

Town of Belmont
COMMUNITY PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 6, 2013
Town Hall, Conference Room 4

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MEETING NOTES

The Community Path Advisory Committee (CPAC) meeting was called to order at approximately 7:07 PM by Chairperson Jeffrey Roth.

Attendance (**boldface** indicates those present)

Committee Members: Jeffrey Roth, John Dieckmann, Cosmo Caterino, Amy DeDeo, and Kevin Sullivan, Price Armstrong, Joseph Noone, **Brian Burke, Charlie Conroy, and Tomi Olsen**, constituting a quorum with seven of ten members present.

Town Officials: Kellie Hebert, Assistant Town Administrator and **Jeffrey Wheeler**, Planning Coordinator.

Others: Hank Thidemann and Mike Cicalese.

Minutes were submitted by Amy DeDeo.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings

After discussion and review, Brian motioned to accept two sets of previous meeting minutes as amended, and John seconded the motion. All voted in favor on this measure. Jeffrey Wheeler captured the minutes corrections that were voted on.

Possible Future Dialogue with MBTA

Jeff Roth proposed a dialogue with the MBTA since some of the proposed paths include rail-with-trail routes. In John's experience, the MBTA does not generally meet with citizen groups. Jeffrey Wheeler pointed out that the MBTA is permitted to meet with official Town committees. When approaching the MBTA, we should ensure that the Town is involved. Charlie proposed we inquire with Cambridge about how they engaged with MBTA on the Alewife-to-Brighton St. rail-with-trail.

Action - Jeffrey Wheeler will reach out to Kellie about how to approach the MBTA.

The Public Forum #1

Leanne transcribed the notes collected at the meeting. She then tagged the data with key words to allow for a quantitative analysis. The results were distributed in hard copy to the committee. Amy asked everyone to please consider that this data is a fraction of the questionnaire collection.

Jeff Roth asked for feedback on the format of the event. The space was felt to be appropriate in size and parking availability. Approximately 50 people attended. Some Committee members felt they weren't prepared enough because they didn't have some of the information that people were looking for. There will be future opportunities to get information out to the public through the Belmont Media Center, papers, and a follow-on forum.

Transitioning to topics of interest brought up at the event, there were concerns about the speed of the train. People were relieved to hear about the possibility of multiple fences separating the trail from the tracks and from private properties.

West Belmont –

Amy's table favored the McLean area due to separation from road and the atmosphere. Kevin found the Town Yard favored. Both tables saw one big challenge – how to connect from the Town Yard across to Trapelo in a safe manner.

Action – Jeffrey Wheeler will get the Trapelo Road plans which we presume to be complete, to provide insights into this question.

Hank asked what the anticipated funding sources are for trail projects. Typically, shared-use paths are sourced from State and Federal grants. There is no way to predict what funding will be available, so it is important to prepare the Town when an opportunity presents itself. Also to put things in perspective, this is part of a larger project that goes beyond Belmont. To this end, feedback was gathered beyond Belmont because residents of nearby towns may work here and shop here. In addition, outside funding can be further justified if there is positive support within both Belmont and within the nearby communities.

Mike, a resident of Channing Road, was asked to share his thoughts on the event. He is looking for a quantifiable assessment of the routes. The group shared our vision for how the results will be quantified in the end. The discussion of a set of evaluation criteria is being developed for assessing options, and weighting of this rubric is being driven in part by the questionnaire.

The Questionnaire

Charlie had the questionnaire sent to Winn Brooke Elementary School. Kevin had the questionnaire sent to Butler Elementary School. Jeff Roth will approach Burbank Elementary School. Jeff also had the questionnaire distributed to the Town Meeting Members, all Town committee chairs, and all Town department heads. The BMLD electrical bill inserts should also be appearing shortly.

Action – Everyone check your electric bills.

Amy provided a top-level summary and feel for the large amount of open-answer questions in the responses to the questionnaire. There was a volunteer at the public forum with experience with open-answer data analysis. The Committee appreciated this offer, and agreed to approach her when all data is collected so (a) she understands the scope of this potential project, and (b) we can request a brief summary of how she might approach analyzing the open results.

Reviewing upcoming calendar of events

2nd Public Forum – May 22nd (proposed for the Wednesday after Town Day).

Closing remarks

A Selectman attended the Public Forum event. In general, the Selectmen are very pleased with the effort and progress of the Committee to date, and they recognize that good work takes time.

Public safety concerns at the forum should be taken under consideration. Cosmo suggests we invite fire and safety to a future CPAC meeting.

Actions

Action – Jeff Roth will reach out to Cambridge/DCR about their interaction with MBTA.

Action - Jeffrey Wheeler will reach out to Kellie Hebert about how to approach the MBTA.

Action – Jeffrey Wheeler will get the Trapelo Road plans which we presume to be complete, and distribute them with the Belmont Center plans.

Action – Amy DeDeo will reach out to Yvette Tenney to let her know we are interested in her helping with the questionnaire analysis, and that we will be contacting her with more details around the end of the month.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by John, and seconded by Kevin. All in favor.

