

**MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OCTOBER 28, 2002
SPECIAL SESSION**

The Board of Selectmen convened in a special session at 7:30 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of Town Hall to hear an update of the Long Range Financial Planning Committee and to discuss the Fire Station Consolidation project. All members were in attendance; Mr. Brownsberger was delayed briefly due to a family emergency.

Long Range Financial Planning Committee

The Board met with members of the Long Range Financial Planning Committee to receive an update on the committee's progress to date.

Ms. Kelley, chair of the committee, made a brief presentation of the committee's activities to date. She outlined a work plan for the committee and provided socioeconomic data regarding Belmont's financial health using other similar communities as a comparative benchmark. Ms. Kelley described the work to be accomplished by the committee, including: meeting with Town officials to gather data and forecast trends, exploring revenue generating opportunities, and examining costs. She indicated the committee's intention to provide a full report with recommendations to the Board of Selectmen in April 2003.

Dr. Solomon applauded the quality of the work done by this committee to date. He inquired about Ms. Kelley's suggestion that the committee might benefit from professional consulting.

Mr. Brownsberger spoke of the many groups and initiatives being undertaken in the Town, specifically the working group of the Vision Implementation Committee and the Planning Board. He expressed uncertainty about how these groups will all come together.

Dr. Solomon stated that he felt the mandate of the Business and Economic Development working group of the Vision Implementation Committee would serve the role of pulling together all these groups together.

The Board stated they looked forward to receiving a final report from the committee in April 2003.

Fire Station Consolidation Project

The Board reviewed various issues involved in siting a fire station in the Trapelo Road area.

Mr. Brownsberger spoke of a recent article in the *Boston Globe* relative to the Town's options exploring the location of a fire station headquarters along Trapelo Road. He clarified that the Board of Selectmen have in no way closed any options with respect to the potential location of a fire station on a portion of the former Volkswagen dealership site.

Mr. Robert McLaughlin, member of the Fire Station Consolidation Committee appeared before the Board to discuss the potential availability of an alternative location for the fire station headquarters on the opposite side of Trapelo Road from the former VW dealership site, adjacent to the existing video store owned by the Jones estate. He indicated that the Fire Station Consolidation unanimously endorsed this location as a viable alternative.

Mrs. Mahoney questioned the timeframe that would be involved in the acquisition of land from an estate that is currently in probate.

Roberta Sydney, development specialist for the owners of the former VW dealership site, provided an update to the Board of Selectmen. She reviewed a memorandum to the Board from Mark Bobrowski, a lawyer specializing in land use, relative to the Town's request for an opinion of the legality of rezoning the former Volkswagen dealership site and acquisition of a portion of the land by eminent domain.

Ms. Sydney presented the Board with three concept plans. The first was the initial plan combining a fire station and commercial retail development, which would require a zoning change. The second was a proposal of development of the land with ten townhouse units and a fire station without any zoning relief. She indicated the only relief required would be from the Board of Survey. The third was a proposal of a 13,650 sq. ft. retail development that could be completed by right as a continuation of an existing non-conforming use, without a fire station.

The Senior Planner noted that the Planning Board's hearing on rezoning the parcels to accommodate the joint commercial development/fire station project was postponed until late November.

Mr. Tarabelsi of the Tarabelsi Trust acknowledged their presence at the meeting and continued interest in the Town's plans.

The Board determined that it required discussions in executive session to strategize around potential land acquisition.

The Board moved: to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing the value of land related to the potential acquisition of land for the location of a headquarters fire station along Trapelo Road. The Board will not return to open session.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0), by roll call vote.

The Board special session adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Melvin A. Kleckner, Town Administrator
Clerk, Board of Selectmen