

## **PLANNING BOARD MEETING**

### **Minutes, April 15, 2003**

**Members present:** Deborah Emello, James Heigham, Andrew McClurg

**Also present:** Tim Higgins, Senior Planner  
10 Citizens

**7:07 p.m.** Meeting opened by A. McClurg.

#### **General Business:**

- The meeting minutes from March 25<sup>th</sup> were approved (3:0).
- Tim Higgins updated the Board on the McLean Hospital waterline installation. Installation will begin the week on April 21<sup>st</sup> with Concord Avenue being closed on Friday evening, April 25<sup>th</sup>. Various department have been meeting regularly with McLean and Paolini (the contractor) to ensure the process is a smooth one. It was noted that there is a new website for the McLean Redevelopment.
- Tim Higgins went through his checklist that included the following:
  - William Brah's request to produce market data. T. Higgins will contact him for additional information.
  - A student Intern could work for the summer on a specific aspect of the corridor. All thought this was an excellent idea and T. Higgins will pursue.
  - May extra meeting date was agreed to be Tuesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>.
  - The format for the report to Town Meeting has been agreed upon. Andy will make a brief presentation of the overall project and then Ken Buckland from the Cecil Group will show a 12-15 minute power point presentation.

#### **Economic Development Study - Goals Statement:**

Andrea Marciari from the Belmont Citizen Forum (BCF) provided the Board with a summary of the April 1<sup>st</sup>, BCF conference on Trapelo Road/Belmont Street Corridor Study. She distributed a seven-page handout (attached). T. Higgins noted that the results strongly support the efforts and findings of the Planning Board to date.

A discussion began on the most recent version of the Goals. The action items have been removed and in some cases combined with the objectives. The Board proceeded to discuss the goal.

A. McClurg wants to keep the statement/objective noting that the road should be one lane of traffic in each direction. A lengthy discussion ensued. Pedestrian safety, bicycle use, speed of vehicles and traffic volumes were discussed relative to requiring a single travel lane in each direction. The need for a traffic report was discussed. Bill Engstrom,

Wendy McDonald, Jan Kruse of Grant Avenue, Sara Oaklander, James Diamond (Benton Square), Nancy Mc Isaac and others actively spoke on this issue. It was agreed that a professional assessment of the impacts of a single lane width needs to be done to generate additional information. A. McClurg asked that staff perform additional word smithing on the first goal after a discussion of over one hour. Wendy McDonald was concerned with the process and noted that the current situation isn't that bad. She wanted to know why a business should be promoted at the cost to the residential neighborhoods. She feels the residents are being ignored. Sara Oaklander and Jeffrey Wheeler suggested that she read a recent editorial written by Jennifer Page answering this question. It is on the Corridor Study web page.

A discussion then took place on the need to identify the next steps in the process. The Town is not going to resolve all of the issues through this planning effort. For example, the areas of the commercial districts must be clearly defined for further discussion to take place. T. Higgins reminded those present that OCD has stated from the beginning of the process that this is merely a first step. A great deal of work will follow.

Sharon Vanderslice reiterated the overwhelming support of those present at the meetings to reduce the width of the pavement (contrary to the position of Mr. Diamond). She suggested changing the text in Goal #1 to read:

*"Evaluate the impacts of narrowing the road."*

Joe Greene spoke noting that he is vice-chair of the Vision 21 Implementation Committee. He supports developing a broad-based support for this effort. The need for enforcement of existing parking regulations is essential.

Goal #3: A brief discussion took place over the objective of promoting locally owned businesses. There was no consensus on the language but it was agreed to be modified, as it would be very difficult to regulate out national chains.

The next meeting should be used to begin the discussion of defining the segments to be studied. Tim Higgins talked about the timeline for the project. He projected a June/July completion with a late fall Town Meeting to act on short-term articles. Zoning setback lines and streetscape improvements could all be acted upon in the fall of 2003.

Historic preservation was cited as being an important objective to include by Sharon Vanderslice. This was agreed to.

### **Other Business:**

The Board agreed to hear the Kendall petition if it is ready on May 13<sup>th</sup>. It can only be for 45 minutes and then the discussion will turn to the goals and objectives.

**9:25** Meeting adjourned. Mr. Heigham moved that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss the ARC litigation - not returning to open session. Role call vote was (3:0) in favor.

