

Belmont Economic Development Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes for February 2, 2012

Attendees: Ed Starzec, Erik Rhodin, Anthony Leccese, Jay Szklut, Andres Rojas, Tomi Olson, Keith Andre

Absent: Lalig Musserian, Steve Savarese, Angelo Firenze

Guests: Judith Ananian Sarno, Evan Allen (Boston Globe)

Minutes

- January 12, 2012 Minutes were accepted with an acknowledgement that Jay Szklut was not in attendance at that meeting.
- Andy Rojas reported on the recent activities of the Planning Board:
 - 3 Cushing Square community meeting has been rescheduled to February 28th. Cushing Square will take a lot of time. The learning, however, from Cushing Square will help the Planning Board as it evaluates South Pleasant Street. Issues for Cushing Square include height, mass, square footage, adjacency to neighbors, economic impact data, and traffic data will also be considered. Andy will send to all EDAC members a copy of the Cushing Square overlay district design guidelines. Given all the issues that need to be considered, the Planning Board's evaluation may take from 3 to 6 months. The issue of standards versus guidelines was again raised as offering more predictability for Developers, and as a step toward making Belmont more commercially appealing.
 - 3 South Pleasant Street has been delayed.
 - 3 The Planning Board's position on the Demolition Delay bylaw centers on the shortness of the 50 year look-back the Historic District Commission has recommended. Another issue is the lack of distinction between residential and commercial properties, although certain properties (i.e. Cushing Square and South Pleasant Street) are excluded. Jay Szklut explained that the purpose of the 30 day delay is to determine the significance of a given building. It was decided that EDAC would review the bylaw for its impact on commercial development and prepare its recommendations for the April Town Meeting. Jay Szklut noted that the draft bylaw is currently available and will forward to all EDAC members.

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- A Parking management presentation will be given on February 2nd at 7pm. This is the result of a several month long parking study. The Study mainly addresses parking in Belmont Center although its recommendations may be extended throughout the town. It was noted that newer technology (electronic meters, transponder-like sensors) enhances the ease of instituting new parking fees
- Additional issues discussed
 - Most valuable spaces in the Center are free while less desirable spaces are metered.
 - The cost of employee parking
 - 6 The lack of ease getting from Claflin Street lot to parts of the Center due to a lack of cut through. A possible solution for this cut through may be to provide an easement and some incentive to the property owner.
 - 7 Residential streets carrying the burden of parking for the Center and/or commuters. In other communities parking revenues have been returned to the Business organizations, encouraging them to make the improvements they felt would improve customer flow. Alternatively, parking revenues from permit validations can be returned to individual street organizations.

Future agenda items:

What can be done to help **existing** businesses?

Demo Delay Bylaw

Standards vs Guidelines

MA Economic Development position paper

Next Meeting: March 1, 2012 @ 8:00 am, Town Hall, Room 1

Respectfully submitted,

Tomi Olson