

TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES
January 27, 2010

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7:09 p.m. Meeting called to order.

Attendance: Jenny Fallon, Chair; Karl Haglund; Andres Rojas; Carla Moynihan; Sami Baghdady; Jay Szklut and Jeffrey Wheeler, Staff.

Absent: None

Minutes of October 28, 2009, December 7, 2009, and January 6, 2010 approved as presented.

There were no committee updates.

7:10 p.m. Planning Board Schedule

Staff presented the draft spring schedule to the Board. The schedule was amended to include Outdoor Café seating and South Pleasant Street as potential zoning amendments. Also, added to the February 24 meeting was a discussion with the Board of Selectmen and the Comprehensive Plan Committee on the draft plan recommendations.

7:18 p.m. Cushing Square – Informal Discussion (cont.)

Gwen Noyes of Oaktree Development introduces the representatives of the development team. A revised conceptual plan is presented. The connection over Horne Road has been removed. Roofs are now shown as sloping with the roof peak at 48 feet. Portion of building abutting the residential property on Belmont Street has been scaled down to 2½ stories. Ms. Noyes highlights several of the environmentally friendly features of the development. Responding to a question on parking, Ms. Noyes notes that the project contains 264 parking spaces which include 50 public spaces. The development team presents several shadow studies representing the project's impact on sunlight to neighboring properties. An overall site plan is shown along with concept sketches of the various buildings. Views of the project from the perspective of various locations around the project are also shown. Ms. Noyes notes that the project will include bicycle stands to encourage use of this alternate form of transportation. Finally she notes that the height of the portion of the building fronting common street on the corner of Common and Belmont has been increased to replace the square footage lost by removing the bridge over Horne Road.

Mr. Starr introduces Ron Burns of Coler & Coluntonio who is the Licensed Site Professional handling the remediation of the contaminated portion of the site. Mr. Burns outlines how the clean up is done and how it is phased to coordinate with the construction of the project.

Residents and Board members continued to raise several concerns with the overall project. These concerns include:

- Overall height – 48' around Horne Road may be too high
- Can the CVS site be just a residential building?
- Will the buildings be significantly larger (volume) than existing buildings in the square?
- How do the traffic patterns around the CVS site relate to the residence abutting the site?
- What is the space between the proposed building on the CVS site and the abutting residence?

- What does the back of the development from Common to Horne look like?
- Still concerned with contamination and clean up.
- Phasing of project.
- This new iteration shows a greater area than the previous one and is still criticized as too massive.
- Building on parking lot needs more work.
- Can a 3D scale model be presented?

Developer to return on February 10 with further revisions and modifications.

9:30 p.m. South Pleasant Street Rezoning

Staff provided a comparison of the Town's commercial zoned districts with the recommendations made in 1996 concerning the South Pleasant Street Area. A question was raised on how the area and previous proposals relate to the McLean development, to Waverley Square, and to the Town? Further discussion was tabled to the February 10 meeting.

9:55 p.m. Major Development Zoning By-Law

Board members discussed the possibility of bringing forward an amendment to this by-law at the April Annual Town Meeting. It was decided that the Board would take no action on amending this by-law at this time. However, staff was requested to develop a position paper on the topic citing good points, bad points, and whether the additional safeguards provided by the by-law did not already exist elsewhere. The paper should include a review of the zoning with recommendations.

10:10 p.m. Comprehensive Plan Discussion

Ms. Fallon briefly noted the Board's increased role over the next few months in the development of the comprehensive plan. Recommendations would be forthcoming.

10:15 p.m. Vacant Property Policy

The Board of Selectmen forwarded for comment a policy on vacant properties recently enacted in Revere. The Planning Board noted that the policy had been passed and enacted prior to the current economic downturn. The Board advised staff to report to the Selectmen that enacting the policy during the current economic environment is unlikely to have any major impact.

10:25 p.m. Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February, 10 2010, 7:00 p.m., 3rd Floor Art Gallery, Homer Municipal Building

3/10/10 MINUTES APPROVED