

TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

October 17, 2023

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: December 7, 2023
TIME: 3:04 PM

Present: Jeff Birenbaum: Chair; Carol Berberian: Vice Chair; Thayer Donham;
Andrew Osborn; Taylor Yates; Renee Guo

Staff: Ara Yogurtian, Inspector of Buildings
Chris Ryan: Town Planner Planner

This meeting was held remotely using Zoom video conferencing technology, as permitted by the Massachusetts Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations, which became effective July 16, 2022. Update 3/30/23: The State has extended authorization for virtual public meetings through March 31, 2025.

1. Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 PM

Mr. Birenbaum introduced the Planning Board members and reviewed a summary of the items that were on the agenda.

2. The MBTA community Advisory Board will present an update for discussion on GUIDING GOALS AND PRINCIPLES FOR ESTABLISHMENT/LOCATION OF MBTA COMMUNITIES ZONES/SUBZONE.

Mr. Ryan came before the Board to review the goals of the MBTA Community Advisory Board. He stated the goals and principles:

- To be informed and guided by prior relevant studies
- To be equitable and context-sensitive regarding the distribution of MBTA sites and unit counts
- To use good planning principles and best practices
- Be strategic and flexible regarding the final proposed option
- To maximize economic development opportunities without compromising other key goals
- Protect the essential character and scale of Belmont to the extent possible
- To meet key housing benchmarks and metrics
- Adopt a meeting and communication framework

Mr. Ryan noted that the initial notification may happen in May and a public hearing in early June with a September or October Town Meeting for this work. Ms. Donham mentioned that this must be approved by the end of 2024 as per State requirements.

3. The Community Path Implementation Advisory Committee (CPIAC) will present an update on the Community Path project to the Planning Board.

Holly Muson, Co-Chair of the Community Path Advisory Committee, came before the Board to give them an update on the status of Phase 1, she presented a map of the proposed Phase 1 path, Phase 2 route goals, and the recommended route for Phase 2

Ms. Muson noted that she hoped Board members would attend the 25% design public hearing and she would keep them updated as to final Select Board approval of Phase 2.

4. Public Hearings:

a) Case No. 23-23 Two Special Permits 196-198 Beech Street (GR) – Ara and Sossy Yogurtian

Applicants request Two Special Permits to construct an addition at 196-198 Beech Street located in a General Residence (GR) zoning district. Special Permits: 1.- §1.5.4A (2) of the By-Law allows alterations and expansions greater than 300SF in the GR district by Special Permit granted by the Planning Board. 2.- §4.2.2 of the By-Law allows 30% maximum lot coverage in the GR zoning district; the existing lot coverage is 31.5% and the proposed is 32.2%.

Mr. Rober presented the plans for Mr. and Mrs. Yogurtian. Mr. Rober shared images of the existing buildings and abutting buildings. He explained that the proposed project was to remove a one-story section and propose a two-and-a-half-story section to mirror the peak elevation of the rear of the building along with an associated front porch. He walked the Board through the proposed floor plans. Mr. Rober noted that the existing house was at 25% TLA and the proposed house would be at 65% TLA - smaller than over 1/3rd of the other houses in the area. Ms. Berberian reviewed the neighborhood analysis, and she said that what is proposed fits into the neighborhood.

Mr. Ryan noted that this was a good candidate for the types of special permits.

Public comment:

Daniel and Courtney Eldridge, asked for clarification on the existing and proposed setback.

MOTION to approve a Special Permits to construct an addition at 196-198 Beech Street located in a General Residence (GR) zoning district. Special Permits: 1.- §1.5.4A (2) of the By-Law allows alterations and expansions greater than 300SF in the GR district by Special Permit granted by the Planning Board was made by Mr. Birenbaum and seconded by Ms. Berberian. Motion passed.

YES votes-
Jeff Birenbaum
Carol Berberian
Thayer Donham
Andrew Osborn
Taylor Yates
Renee Guo

MOTION to approve a special permit to allow §4.2.2 of the By-Law allows 30% maximum lot coverage in the GR zoning district; the existing lot coverage is 31.5% and the proposed was 32.2% was made by Mr. Birenbaum and seconded by Mr. Berberian. Motion passed.

YES votes-
Jeff Birenbaum
Carol Berberian
Thayer Donham
Andrew Osborn
Taylor Yates
Renee Guo

5. Update on Cases, Planning Board Projects and Committee Reports.

- Ms. Donham spoke about the position as Planning Board Liaison for Housing Trust. The committee position is open and available to any of the Planning Board members. They will discuss this again at the next meeting.
- The Planning Board's future meetings will be held on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 and then on November 21, 2023, December 5, December 19, January 2, January 16, February 13 and February 27.
- Mr. Birenbaum recused himself from the meeting. Ms. Berberian noted that the library will need approval for peer review for the stormwater review.

MOTION to authorize the engagement of Stantec for the stormwater review for the library building project was made by Ms. Berberian and seconded by Mr. Osborn. Motion passed.

YES votes-
Carol Berberian
Thayer Donham
Andrew Osborn

Taylor Yates
Renee Guo

Mr. Birenbaum returned to the meeting.

6. Adjourn 7:24 PM.

The Planning Board's next scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 14, 2023.