

2019 AUG 13 AM 9:01



**Transportation Advisory Committee**

July 18, 2019

**Minutes**

Committee Members Present: Dana Miller (Chair), Larry MacDonald (Vice Chair), Annis Sengupta (Clerk), Jessie Bennett, Clifford Gaysunas, Jeffrey Roth (arr 7:18)

Ex Officio Committee Members Present: Glenn Clancy (Belmont Director of Community Development and Town Engineer); Jay Marcotte (Director, Department of Public Works)

**7:03 pm Meeting Opened**

**7:08 pm Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Correction: Add Jay Marcotte to Ex-Officio members present on June 27, 2019.

Minutes carried 3 to 0 with two abstentions.

**7:09 pm Distribution of Materials**

To understand how we could use data that is currently available to help us determine in which instances traffic-calming might be used to ameliorate traffic problems, the TAC reviewed and discussed in some depth the results of three speed studies prepared by the Belmont Police Department.

**7:10 pm Review of Draft Traffic Calming Policy**

TAC members discussed the scoring criteria in Table One of Section VIII. PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF TRAFFIC CALMING REQUESTS of the draft Traffic Calming Policy.

The questions considered by the committee addressed the following:

- 1) Are all of the proposed scoring criteria necessary?
- 2) Are the proposed scoring criteria sufficient? Should additional criteria be used?
- 3) Is it necessary to assign points to each scoring category and, if so, how will the Committee assign these points?

The committee agreed on the following:

- 1) The need for traffic calming is strongly determined by four criteria:
  - a) Excessive traffic speed
  - b) Excessive traffic volume
  - c) Excessive cut-through traffic
  - d) Potential for automobile conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists.
- 2) The purpose of the scoring criteria is to establish a minimum eligibility for the investment of Town funds in an in-depth study of the reported problem so that the Town can determine whether traffic calming measures might ameliorate the problem.
- 3) In most instances, the Town will use documented information about the location of the reported problem, combined with data provided by the Belmont Police Department about the speed and volume of automobile traffic, as a basis for its evaluation of the reported problem.
- 4) Points could be awarded such that, above a certain threshold, 1 point determines that there is a problem and additional points could be used to indicate a location with a greater problem.

The TAC discussed criteria and options for measurement:

**Speed:** Members discussed using the following criteria to identify a speeding problem: if the 85th percentile speed is at least 5mph over the posted speed limit, the road would be considered to have a speeding problem and would receive one point. Multiple Committee members expressed their dissatisfaction with the Federally regulated definition of speeding as occurring only in the instances in which the 85th percentile of speed on a road exceeds the posted speed limit, the circularity of this definition, and the auto-centricity of this definition.

**Volume:** Glenn will consider road classifications and make recommendations for volume thresholds to use in scoring.

**Cut-through Traffic and traffic volume:** TAC members discussed using the following criteria to identify cut-through traffic. If peak-hour traffic is 10% or more of total daily traffic, the road would be considered to have a cut-through traffic problem and would receive one point.

TAC discussed the benefits and drawbacks of using a binary versus a relative scoring. The Committee also discussed using a combination of a binary and a relative system in which, for example, when considering cut-through traffic, a road might receive one point if its peak traffic volume exceeds 10% of its daily traffic volume and the road might receive an additional point for every 5% above that 10% threshold.

Potential for conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists could be identified using the following criteria:

- 1) Pedestrian Route: lack of sidewalks or bicycle lanes and sidewalks in poor condition tend to force pedestrians and bicyclists into traffic.
  - a) Measures: absence of sidewalks; absence of bicycle lanes, relative condition of sidewalk from town wide sidewalk inventory.
- 2) Traffic Collisions: any collisions between cars and pedestrians or bicyclists in prior 3 year period indicates high conflict potential.
- 3) Pedestrian Generators: schools, community centers, libraries, churches, bus stops located along road increase potential for conflict.
- 4) Safe Routes to School: road designation as part of Safe Routes to School indicates higher potential for conflict.
- 5) Residential Density: higher density along the street in question generates more pedestrians and higher potential for conflict. Still need to define threshold based on the available data.

TAC discussed adding explicit language about bicyclists and bicycle routes to the draft policy and included Safe Routes to School as a criteria. TAC also discussed eliminating the Residential Density criteria because most of the town has a density that would suggest some level of traffic calming to be appropriate. Concerns were raised that General Residence areas have significantly higher density than other areas of town; even in the absence of other pedestrian generators, they will have more pedestrians.

### **Additional Considerations**

These criteria are only a way to identify areas where speed, volume, or cut-through traffic is high and pedestrian or bicycle conflicts are likely. Successful scoring criteria will not suggest that all roads in town are eligible for traffic calming and they will not point to a single, specific solution--like additional sidewalks. Once the criteria are determined, they will need to be tested at different locations where we already know we need to explore traffic calming. Further study of pedestrian and bicycle use, roadway geometry, number of intersections and pedestrian crosswalks and other considerations that cannot be assessed with available data will be evaluated as part of an engineering study for streets that qualify for consideration under the Town's Traffic Calming Policy.

### **Next Steps**

- TAC members were asked to draft their preferred criteria and return prepared to discuss and finalize criteria. TAC Chair Dana Miller offered to take the lead in revising the criteria to reflect the initial conversation.

**8:57 pm      Discussion of August Meeting Dates**

Glenn Clancy will send a request for availability of members for August dates (8, 15, 22, 29).

**9:15 pm      Old Business**

None.

**9:13 pm      New Business**

- Preliminary Discussion – 2 Hour Parking Request – Belmont Street.

A petition has come in from Hair Now at 165 Belmont Street. Street parking is currently signed for 1 hour parking. The multiple-page petition states that 2-hour parking would better suit the businesses in that area of town.

TAC will hold a hearing on the issue September 12th.

**9:16 pm      Meeting Adjourned**



# Transportation Advisory Committee

## TOWN OF BELMONT

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Annis Sengupta - Clerk

Jessica Bennett  
David Coleman  
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Charles Hamad  
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Jeffrey Roth

**Date:** July 11, 2019

**To:** Members – Transportation Advisory Committee

**From:** Glenn R. Clancy, Committee Liaison

**Subject:** Agenda for Meeting on July 18, 2019 at 7:00 PM in Town Hall Conference Room 2, 455 Concord Avenue. If you cannot attend the meeting, please contact me via e-mail.

7:00 – 7:05 Approval of Minutes (June 26, 2019 and June 27, 2019)

7:05 – 8:30 Review of Draft Traffic Calming Policy

- Section VIII, Table 1
- Other Sections as time permits

8:30 – 8:40 Discussion of September Meeting Dates

8:40 – 8:45 Old Business

- No Known Items

8:45 – 8:50 New Business

- Preliminary Discussion – 2 Hour Parking Request – Belmont Street

8:50 Adjourn

Note: Times are tentative depending on the flow of the meeting, the time of any particular item may deviate ten to fifteen minutes from the schedule.

Cc: Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator  
Sgt Ben Mailhot, Belmont Police Department  
Jay Marcotte, Director, Department of Public Works  
Richard McLaughlin, Belmont Police Chief