

**TOWN OF BELMONT
COMMUNITY PATH PROJECT COMMITTEE**

<https://belmontcommunitypath.com/>

MEETING MINUTES

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: March 13, 2024
TIME: 3:25 PM

February 28, 2024 Remote Meeting (held via Zoom)

CPCC Members: Holly Muson, Bonnie Friedman, Vincent Stanton, Phil Lawrence, Eric Perkins, Ellen Sugarman (arrived 8:08 AM)

Ex Officio Members: Glenn Clancy (left at 9:12 AM), Patrice Garvin

Members of Public: Aleida Leza, Paul Cobuzzi, Jarrod Goentzel

Nitsch Engineering: John Michalak (left at 8:55 AM)

Called to order 8:03 AM

1. MPO Meeting on February 15: Patrice Garvin and Glenn Clancy attended the February 15 Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting to assure the MPO about the readiness of the project during the public comment period.
2. Phase 1: Preparation for the March 7, 2024 MassDOT 25% Public Design Hearing at 7 PM at the Belmont Senior Center: John Michalak gave a readout of the state of the preparations for the March 7th MassDOT 25 Percent Design Hearing. Holly Muson articulated how important this is to the community, and that the website needs to be updated with current information right away. J. Michalak responded that it would be done shortly. He said that MassDOT was reviewing his draft presentation, anticipated to be approximately 30 minutes long. He also stated they will have visuals for public viewing prior to the presentation, including those showing proposed easements. J. Michalak stated there are around a dozen easements - almost all would be temporary, except 7 Channing Road, which requires a permanent easement. Easements have changed somewhat due to tunnel design changes (cut and cover, and retaining wall). Cut and cover will be done in 4 days, and the expedited schedule means the contractor needs more room for equipment and material removal. The revised interior dimensions of the tunnel are 10-feet-high by 14-feet-high.
3. Phase 1, Moving to the 75% Design:
 - a. The Committee discussed a date for a site walk with abutters on Pleasant Street and Channing Road, and agreed on Saturday, April 6 with a rain date of Sunday, April 7. J. Michalak agreed that he and Sean Sanger of Copley Wolff could attend that weekend. He said that they would generate a flyer for that session and that they would prepare presentation materials to show residents the types of plantings, fencing, etc. proposed, based on feedback from the previous abutter site walk (held November, 2019). G. Clancy will mail the flyer to abutters ahead

of the April 6 session. Vince pointed out the knotweed infestation along much of the tracks near the Belmont Center Station. J. Michalak agreed that this is a problem, but will likely not be completely resolved as part of the construction of the path.

b. H. Muson asked J. Michalak what else would be required to complete the 75% design documents. J. Michalak noted they will need resolution of aesthetic elements such as railings and to meet with boards such as the Historic District Commission again to confirm that any outstanding concerns are resolved. The Committee will try to coordinate a meeting with multiple committees/boards at the same time for efficiency. 75% design is expected to be submitted to MassDOT by June 30, 2024. Nitsch is trying to meet with MBTA ahead of the submittal, specifically around the barrier between the path and the tracks and signal coordination at Brighton Street crossing. Grayco is already working on the MBTA easements needed. The MassDOT review of the 75% set is expected to take 60 days.

c. Nitsch has to go back to survey the propane tanks and parking at the police station. MBTA said the propane tanks could be relocated if necessary. G. Clancy stated that the Belmont Fire Department has a permitting process regarding securing the tanks and that abutters have already received a mailing about that process. Given that winter is nearly over, MBTA should be able to wait to finalize the propane tank locations so they are out of the way of the path.

d. J. Michalak noted that as part of the 75% design review, the Conservation Commission will be asked to review impact to the wetlands on the south side of the tracks along Royal Road.

4. Other Phase I issues.

a. G. Clancy noted that he and P. Garvin have been trying to arrange a meeting with the owner of 7 Channing Road (Mr. Jamal) ahead of the 25% Design Public Hearing, but Mr. Jamal is out of the country and unavailable to meet.

b. G. Clancy made a grant request to MassTrails for \$475,000 for right-of-way acquisition. MassTrails requires a proponent match so G. Clancy put in an off-cycle request to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for \$135,000. The total amount was based on G. Clancy's experience with previous easements for the Trapelo Road and Wellington Safe Routes to School projects. Abutters can choose to donate (not accept payment for easements), and in those cases many did, but we need to be prepared in the event that property owners do not want to donate. A previous CPC request was already approved by Town Meeting for the administrative and legal portion of the appraisal work for the right-of-way acquisitions. The committee discussed creating an FAQ to review the chronology of funding to date, and Vince Stanton offered to draft one.

5. Phase 2 Update: G. Clancy stated that Pare had hired a subcontractor, WSP, to do the survey work along BHA and DPW property and was still waiting for information to finalize their own work.

6. Future Agenda Items: Carried over from previous minutes

a. Waverley Square Business Owner Interviews to Phase 2 of the Path will go through the Square.

7. Next meeting: Wednesday, March 13th, 2024, 8:00 AM.

8. Adjourned at 9:21 AM.

Minutes Submitted by Phil Lawrence.