



Office of the Board of Selectmen
Town of Belmont
Massachusetts
selectmen@belmont-ma.gov

455 CONCORD AVENUE
BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS 02478
TEL (617) 993-2610
FAX (617) 993-2611
www.belmont-ma.gov

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

SAMI S. BAGHDADY, Chair
MARK A. PAOLILLO, Vice-Chair
JAMES R. WILLIAMS, Selectman

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

DAVID J. KALE

ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

PHYLLIS L. MARSHALL

July 16, 2015

Dear Town Meeting Members:

Enclosed please find the Warrant for a **Special Town Meeting** scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on **Thursday, August 6, 2015** at the Chenery Middle School Auditorium. There is one article as follows:

ARTICLE 1: CITIZENS' PETITION – BELMONT CENTER RESTORATION PROJECT

Please be reminded that the Warrant and any additional information can be found in the Town Meeting section of the Town Clerk's web page at www.Belmont-ma.gov.

Sincerely,

Sami S. Baghdady, Chair
Mark A. Paolillo, Vice-Chair
James R. Williams, Selectman

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

PLAN ZERO

	<u>SYM</u>	<u>LIGHTING LEGEND</u>	<u>QT</u>
A		ROADWAY 22' SINGLE	14
B		ROADWAY 22' DOUBLE	1
C		POST TOP 14'	27
D		ROADWAY 18' SINGLE	6
U		IN GROUND WALL LIGHT	18
T		IN GROUND TREE LIGHT	16
		SOLAR FLAG POLE LIGHT	1
		PROP. 2" CONDUIT	
		PROP. SD2.030 ELECTRICAL PULL BOX	
		EXISTING LIGHT	

-
- A hand-drawn map on a white background. At the top left is a red dot. Below it is a green irregular shape. To the right of this shape is the text 'TREE EXISTING/' followed by 'TO REMAIN' on the next line. Below the green shape is another green irregular shape. To the right of this shape is the text 'TREE PROPOSED'. At the bottom left is a yellow dot. Below it is a red horizontal line. To the right of the yellow dot is the text 'STREET LIGHT'. At the bottom right is the text 'LIMIT OF ISLAND'.
- TREE EXISTING/
TO REMAIN
- TREE PROPOSED
- STREET LIGHT
- LIMIT OF ISLAND



RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

2015 JUL 30 PM 3:00

34 Cushing Ave.
Belmont, MA 02478
July 30, 2015
rie@royepstein.com (preferred
means of contact)

BY EMAIL

Town Clerk
Town Hall
455 Concord Avenue
Belmont, MA 02478

Dear Town Clerk:

I would like to submit an amendment to Article 1 in the Warrant for the August 6, 2015 Special Town Meeting as follows:

Insert ", with three parking spaces in front of the Belmont Savings Bank oriented as indicated on the attached drawing titled Plan A-Revised" after the words "a town lawn".

The Plan A-Revised drawing is included with this letter. For reference, I have also included the original Plan A sketch of the relevant area.

The reason for this amendment is to suggest a compromise position that addresses some of the criticisms of Plan A voiced at the November 17, 2014 Special Town Meeting and the May 28, 2015 meeting with the Board of Selectmen.

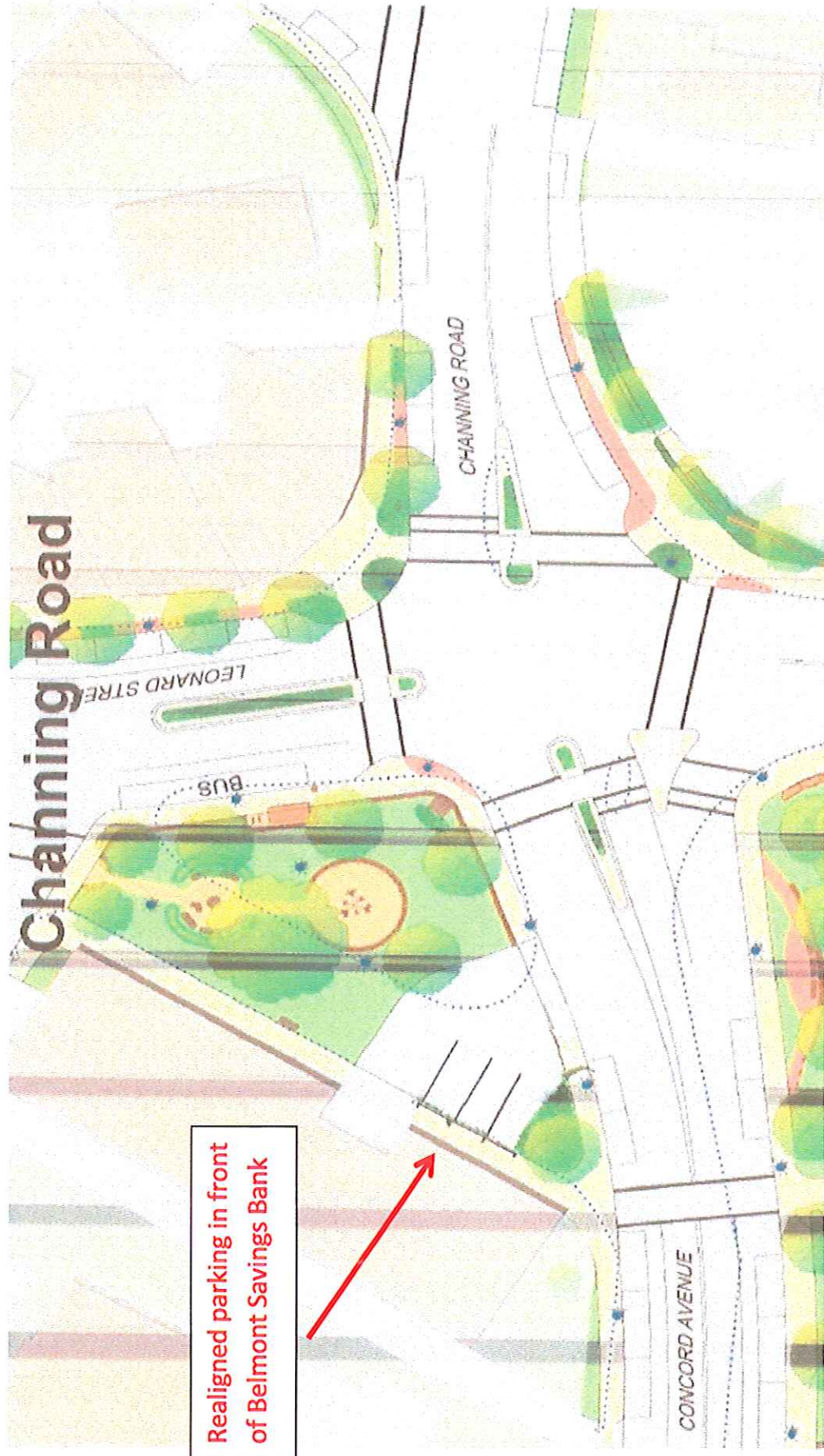
The amendment indicates realignment of the parking area in front of the Belmont Savings Bank to make it easier to access from Concord Ave. There is no material change in the amount of green space compared to the original Plan A.

Please advise if Town Counsel or the Moderator have any comments or suggested edits.

Thank you.

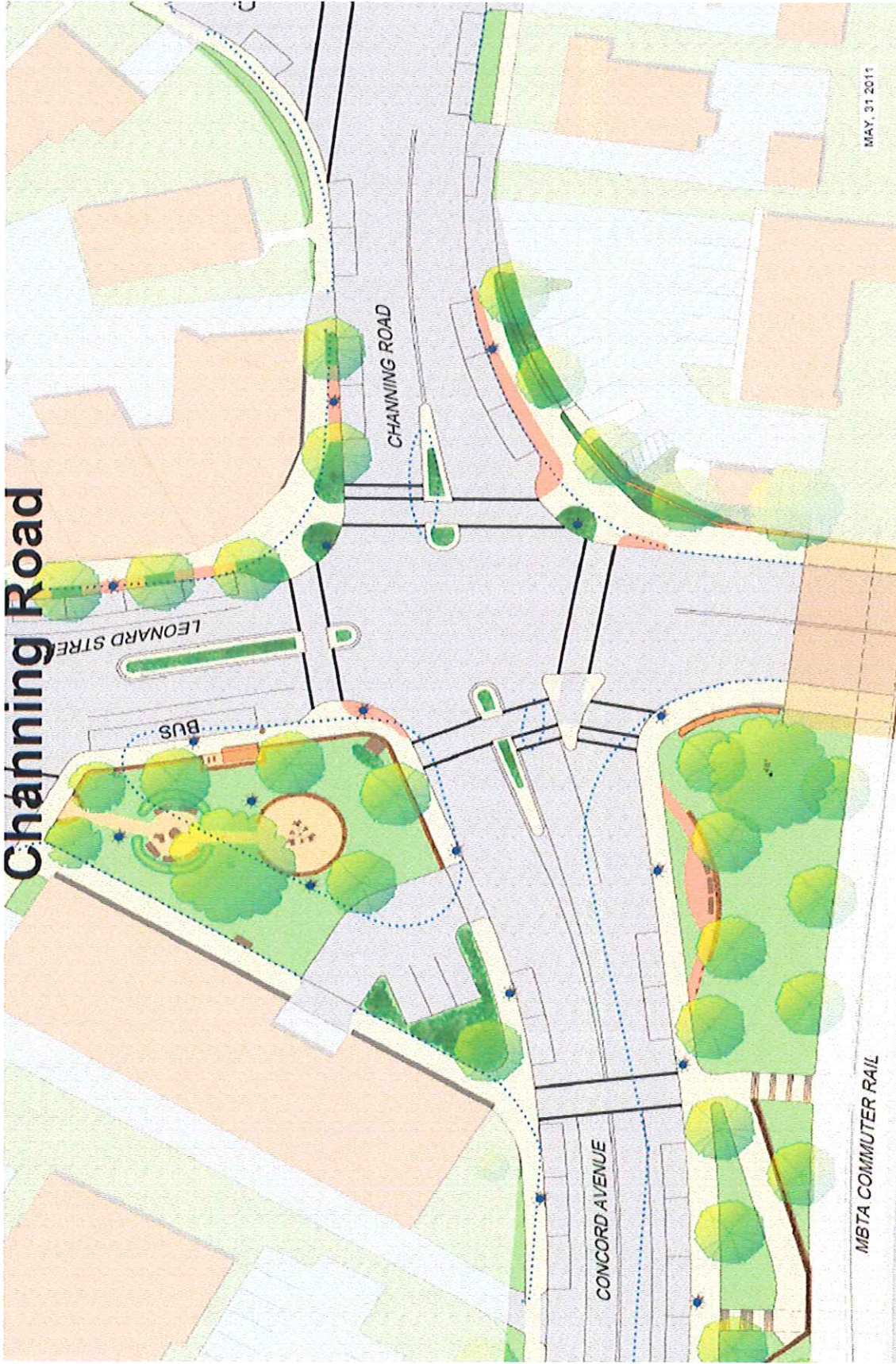
Roy Epstein

PLAN A -- REVISED



PLAN A -- ORIGINAL

Channing Road



MBTA COMMUTER RAIL

MAY 31 2011



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Town of Belmont
Massachusetts*

selectmen@belmont-ma.gov

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TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

DAVID J. KALE

ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

PHYLLIS L. MARSHALL

April 22, 2015

Dear Town Meeting Members:

Enclosed please find the Warrant for a **Special Town Meeting** scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on **Wednesday, May 6, 2015** at the Belmont High School Auditorium. The articles included are as follows:

ARTICLE 1: TRANSFER FROM FREE CASH TO FUND SNOW AND ICE DEFICIT- \$748,000

This article authorizes the transfer of balances from Free Cash necessary to cover the Public Works budget shortfall in the Snow and Ice account for Fiscal Year 2015, as a result of the record snowfall experienced this past winter.

ARTICLE 2: TRANSFER FROM SPECIAL EDUCATION STABILIZATION FUND- \$250,000

This article appropriates \$250,000 from the Special Education Stabilization Fund to the School General Fund to cover the cost of state and federally mandated Special Education services incurred in excess of the School Department budget for Fiscal Year 2015. The School Department has experienced substantial and unanticipated increases in costs for Special Education out-of-district tuition, transportation and direct services.

Sincerely,

Sami S. Baghdady, Chair
Mark A. Paolillo, Vice-Chair
James R. Williams, Selectman

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

FACT SHEET
BELMONT CENTER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

A. THE HISTORY:

On November 17, 2014, a Special Town Meeting was held to request the appropriation of \$2.75 million for the Belmont Center Reconstruction Project. Concept plans of the Belmont Center improvements were presented. It was stated by the Board of Selectmen and Town Officials that the building plans were not in final form (90% complete), and could change based on additional comments by residents.

The full text of the vote adopted by two-thirds of Town Meeting is: “That \$2,750,000 be appropriated for the Belmont Center Reconstruction Project and to meet this appropriation, \$1,300,000 be appropriated from Free Cash and further to meet this appropriation the Town Treasurer with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, is authorized to borrow a sum of \$1,450,000 and issue bonds or notes under the provisions of Chapter 44 of the General Laws or any enabling authority; and to take any action necessary to carry out the project.”

Town Meeting did not vote to approve any particular plan.

B. WHAT HAPPENED:

Since the November Special Town Meeting, many comments were received from residents about the reconstruction of the Delta and elimination of the roadway in front of Belmont Savings Bank. A resident petition was circulated. In response, the Board of Selectmen scheduled a forum to address resident concerns.

On May 14, 2015, the Town Clerk sent a notice to all Town Meeting members that the Board of Selectmen had scheduled a meeting on May 28, 2015 to update residents on the Belmont Center Reconstruction Project. Notice of this meeting was also on the Town’s website, Twitter, and in the general media.

The notice stated: “As a part of this update, the Board will receive information on the current design and possible design alternatives of the ‘Green Space’ located in front of Belmont Savings Bank. This will be an opportunity for residents to provide feedback to the Board of Selectmen on this component of the project.”

The May 28th meeting of the Board of Selectmen was well attended. After an extended and lively discussion, the Board of Selectmen unanimously voted to adopt a reconfiguration which would enlarge the Delta, but retain a narrower drive-through with parallel parking spaces in front of the Bank. Some members of the Belmont Council on Aging requested an area in front of the Bank allowing a safer drop-off for those who are elderly and/or handicapped and need access to the Bank.

C. REASONS FOR THE RECONFIGURATION:

The Board of Selectmen was motivated primarily by public safety concerns, and the interest of the Belmont Community as a whole. It decided that the reconfiguration of the Delta resulted in a better design for Belmont Center, for the following reasons:

- The three isolated parking spaces within the two lane drive for access to and from the Bank's indoor parking lot, as provided on the previous design, presented a congested and potentially dangerous traffic situation.

- The new parallel parking spaces within the drive in front of the Bank provide safer parking for senior citizens and those with young families on a less travelled way. In addition, those spaces are more accessible to the customers of other businesses within the Center.

- An alternative traffic pattern allows motorists to bypass the busy Concord Avenue/Leonard Street intersection.

- To provide for the needs of the Town's elderly and/or handicapped, including a handicapped accessibility space.

The reconfiguration of the Green Space will not affect any other design aspects of the Belmont Center Project, including the sidewalk in front of the delta and crosswalk system. In addition, the delta will remain considerably larger than what currently exists.

D. TOWN MEETING'S ROLE AND THE LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

According to Town Counsel, the Board of Selectmen, having been designated to serve both in the role of a board of public works and of park commissioners, have exclusive control over road and park repairs and improvements, subject to the appropriation of funds by the Town Meeting. Oversight of the Belmont Center Improvement Project is an executive function that is the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen. It is common for the board or committee charged with implementing any kind of capital project to make design changes and modifications to plans after Town Meeting has appropriated the funding for the project (e.g. the Underwood Pool).

The current Special Town Meeting Article and Motion both provide that the Board of Selectmen and other Town officials "be directed" by Town Meeting to adhere to the concept plan presented at the November 17, 2014 Special Town Meeting. However, decisions about the award and implementation of the contract for the project, including project design, are the province of the Board of Selectmen. The Board properly undertook its responsibility to finalize the project design, with ample public input, taking into account what the Board believed to be the best interests of the public. Having appropriated the funds for the project, the Legislative branch of Town government (Town Meeting) has no legal authority to "direct" the Board of Selectmen on how to carry out its executive functions and responsibilities.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Sami S. Baghdady, Chair
Mark A. Paolillo, Vice-Chair
James R. Williams

Belmont Center Greenspace Response to Questions

Q: What is the cost of the consultant services for the Belmont Center Project?

A: Concept Development - \$82,700. Design - \$201,400. Construction - \$45,000.

Q: What does the grading plan (topography) look like for the greenspace?

A: Plans of each of the three greenspace concepts, each showing topographic survey, are attached. Each alternative yields an elevation difference of between 7 and 8 feet.

The maximum height of the proposed retaining wall is 2 feet.

Q: What analysis has been done about the impact on traffic on Leonard Street and surrounding streets if the present cut-through in front of the bank is eliminated.

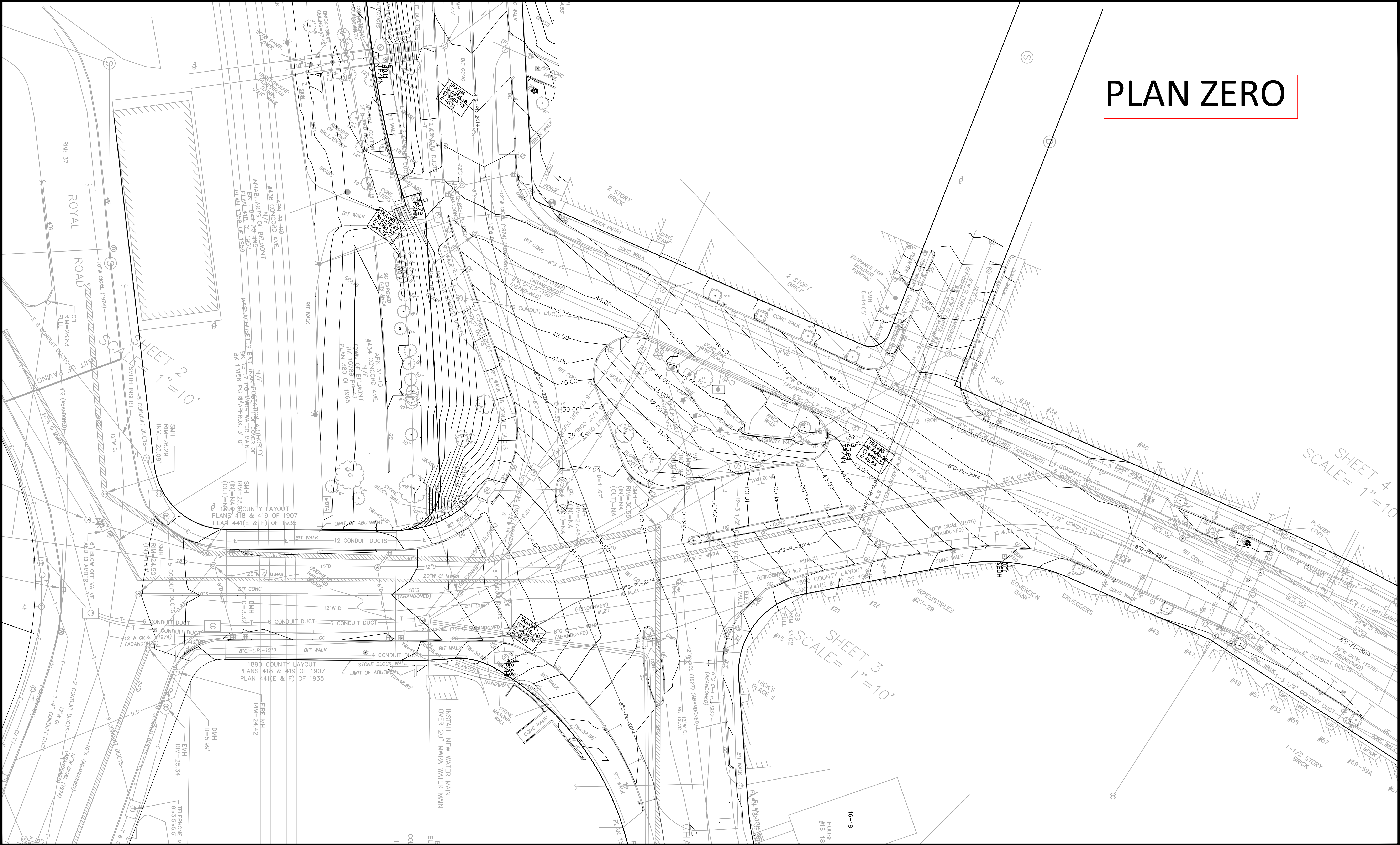
A: During the Traffic Advisory Committee Belmont Center public hearings in 2010/2011 the traffic consultant, the BSC Group, did consider traffic impacts on the main roadways in and around Belmont Center. The cut-through was not considered a major roadway.

Q: How important is the cut-through to traffic flow in the Center?

A: An alternative traffic pattern allows motorists to bypass the busy Concord Avenue/Leonard Street intersection.

Q: What is the area of the island (aka Plan 0), the area of the island in Plan A (included in the original construction contract documents) and Plan B (approved May 28, 2015)?

A: The island is 4240 sf. The island in Plan A is 7870 sf. The island in Plan B is 6235 sf. These actual figures are determined based on the use of AutoCAD technology.



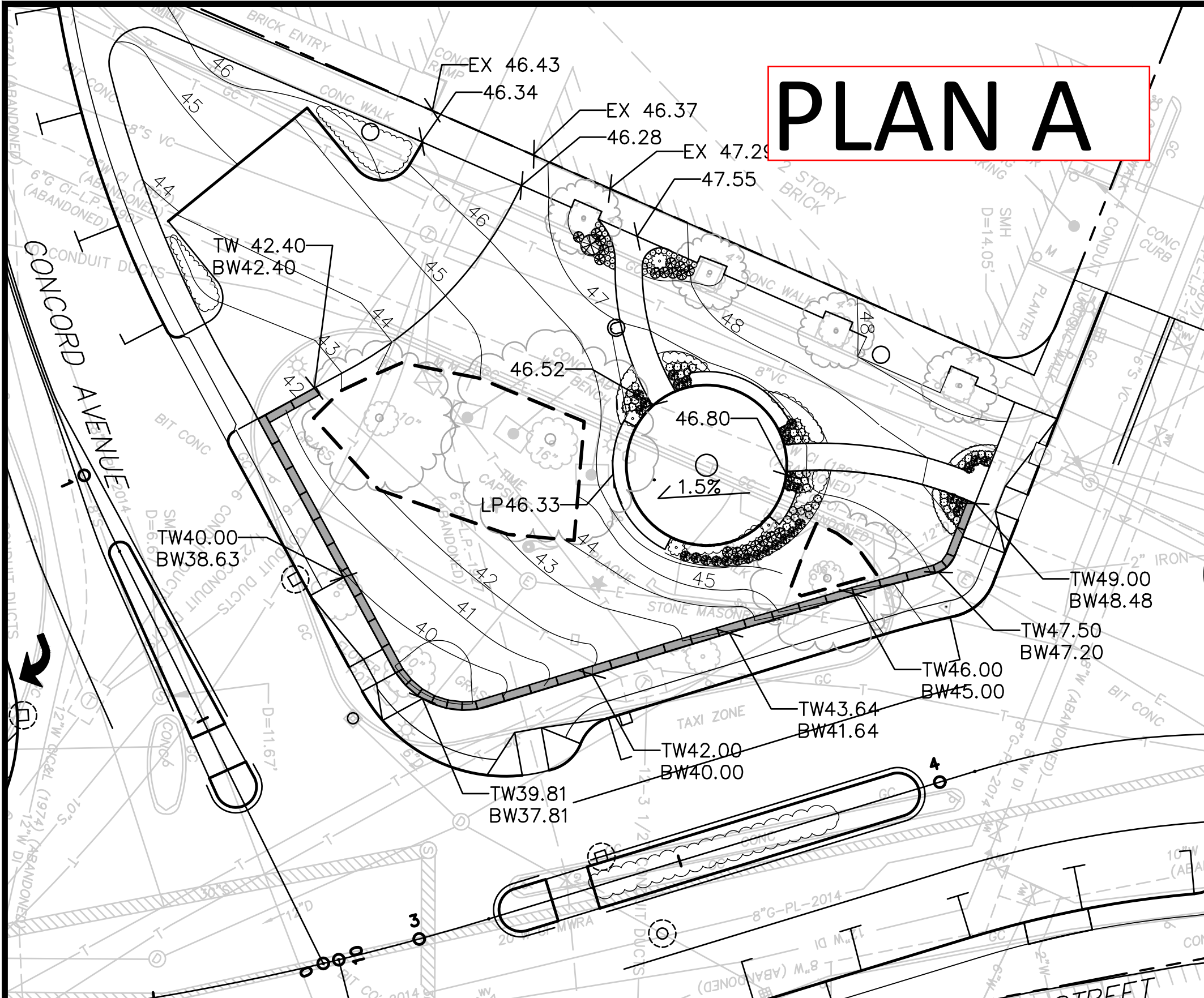
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PLAN ZERO

SHEET 4
SCALE= 1"=10'

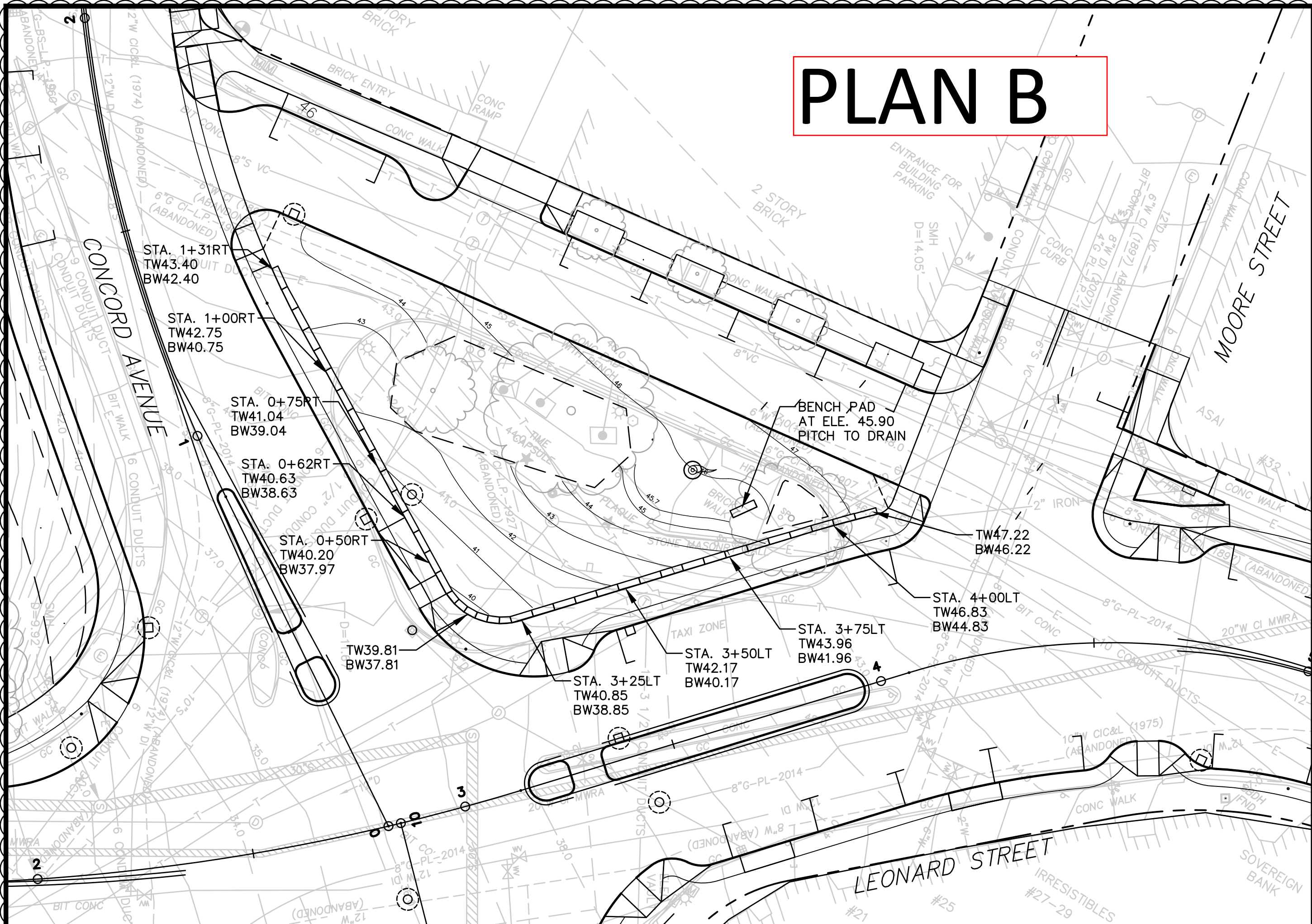
SHEET 3
SCALE= 1"=10'

PLAN A



GRADING DETAIL (BELMONT GREEN)
SCALE: 1" = 20'

PLAN B



GRADING DETAIL (BELMONT GREEN)
SCALE: 1" = 20'

**AMENDMENTS RECEIVED FOR
AUGUST 6, 2015 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

To the Motion for Article 1

Submitted by Yvette Tenney, Precinct 1

Moved: That in place of the revised Belmont Center conceptual plan adopted by the Board of Selectmen at its hearing on May 28, 2015, the Board of Selectmen and other Town officials be directed to draw up documents pertaining to the Belmont Center Restoration Project to preserve unaltered the layout of the delta and the road in front of the Belmont Savings Bank with its angled parking spots, as it has existed for many years, was in existence on the day of the Special Town Meeting of Nov 17, 2014, and still exists today, July 20, 2015.

Explanation

This amendment is "Plan Zero" (no change from past years) for the delta and road in front of Belmont Savings Bank. Neither Plan A (voted at Special Town Meeting on Nov 17, 2014), nor Plan B (voted by Selectmen at a hearing on May 28, 2015) provides enough improvement over the status quo to warrant the loss of the angled parking spaces or the bank cut-through. While it would be wonderful to have a real Belmont Commons, this space is inadequate. None of these plans can overcome the limitations of a small delta in the midst of traffic. The question is how to maximize its use. Plan Zero (as it has in the past) provides the most benefit for the most people: a green space with seating, a cut-through to facilitate traffic at difficult times, and the largest number of conveniently located and easy to use, angled parking spots

Submitted by Donald Mercier, Precinct 8

Moved: that the main motion be amended to add the words " or the bid documents of January/February 2015" after the date, May 28, 2015 and by deleting all of the words after the phrase " Board of Selectmen and other Town officials be directed to" ,and adding the words "maintain the present nine (9) parking spaces and roadway between Moore Street and Concord Avenue, in front of the Belmont Savings Bank" so that the amended motion reads as follows:

Moved:

That in place of the revised Belmont Center Improvements conceptual plan adopted by the Board of Selectmen at its hearing on May 28, 2015 or the bid documents of January/February 2015, the Board of Selectmen and other Town officials be directed to maintain the present nine(9) parking spaces and roadway between Moore Street and Concord Avenue, in front of the Belmont Savings Bank.

Explanation:

As a member of the Traffic Advisory Committee since January 2011, I voted against the plan that removed these parking spaces and the roadway at Belmont Savings. The objective is to retain as many parking spaces as possible and preserve the angle parking option for visitors to Belmont Center. The visual value of the green delta, usable only for 90 days, is less than the value of 365 days of parking.

August 6th, Special Town Meeting

Green Space: Process, Pedestrians & Parking

What is the purpose of this article?

You are being asked to vote for an article that instructs the Board of Selectmen (BOS), as the overseers of the Town Center Reconstruction project, to adhere to the original design documents that the Town completed in December, put out to bid in January and February and contracted to build on April 21st of this year (aka "Plan A").

By voting "YES" you will be instructing the BOS to implement the vision for Belmont Center represented in the design documents and presented to Town Meeting in November, 2014. You will be instructing them to put aside their own plan for the Town Center (aka "Plan B"), which was unveiled and immediately adopted in a May 28th Special Hearing of the Board without review by the Planning Board, Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC), Town Meeting, or the public.

Where did Plan A come from?

Plan A, the original design plan for the Belmont Center Reconstruction, was the product of a four-year-long process of public meetings, deliberations and hearings by the TAC, the Planning Board, the BOS, and Town Meeting. It represents the consensus plan of Belmont as a community. The extensive public vetting included:

- Four Belmont Center information sessions hosted by the TAC from October 2010 to January 2011 with Planning Board input
- A presentation at Town Meeting in May, 2014
- A presentation at Meet Belmont in August, 2014
- Discussion at precinct information sessions hosted by the BOS in September, 2014
- A presentation at a joint meeting of the BOS, the Warrant Committee and the Capital Budget Committee in October, 2014
- A presentation at the League of Women Voters' Warrant Briefing in November, 2014
- A presentation and discussion at a Special Town Meeting in November, 2014

Where did Plan B come from?

Plan B was drawn up by Director of Community Development, Glenn Clancy, at the instruction of Selectman Sami Baghdady in the days leading up to a May 28th meeting. This meeting was advertised as an update to Belmont Center Reconstruction; no advance mention was made of changes to the contracted plan. After being introduced at the May 28th meeting, it was immediately adopted that evening, without input from any of the bodies that contributed to Plan A.

What are the differences between Plan A and Plan B?

The major differences between the Town Meeting-approved Plan A and the Selectmen's Plan B concern the existing "cut-through" road in front of Belmont Savings Bank. Plan A removes the cut-through and uses the space freed up to create a continuous lawn linking the current

landscaped traffic island with the sidewalk that runs in front of Belmont Savings Bank and the adjacent parking garage. Plan B restores a narrower cut-through road than the one in place today and four parallel parking spaces in front of Belmont Savings Bank in place of six parking spaces in the original redesign (Plan A).

The lawn feature is the centerpiece of the Town Center Reconstruction project. As explained to Town Meeting in November by Glenn Clancy, it plays a critical role in the traffic calming and pedestrian friendly features of the reconstruction plan, enforces a single lane of traffic in each direction for the length of Leonard Street, removes a troublesome "pinch point" at Moore Street. Finally, the lawn provides more space for pedestrians to walk, sit, socialize and relax.

Does Plan B increase parking in Belmont Center?

No. It actually reduces parking by two spaces. Plan A, the design for the Town Center Reconstruction that was contracted in April, includes **six parking places** in the area around Belmont Savings Bank: three off-street spots adjacent to the lower entrance to the Belmont Savings parking garage and three new spaces adjacent to the entrance to Belmont Savings Bank on Concord Avenue. Plan B offers just **four, parallel spaces** along a narrower cut-through lane in front of Belmont Savings bank, and eliminates the Concord Ave spaces.

Does removing the cut-through road pose a safety risk?

No. Just the opposite. The town lawn feature is a pillar of the pedestrian-friendly and traffic calming features of the design. It replaces a small, little-used island of green space bounded on all sides by heavily trafficked streets with a continuous lawn accessible from the sidewalk in front of Belmont Savings Bank. Further, the removal of the cut-through is intended to remove a busy, confusing and hectic intersection at Moore and Leonard Streets, where two lanes of traffic expand to three lanes, creating a pinch point that is dangerous for motorists and pedestrians.

Does how I vote have implications beyond the Town Center?

It does. The Belmont Center Reconstruction is one of a long list of infrastructure projects in Belmont over which the Board of Selectmen will have jurisdiction and about which there are differences of opinion within town. Several projects will come to Town Meeting in the near future: the Belmont Community Path, the Grove Street Playground and the Belmont Incinerator site among them.

By voting "YES," you will be affirming that process and transparency are key elements of planning in Belmont. Major infrastructure projects should not be designed by whim and adopted hastily. They should be deliberate and represent the interests of the whole community. Plan A meets that standard. Plan B simply does not. Conversely, by voting "NO", you are agreeing with the Selectmen that, within the four corners of a project, the BOS has total authority to change any element of the design at any time and for any reason. In such a system, there would be no such thing as an "agreed upon plan" for any project. Belmont would be in the position of waiting until each ribbon cutting to see what the Selectmen decided to build.

Questions regarding this page should be directed to:
Paul Roberts, Town Meeting Member Precinct 8,
paulroberts@gmail.com, 617 932-1234 and/or
Bonnie Friedman, Town Meeting Member Precinct 3,
home@bonnieanddavid.com, 617 484-1388.



May 28, 2015

