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**TOWN OF BELMONT  
COMMUNITY PATH IMPLEMENTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**November 9, 2016**

Present: Brian Burke; Michael Cicalese; Vincent Stanton

Absent: Russel Leino; Heather Ivester

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development

The Committee and Pare held a public engagement meeting focused on the central area of the Path – Belmont Housing Authority to the east side of Belmont Center.

Prior to the meeting, presentation materials were available for the public to review at 6:30 p.m.

**7:00 p.m. Meeting began**

Mr. Cicalese introduced the consultants and opened the meeting. He provided a brief overview of Study and the purpose of the meeting.

The consultants presented a PowerPoint presentation reviewing segment options and the matrix. Questions from the audience followed that the consultants responded to. The attached memorandum from Pare, dated November 10, 2016, summarizes the public feedback received at the meeting.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the consultants noted that the PowerPoint presentation and a link to the Belmont Media Center broadcast of the meeting will be made available online through the Town of Belmont webpage.

**9:25 p.m. Meeting ended**

# MEMORANDUM



DATE: November 10, 2016  
TO: Jeffrey Wheeler – Belmont Planning  
CC: Project File  
FROM: Amy Archer  
RE: Meeting 3 – Central Path Alignment Notes

Community Meeting No. 3, focusing on the central section of the Belmont Community Path from the Belmont Housing Authority to the east side of Belmont Center, was held on Wednesday, November 9, 2016. The following summarizes the discussions held during the meeting:

- The height of the proposed rail overpass near the BHA was questioned regarding whether the path was allowed to be closer to the rail if it was elevated. It was explained that the path can be closer than the 15-foot minimum once it reaches a higher elevation above the rail, however, for the majority of the ramp leading up to the bridge, the offset would have to be 15 feet or greater and little area would ultimately be gained.
- Landscaped buffers at the BHA parking lot were questioned with the revised parking lot layout. The revised parking lot layout does account for a landscaped separation between the parking lot and Pearson Road.
- Use of the existing Clark Street Bridge was brought up. The existing Bridge is not wide enough to accommodate the path. It is currently 6 feet wide and the recommended path is 14 feet wide.
- It was suggested that images of the old Clark Street Bridge are available and could be considered for design inspiration.
- It was asked if a particular alignment was not ultimately selected for the path, could it still be considered as a path link or spur. This discussion was targeted towards making the connection between the DPW and Town Field via Midland Street. These critical connections will be considered.
- It was mentioned that Royal Road Woods may have been donated to the Town as open space and use of this land may be restricted based on the land transaction details. The legal use of this land should be investigated.
- The topic of safety, and the various types or perceptions of safety, was discussed. It was mentioned that separate rankings for issues such as bike or pedestrian safety (separation from vehicles, pedestrian, parked cars, etc.) be considered differently from general public safety (police/fire accessibility, lighting, path visibility, etc.).

- The use of the “On-Road” path designation is somewhat confusing in that the path is really proposed adjacent, but separated from, the road.
- The effective width of the sidewalk under the Concord Ave. rail overpass was discussed. Because the edge of the sidewalk is so low (~6’), a few feet of this sidewalk should not be considered usable space.
- In the matrix system ranking scheme, path alignments that are under overpasses and adjacent to vehicles should be ranking low due to the relatively unpleasant experience of being close to vehicles in a confined space, including exposure to noise and exhaust.
- The amount of vehicle interaction should also be heavily weighted, whether it is street crossing or being adjacent to vehicles.
- The discussion of a shared path versus a ped/bike separated path was held. It was noted that fully shared paths are difficult for bike commuters. The speed differential between a commuting cyclist and a walker is too great.
- Adding the length of segment to the weighing system should be considered.
- The need for expanding the 5 categories was discussed. It was mentioned that these five were only a starting point and that additional sub-categories would be included.
- The definition of cost was also discussed. Costs should not only consider the construction cost of the path but other costs such as impact to adjacent roadways and traffic circulation patterns, maintenance costs, and other community costs.
- Aesthetics need to have a stronger weight especially in areas like Belmont Center where they will not only impact path users but the entire community.
- The topic of beginning to drop alternatives was discussed. While it appears at this point that there are alternatives that are significantly less viable than others, it is the desire of the CPIAC to continue forward with all alternatives to fully complete the feasibility analysis.
- Opinions were shared regarding the Royal Road Woods area. Maintaining the large, mature trees should be considered when selecting the alignment through the Royal Road Woods. Additionally, there should be a substantial offset between the path and the road to maximize safety.
- Critical path access points within this section include the connection to Town Field and the Senior Center. Additionally, it was mentioned that Common Street would likely serve a large number of users from residences south of Belmont Center and connections to this roadway should be considered.