

To: Belmont Planning Board

From: Barbara Fiacco and Joe DeStefano

Date: May 21, 2017

Re: Working Group Meeting with Belmont Fire Department regarding Belmont Day School

On May 12, 2017, we met with Chief David Frizzell and Captain Pizzi of the Belmont Fire Department; Kelly Durfee Cardoza of Avalon Consulting Group; Brendan Largay of Belmont Day School; and Jeffrey Wheeler and Spencer Gober of the Office of Community Development. The meeting was intended to discuss the Fire Department requirements for the proposed Barn structure and proposed driveway currently under Design and Site Plan and Review before the Planning Board.

Chief Frizzell began by noting that in his review of the proposed plans, the fire regulations need to be considered in light of the existing conditions of the property. He stated that the new separate building requires certain fire safety standards to be met including unobstructed access to that building through the proposed access road. He explained that the Fire Department will utilize Day School Lane, not the proposed access road, if there is a fire in the existing school building. When asked whether redesigning the building so that it is attached to existing school would alleviate any identified requirements including the proposed access road, Chief Frizzell said that such a redesigned structure would not eliminate the need for the proposed access road. Finally, Chief Frizzell stated that during a site visit on May 11 that he had not observed traffic issues that would impede access in an emergency.

Chief Frizzell explained that the driveway needs to be built to road standards since it must be able to carry the weight of fire trucks. He indicated that pervious pavement may be acceptable under the fire regulations as long as it can handle weight of the fire trucks. Travel width of 20' is required. He explained that one reason for the width requirement is that there needs to be room to laydown fire hose without fear of it being driven over in the event that the hydrant closer to Belmont Day School is not sufficient. There is nothing in the fire requirements that prohibits parking spaces alongside the access road so long as they do not encroach on the 20-foot width of the road. With respect to the design of the proposed driveway itself, he informed us that the turning radius around the parking lot islands needs to accommodate fire trucks. In particular, the radii of island curbs need to be softened. He expressed his view that this issue should be resolved before Board makes decision. An Auto Run for the radii of the parking lot islands needs to be submitted to the Fire Department for their review and approval.

Chief Frizzell cautioned that the proposed emergency access road needs to be maintained/plowed to insure continued access year round. Ms. Cardoza indicated that Belmont Day School planned to construct a temporary gravel road for construction vehicle access. There was some discussion about how to maintain Concord Avenue clean of debris such as road material, etc. during construction. Chief Frizzell expressed no opinion on this issue.

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When asked, Chief Frizzell stated that, under the fire regulations, (1) there is no prohibition of shared use with other vehicular traffic and (2) the Fire Department was expressing no opinion on whether the emergency access road should be used by all vehicular traffic to access Belmont Day School. If the proposed access road is for emergency access use only, he noted that care needed to be taken with measures to enforce an "emergency access only" condition. The Fire Department has had trouble with removable bollards which freeze in place during the winter as well as locked gates which have, on at least one occasion, prevented quick access by neighboring fire departments when called in to assist the Belmont Fire Department.