

Town of Belmont, MA

Traffic Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting October 14, 2010

Members present: Linda Nickens, Laurence Macdonald, Dana Miller, Tommasina Olson, Peter Curro, Ron Sacca.

Ex-Officio members present: Glenn Clancy, PE

Absent: Dana Miller, Sgt. Shea, BPD

Also present: BSC Group representatives: Peter J. Briere, PE; Charles A. Kalauskas, PE; Marybeth T. Murphy, RLA, LEED ASP. Many residents and business representatives were in attendance. The BSC Group had a sign in sheet which will become a part of the record.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM by Linda Nickens, Chair.

Belmont Center Public Forum:

Linda Nickens made introductions and discussed the process. Glenn Clancy said that the roadways around Belmont Center are in need of repair and had asked the BOS if this is the time to revitalize Belmont Center. Glenn Clancy is modeling the process along the lines of the Trapelo Road/Belmont Street Project. A series of 4 Public Forums will be held on October 14, November 4, December 9, 2010 and January 13, 2011. Glenn Clancy then introduced the BSC Group. He stated that there are no preconceived ideas. Peter Briere talked about the purpose of the project: Looking at roadway, sidewalk, parking and landscaping improvements to create a more vibrant Belmont Center. The goal is to create better traffic flow, parking, and pedestrian flow.

Roy Nejabi, a resident of Farm Road asked about examining problem scenarios before solutions.

Glenn Clancy responded that the forums would allow residents, business owners, and property owners to give us priorities to develop a plan. A priority list does not now exist.

A Power Point presentation was then made by the BSC Group.

Purpose of Project:

1. Analyze Alternatives
2. Determine Preferred Alternatives relative to: Roadway, Sidewalk, Parking, and Landscaping.

Peter Briere, of the BSC Group presented the Project Schedules:

October 14, 2010: Previous Studies, Existing Conditions, Study Area Context, Land Use, and Landscape.

November 4, 2010: Discuss/Present 7 or 8 Traffic Patterns, Pros and Cons of each, select 2 Preferred Alternatives.

December 9, 2010: Review/Discuss the 2 Preferred Alternative Traffic Patterns and come up with an approved Plan which may or not be a combination of both Alternatives.

January 13, 2011: Present Roadway Plan, Parking Plan, Landscaping Plan, Pedestrian Flow and solicit input.

January 24, 2011 or Date TBD: Meet with BOS to present/discuss Planning Process, Preferred Plan and Initiate Public Discussion.

Previous Studies;

1986: Eliminate parking meters, initiate Timed Parking Zones and create long term parking in the Claflin Street Lot.

1989: Belmont Center: A Development Plan

1996: Belmont Center Traffic Improvements

1997: Bikeway Study Rail Trail

2001: Municipal Parking Study

2003: Belmont Center Parking Study Committee: Implemented changes to Claflin Street and the Claflin Street Lot to gain 41 additional parking spaces. These changes were almost negated when the new Fire Station 2 was built on the old Alexander Avenue Parking Lot.

2005-2008; Planning Vision for Belmont Center

2008: Belmont Comprehensive Plan

Marybeth Murphy of the BSC Group, then made a presentation on the Study Area Context. She outlined the area contained in the study.

The presentation utilized Google Earth photos/imaging showing implant images on/over the various locations in the study. She explained that this is a good interactive tool to work with.

Peter Briere then spoke about Pedestrian Accommodation, Bicycle Traffic and Safety, and Public Transportation. He also addressed the 48 Traffic Counts in and around Belmont Center.

Public Discussion: Ray Miyrds, a resident of Edgemoor Road asked if the Old Clark Street Bridge could be included in the Study Context area. He would like to see the Clark Street Bridge reopened to traffic. He walks to work at the Old Fire House. Ron Sacca asked about the ownership of the Clark Street Bridge, now only a pedestrian bridge. Glenn Clancy stated that either DOT or the MBTA owned it and the Town has the right to open discussion. Tommasina Olson, said that the neighborhood was opposed to the reopening of the bridge to traffic. Mr. Burke, of Burke Land Company, wishes that a public walkthrough could be created from the parking lots behind the Center to Leonard Street. Glenn Clancy would like to see the Claflin Street Lot more accessible to pedestrians. R. Nebjei in his priority of problems asked if we can discourage traffic from Route 2. Glenn Clancy asked him what his priorities are. R. Nebjei listed Traffic, Pedestrian Safety, and Reducing Traffic. He asked Glenn about our constraints and funding. Glenn Clancy stated that the Pavement Management Budget was \$1 Million dollars a year. Out of which budget, street repaving only, consultants for the Trapelo Road Project, and police details needed for these paving projects are paid for. The Belmont Center Project could be 2-3 years out. BOS Chair, Ralph Jones, says the Debt Exclusion puts question direct to voters. GC said the process will give us cost estimates. The Center should be Community - Civic Pride as in other communities. Why not Belmont? GC said that Mass. DOT constraint is dealing in reality, Bicycles and Pedestrians. A traffic volume constraint would be dealing with angle vs. parallel parking. Isabel Nebejei asked about state funding. GC replied that this is a local issue; we have more flexibility to deal with reality. Another constraint, the signalization of the underpass. Jack Droney, a resident, suggested widen sidewalks with no planters. GC stated, we need a better comfort level for pedestrians. Steve Marlin, a resident of Channing Road, concerned about speed and bicycle and pedestrian safety at the intersection of Cross Street and Channing Road. Ray Miyrds, the Edgemoor Road resident suggested that the "T" extend the bus route from the Center to Alewife via Pleasant St and Rte2. Ron Sacca, a "T" employee said that the new "T" GM listens. He also asked about the possible commuter rail station closing/consolidation. GC stated that some talk has been had about the consolidating the 2 railroad stations into 1 station on Pleasant Street. For our purposes we will include the old Belmont Center RR Station in our study. Ray Miyrds asked about the old Light Dept Building and the Police Station. GC replied that the Police Station is dependent on whether or not the Town gets a new library. Sandy Kendall, a resident, wondered about a Travelling Trolley

about town that could serve the 3 main business districts. Roy Nebeji asked about a possible survey on the Town's website. He offered to help out with this idea. GC would like hear traffic flow concerns that business owners bring to the process. He also said that direct mail to residents, flyers to businesses were sent out notifying all about the public forum. Ron Sacca feels that traffic flow in the town is leveling off. He wondered why more of roadwork could not be done at night, thereby reducing the impact on daytime traffic flow. GC replied that maybe we could do a better job on communicating and managing impact in neighborhoods.

The Public Forum ended.

Minutes: The June 10, 2010 minutes were approved.

New Business: Butler School Parking. GC said that TAC will be addressing this issue soon.

Dana Miller moved and Larry Macdonald seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Laurence P. Macdonald, Clerk