

Belmont Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes for January 12 2012

Attendees: Lalg Musserian, Angelo Firenze, Erik Rhodin, Anthony Leccese, Jay Szklut, Andres Rojas, Tomi Olson, Keith Andre,

Guests: Judith Sarno. Charles Laverty, Joanne Tzouvelis

Minutes

- The meeting was called to order by Lalg Musserian
 - Minutes from the December 15, 2012 meeting were approved.
 - Discussion of the initial size of the committee ensued. Originally 9 members. Presently 8 members. The Board would do well to add a Developer to the Committee. Several names were suggested including Palajian, Chiafaro, Starr (of Belmont) McLaughlin, and one more recommended by Erik R.
- Andy Rojas reported for the Planning Board that the Cushing Square project has been submitted. The Planning Board is beginning its review and reviewing times for public hearing and forums. Jeff from the Planning Department is working with the Developer to complete the final details.
 - The Solar Panel Bylaw (Article 8 for the upcoming Town Meeting) recommended by the Planning Board has the twin goals of safeguarding resident interests and preserving the Town's character. It is the Board's belief that without this Bylaw the Solar Panel Installers become the final determiners of the placement of solar panels. An alternative opinion will be presented by Roger Colton at Town Meeting who objects to the Bylaw on the grounds that any restriction will diminish the impact of green conservation goals.
 - Lalg reported that the EDAC Report has been submitted and will be presented at the upcoming Town Meeting.
 - The Parking Study was looked at by Tony L. and Tomi O. The goal of the study is to manage parking. The study is very detailed and two questions are paramount: Will the Town be able to agree with all the regulations? Will the Parking restrictions be limited to Belmont Center or will they be enforced throughout the Town as a whole, including Cushing Square and Waverly?

- Angelo believes that the study needs to be comprehensive. He believes the recommendations should include paid parking in commercial areas and permit parking everywhere else. Issues that need to be addressed are the technology available and the timing of permit parking. The current plan recommends that 30% of the revenue will be returned to the neighbors although the exact mechanism was not discussed.

Belmont Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes for January 12 2012 Page Two

- Tomi O. reported that the Traffic Advisory Committee approved 10 additional parking spaces in the recent plan for Belmont Center that was submitted to the Selectmen. A copy of the map of that proposal was submitted to EDAC.. Since the Parking study is quite detailed, it was agreed that the entire Committee should review it for discussion at the next EDAC meeting.
- The EDAC welcomed guests Charlie Laverty, of the Board of Assessors and Joanne Tzouvelis from the Belmont Citizen Herald.
- Mr. Laverty reported that Belmont now ranks in the top 10 residential tax rates.. Neighboring Cambridge ranks on the bottom of the residential rates.
- Mr. Laverty reported on the PILOT program (Payments in Lieu of Taxes) . Since 2000 the Town of Belmont has lost 10 plus properties to Tax exempt designated properties representing \$175000 in tax revenue. As the former Chair of the Cambridge Board of Assessors, Mr. Laverty reported on the Cambridge formula which recommends that for each square foot of property owned by a Tax Exempt organization a payment of \$.042 be made for the services of Cambridge's police, fire and public works. In 2009 the program developed "voluntary requests" bringing in \$533,000. What is necessary with such a program is to build public awareness that Tax Exempt organizations, including Independent Schools have a responsibility to the Community. This starts with a need to publicize this information to the community.
- The Committee recommended that the Board of Assessors write a letter to the Board of Selectmen regarding this issue.
 - The MDC Skating rink will be discussed upon Ed S. return.
 - The Meeting calendar for EDAC has been circulated by Lalg via email.

Next meeting will be February 2, 2012, @ 8:00 am, Town Hall, Room 1

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 am.

All meeting materials are on file at the Office of Planning and Economic Development in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Tomi Olson