

TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES
February 8, 2007

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7:00 p.m. Meeting called to order.

Attendance: Karl Haglund, Chair; Andrew McClurg; Jennifer Fallon; Sami Baghdady; Andrew Rojas; Jay Szklut, Staff; Jeffrey Wheeler, Staff

Minutes of January 10 were approved unanimously.

7:05 p.m. Update: Senior Center Building Decision

No update was presented. Jeffrey reported that Town Counsel recommended hiring of a traffic engineer to review proposed planning board conditions. Review fee to be paid by Senior Center Building Committee.

7:15 p.m. Discussion - Zoning Amendment: Schedule of Uses, Footnote 1
Discussion - Zoning Amendment: Side Yard Setbacks in LBI and GB Districts

Jeffrey presented language for the proposed amendment that would have residential developments above commercial uses in commercial zones conform to the Inclusionary Housing By-Law. In addition, the amended language would delete footnote 1 which requires that a minimum of one affordable unit be provided for any sized residential development in a commercial zone.

Language was then presented that would set side and rear setbacks requirements in the LBI and GB districts at 0 feet subject to footnote 9. Mr. Baghdady requested clarification. Jeffrey explained that currently the language states that the setbacks are 6 feet or none, subject to footnote 9. Interpretation of this dimensional regulation is unclear and for consistency, none should be changed to 0 feet. Footnote 9 establishes a setback requirement for properties abutting residential districts. Footnote 9 would still be in effect protecting residential properties abutting the commercial zones.

Moved by Baghdady to accept proposed language of the amendments and to schedule public hearings on both proposed amendments for February 28, 2007.

Second by Rojas

Motion passed unanimously.

7:45 p.m. Discussion (continued) - Zoning for Transitional Areas

Jeffrey presented example printouts from the Assessor's data base indicating data that was readily available. The Board requested that information on lot size, building size, height/# of stories, and uses be supplied for all properties in the three areas under study. Mr. Haglund requested that staff prepare a packet on each area to include photographs of existing structures along with other data collected.

There was general discussion among Board members as to how best to approach rezoning of these "transitional" zones. Discussion was continued to the Feb 21st meeting.

8:20 p.m. Discussion (continued) - Open Lot Storage of Multiple Vehicles

Board members generally felt that the current restrictions on the number of parked vehicles allowed in one's driveway did not recognize modern realities. However, they were concerned that having no cap would allow an excessive number of vehicles. Additionally, not limiting the number of vehicles may encourage larger driveways reducing pervious surface area. The question was also raised regarding driveways in front yards and how those were to be interpreted. The Board felt that there is a need to look at the broader resident parking issue and to examine multiple vehicle parking within that context rather than to consider it an isolated issue. The Board therefore requested that staff submit a letter to the Board of Selectmen requesting a one year moratorium on the enforcement of the multiple vehicle parking regulations during which time the Board can study the resident parking issue and prepare an article for the 2008 Annual Town Meeting.

8:45 p.m. Discussion (continued) - Planning Board Rules and Regulations

Continued to the February 21 meeting.

Committee Updates

Ms. Fallon reported that there would be a mega group meeting on March 19 at which upcoming major capital projects would be discussed. Siting of buildings is a concern and planning board members may be interested in attending.

Town Planner's Report

Standing Sign Application - Waverly Landscaping has submitted an application to install a free standing sign on their premises. Recommend scheduling public hearing for march 13, 2007. So recommended.

Smart Growth Zoning District - Several Planning Board members received an email from the Chairman of the Belmont Housing Trust requesting a meeting between the Trust and the Planning Board regarding the potential Smart Growth Zone at the Our lady of Mercy site. Jay noted that several of the concerns raised in that email pertained to details of the zoning and/or potential development that had not yet been developed. Additionally, any meetings should involve the Neighborhood Association. Finally, the Housing Trust will be involved in the final zoning as a prerequisite of establishing a Smart Growth Zone is the support of the local Housing Partnership which in Belmont is the Housing Trust.

Other

Ms. Fallon noted that she had met with Jeffrey and that they would prepare a Comprehensive planning Needs Summary for the march 13 meeting.

Ms. Fallon also requested that the Board examine the need for an "Open Space Zoning" article to be included in the Town's Zoning By-Laws. She suggested that this topic be revisited in the Fall.

9:35 p.m. Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 21, 2007
Town Hall, Conference Room 2

3/13/07 Approved