Chief reiterated the importance of design specifications. There are experts out there who have done this before, and we should pull from them. Belmont is a limited geographic area. The key to the path will be location.

Q&A session with Chief McLaughlin.

What can Belmont do to replicate the excellent low crime rate that Arlington has seen on the Minuteman Path?

Lessons learned from Arlington are that major cross streets were very dangerous. It resulted in increased signage and education of riders and motorists. Likewise, unauthorized vehicles got on the path which resulted in installation of bollards at intersections.

Can we predict costs to patrol and impact to crime rate?

It was suggested that we inquire with neighboring communities. We should flow this request through the Board of Selectman. Jeff Roth read an anecdotal email from a Bedford police officer, who reported that crime was minimal and that he said he "can't recall the last criminal event that happened on the bike path."

Is there data available on bike crashes in Belmont reported in 2012?

The Chief will look into the availability of such data.

How are holes found in the fence at Alexander Ave handled?

When a hole is discovered they notify the Town.

Jeff Roth thanked the Chief for his time. *The Chief leaves with the action to determine whether data on number of bike and pedestrian accidents in past years.*

### **Review of minutes**

Brian motioned to accept the July 10th minutes, John seconded, and the committee unanimously accepted as amended.

Brian motioned to accept the June 19th minutes, Cosmo seconded, and the committee unanimously accepted as is.

### **Announcements**

MassDOT is funding the completion of Phase 2 of the Bruce-Freeman rail trail (all three sub-phases). \$6M is allocated toward an overpass over Route 2 in Concord. There is approximately \$20M funding budgeted in total.

### **Updated Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations for Route Evaluations**

Clarification made that it min 12' with 1' shoulder on each side is required. Amy motioned to accept the document as amended, Charlie seconds, and committee unanimously accepted as amended.

### **Updated Route Segments Listing Document**

The major changes include a below grade crossing at Brighton St (4-D2) and feedback from the Belmont Housing Authority who reviewed the document. The Belmont Housing Authority brought to our attention that previously proposed 2-C cross private property, so the proposal has been updated to use the public space. Joe Noone has spoken to the School Department and received their permission to propose a path that crosses the ball fields.

Detailed discussion went into Concord Ave. proposals and feasible options.

Judith raised concern about how the A Street and Grant Avenue communities have been engaged. If that neighborhood is part of the proposed routes, then that attention needs to be brought to them. This goes beyond this specific neighborhood. The committee acknowledges that when appropriate we will approach specific communities adjacent to proposed routes. At this time, the path options need to be down-selected before taking that action.

Cosmo proposes a path segment that stays along Concord Ave starting from the High School driveway entrance, past the pond, across the driveway exit, and along the front of the athletic fields (plural) and cross to the south-side when space is no longer available. *Cosmo has the **action** to detail the proposal. Charlie and Tomi have another proposal that they will take the **action** to define also.*

For the next stage, we need to review each segment in detail to better define the details and information gaps that must be filled in to move forward.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

August meeting will focus on the route definitions and gaps.

First meeting in September will be on September 11th.

John will be coordinating a table at Meet Belmont August 27th at the Chenery Middle School.

### **CPA (Community Preservation Act) Application**

The board of selectman gave their blessing to request an engineering feasibility study of an underpass near Alexander Avenue from the CPA budget. Charlie has drafted the preliminary application and is seeking feedback. *Jeff Wheeler took the **actions** to give realistic numbers for the study.* The application should be submitted with Care Of Jeffrey Wheeler. *Jeffrey has an **action** to provide point of contact information off line.*

### **Summary of Selectman Meeting**

Selectman Rojas raised concerns about safety with rails with trails. Mr. Rojas was looking for precedence for placing a path alongside a rail-line. Jeff Roth knows of a new study coming out soon addressing this concern, which should help complete our research.

The Belmont Housing Authority voted in favor of the existence of a path adjacent to their property.

As mentioned above, preliminary discussions have begun with the School Department.

Other stakeholders that should still be engaged include BMLD, the historic commission, and the DCR.

The motion to adjourn was made by Brian, and seconded by Vince.