

**Community Path Implementation Advisory Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

2015 NOV 18 AM 11:06

**March 11, 2015**

- 1) Meeting called to order at approximately 6:05 p.m.
  - a) Present: CPIAC members Michael Cicalese, Heather Ivester, Russell Leino, Vincent Stanton, and Brian Burke; Jeffrey Wheeler, Belmont Office of Community Development
- 2) Mr. Leino volunteered as Secretary for the meeting
- 3) The committee reviewed and approved the March 4, 2015 Meeting Minutes (drafted by Mr. Stanton)
- 4) The committee briefly discussed the timeline for a potential presentation to the Capital Budget Committee (CBC) regarding the request for town funds for the committee
  - a) Mr. Leino requested that Mr. Stanton reach out to the CBC on behalf of the committee for additional information; Mr. Stanton agreed to do so
- 5) The committee discussed proposed definitions of “challenges” and the rationale for defining challenges
  - a) Mr. Leino proposed defining “challenges” as the specific features of the CPAC-recommended route options that raise engineering and/or technical questions for which professional assistance is required to answer
    - i) Mr. Leino stated that the rationale for defining and prioritizing “challenges” in this way was to maximize the utility of the (expected) allocation of \$100,000 in town funds, in order to serve two central goals of the committee:
      - (1) Provide a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen (BoS) regarding route selection based on the technical information contained in a feasibility study or other work product that would be purchased with the town funds
      - (2) Incorporate the feasibility study or other work product into a workable application for state/federal funding once the BoS has selected a route
    - ii) Because the committee assumes that it is unlikely that \$100,000 will be enough to purchase comprehensive feasibility studies of all aspects of all route options (and because additional town funding at this point is unlikely), Mr. Leino suggested that the challenges will need to be prioritized so as to most effectively meet both of the central goals described above (i.e., the committee must strive to get as much useable work product as possible for the money)
    - iii) The committee discussed this proposal at length, with some discussion of whether the focus on *engineering/technical* challenges was appropriate
      - (1) In particular, Ms. Ivester felt that *legal* and *political* challenges, including opposition of abutters and ownership/takings issues should be included in the definition

- (a) The committee generally agreed that legal issues fell under the rubric of questions for which professional assistance is required to answer and should be included
  - (b) On the other hand, several committee members noted that the CPAC had exhaustively considered political concerns (including abutter opposition to particular route segments), and the BoS would already have that information available when selecting a route
- b) Mr. Cicalese and Ms. Ivester noted that it would be essential for the committee to have a standardized way of assessing and evaluating the challenges, and proposed the use of a tool similar to a threat assessment grid for doing so, which Mr. Cicalese described to the committee
  - i) Mr. Stanton noted that CPAC had spent a great deal of time developing and utilizing a similar tool when evaluating the proposed route options, and suggested that it could be adopted for CPIAC's purposes
  - ii) The committee was in general agreement that an assessment tool would be useful, though some members suggested that such a tool would be more useful in *prioritization* of identified challenges, rather than the initial *identification* of potential challenges
- 6) The committee agreed to begin brainstorming possible "challenges"
  - a) Mr. Burke began walking the committee through the CPAC-recommended routes (beginning at Brighton St.) by referring to a large annotated map
    - i) Mr. Wheeler also provided the committee with a handout (created by CPAC) titled "Maps of Potential Community Path Routes"
  - b) The committee preliminarily identified the following challenges:
    - i) Brighton Street underpass or at-grade crossing from Fitchburg Cutoff path
    - ii) Purecoat North property, if path proceeds on south side of Fitchburg Line tracks
    - iii) Underpass from north side of tracks (just past French & Mahoney property) to south side of tracks, if path begins on north side of track and proceeds on south side of tracks
    - iv) Alexander Ave. underpass
    - v) Use of BHS property, if path proceeds on south side of tracks
    - vi) Engineering mitigation of Channing Rd. abutters' concerns regarding privacy and safety, if path proceeds on north side of tracks
    - vii) Access point at Coldwell Banker parking lot, if path proceeds on north side of tracks
- 7) The committee agreed to continue brainstorming at the next meeting, beginning with the overpass/Belmont Center area
- 8) Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.