

**Town of Brookline  
Advisory Committee Minutes**

Sean Lynn-Jones, Chair

Date: May 21, 2019

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**Present:** Carla Benka, Ben Birnbaum, Cliff Brown, Carol Caro, John Doggett, Dennis Doughty, Harry Friedman, Janet Gelbart, David-Marc Goldstein, Neil Gordon, Susan Granoff, Kelly Hardebeck, Amy Hummel, Janice S. Kahn, Steve Kanes, Bobbie Knable, Carol Levin, David Lescohier, Pamela Lodish, Sean Lynn-Jones, Mariah Nobrega, Michael Sandman, Lee L. Selwyn, Kim Smith, Stanley L. Spiegel, Claire Stampfer, Charles Swartz, John VanScoyoc, Christine Westphal

**Absent:** Alisa G. Jonas

**Also attending:** C. Scott Ananian, TMM10 on behalf A RESOLUTION 4-DRISCOLL; Chris Dempsey, Transportation Board Chair, petitioner, Warrant Article 16; Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator

The Advisory Committee met at Brookline High School, Room 208. The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**AGENDA**

1. Possible reconsideration, further review, and vote on Article 9 Special Appropriations:

- Item 67: Driscoll School Reconstruction
- Item 39: Woodland Road Traffic Calming Project
- Item 36: Fire Station Renovations
- Item 69: Pierce School

*ITEM 67: Driscoll School Reconstruction*

C. Scott Ananian discussed his resolution regarding Driscoll. The Select Board would use \$275K in funds remaining from Schematic Design, voted last December to continue to work on the plans for Driscoll. The support for the Resolution is intended as a unity campaign to bring our Town together. This is a positive step to reunify the Town.

David Lescohier discussed his motion to refer, citing limited timeframe to schedule another Override vote and bring the matter back to Town Meeting in the fall.

Michael Sandman asked both if they discussed any of this with School Committee members.

David and C. Scott did share their options to get feed back from the School Committee, which is looking at a number of options.

Carla Benka noted that the advantage of the resolution is a statement of thinking and preferences of Town Meeting and a valuable statement to make. The School Committee is under no obligation to do anything in response to it.

Stanley Spiegel concurred and stated that Town Meeting has no ability to tell the School Committee what to do. Believe it is premature for Town Meeting to support a resolution.

David will move Stanley's motion.

Janet Gelbart noted that she doesn't see any reason to delay.

Amy Hummel prefers to vote both down – the resolution and the motion for referral. Perhaps there is a cap on how much the Town is willing to bear. This needs to be discussed at Town Meeting – the School Committee and the Select Board can still do what they want to do. Sometimes referral is just a way of not talking about something to get to the real issues. We need a master plan.

Pam Lodish spoke in favor of the resolution and opposed to the motion to refer. I don't think we need to wait another year. We had a plan before us and I found a lot of support for Driscoll. It fixes a school that is in not good shape.

Cliff Brown stated he is where Amy is however, if this goes forward, would like it reviewed by an architect other than Jonathan Levy. The design has features that we don't really need, such as the black box theatre and if you are going to build a new school, do it in a way that is more cost effective.

John VanScoyoc stated that we have a plan and this has been through an extensive process. We need this Town to move forward and get that going because that will help us make all the other decisions about Pierce and other options over and above meeting the needs of one school community.

Steve Kane agreed with Amy. Cannot image that the School Committee doesn't know that something needs to be done with Driscoll. I don't think the Town telling them to move forward will make a difference.

Mariah Nobrega is opposed to the referral and in favor the resolution. Referral wasn't vetted by the School Committee and they didn't ask for it. The parents are in favor (she cited the crowds in the halls). It may take years for us to find out what is happening with Pierce and we need to go ahead with Driscoll.

Neil Gordon is in favor of Stanley's revised motion. It would be good to have a public hearing with Select Board and School Committee.

Christine Westphal was appalled that the School Committee didn't have another plan in case the override failed. Driscoll is a good solution for part of the problem and we need to move expeditiously.

There was an appeal to either vote for or against the resolution

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to amend our recommendation under Article 9 to move the resolution; by a **VOTE** of 18 in favor, 9 opposed and 1 abstention, the Advisory Committee recommends favorable action on the amendment.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to refer the issue; by a **VOTE** of 6 in favor, 21 opposed and no abstentions, the motion fails.

#### ITEM 39: Woodland Road Traffic Calming Project

Janet Kahn spoke regarding her amendment to Item 39. A traffic calming request for the Woodland-Laurel neighborhood was submitted in late November 2013 due to concerns about increasing cut-through traffic bypassing the Route 9 corridor, with the expectation that the situation would worsen with the imminent opening of Chestnut Hill Square, a major impact development on the Newton/Brookline border. An initial Traffic Calming Needs Assessment, prepared in June 2016 by the Transportation Division, supported the need for traffic calming measures. The first of two neighborhood meetings, required by the Town's traffic calming procedures, to review plans was held in November 2016, with an intention to take neighborhood feedback and come back a few months later. The second required meeting was postponed when the Baldwin School site was selected. The second meeting was not held until November 2017 and the revised plan for the project received approval from the neighborhood to move forward. That plan was approved by the Transportation Board in March 2018.

In March 2019 traffic calming plans were again presented to the Transportation Board, this time with no neighborhood prior review, and with the addition on Heath Street, at its intersection with Woodland near Pine Manor College, of both a pedestrian refuge island (similar to the one on Washington Street near Gardner Road) and a new crosswalk with rapid flash beacons. Neighborhood residents who attended the Transportation Board meeting were unanimous in their opposition to installing the traffic island, pointing out that there is little foot traffic in the area that would merit such an intrusive element. Residents also pointed out that they had participated in the multi-year process of working with the Transportation Division to come up with a traffic calming plan per the Town's own review process, yet, in this case, they had received no advance knowledge of this additional element. Despite numerous requests at that meeting to remove the refuge island from the traffic calming plan, the Transportation Board approved it.

This amendment is being requested to bring the Woodland Road Traffic Calming Project back into alignment with the plan that was thoroughly vetted with the neighborhood that had initiated it.

Chris Dempsey noted that the Transportation Board agrees with most of Janice's suggestions. The one point of disagreement has to do with ADA compliant pedestrian refuge island.

Did we approve all of this in light of the Baldwin?

It started before discussions about Baldwin. It is a part of a comprehensive plan and requested by the neighborhood.

This is a plan that pays attention to the neighborhood and should be implemented.

Carla Benka thought part of the agreement that prompted the Advisory Committee's vote in favor of the Traffic Calming funds a couple of weeks ago was that before Town Meeting there would be a Public hearings with the neighborhood before the final design was agreed. And then the Transportation Board would decide to go ahead with the compromise. There was a Transportation Board meeting recently, and although the agenda said the Traffic Calming item would be a briefing of the Board by the Chair, nevertheless, a straw poll had been taken, despite the fact that a straw poll was not listed in the agenda of the Board.

Chris said they would welcome more input from neighbors – they sent an email to the neighbors inviting input at the May meeting and will meet again in June.

The "Compromise" was no blinking lights, but a pedestrian island and a pedestrian crosswalk. Janice's plan is that there is a continuous sidewalk until you get to the end of Woodland and there is no crosswalk. Need to have island because of bad sightlines; cars can't see pedestrians and pedestrians can't see cars.

Both proposals are ADA compliant.

There is better use of this money (to go toward sidewalks) rather than to a pedestrian crosswalk that won't be used.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to reconsider the Advisory Committee vote and in favor of the Kahn amendment. By a **VOTE** of 8 in favor, 14 opposed, and 1 abstention, the motion fails.

#### Item 36: Fire Station Renovations

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to amend the Advisory Committee's previous decision with the Scanlon amendment; by a **VOTE** of 20 in favor, 1 opposed and 2 abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends favorable action.

#### Item 69: Pierce School

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to amend the Advisory Committee's previous decision with the Scanlon amendment, by a **VOTE** of 21 in favor, 1 opposed and 2 abstention, the Advisory Committee recommends favorable action on the Amendment.

Carla Benka gave an overview of the intention of these two Amendments.

The petitioner has met with the Fire Chief and Charlie Simmons. If the CIP funds are used for the mitigation of potential hazardous materials in the fire houses, then the Scanlon amendment won't be operative. If the funds are used to replace the HVAC system in Stations 1 and 4, then a "green" system (electric vs. natural gas) would need to be researched and costed out. Charlie Simmons has already started to look into alternatives so the upgrade wouldn't be delayed. A "green" system isn't mandated by the amendment but it is given very high priority ("to the extent possible"). The goal behind the amendment is to fulfill the Climate Action Committee's goal of zero emissions by 2050.

Don't we already have something in place, a policy so that everything we undertake is mindful of the goals of the Climate Action Plan.

The petitioner noted that the Select Board voted approval for both. There is enough flexibility in the language.

2. Review and possible vote on Article 10: Newbury College

There was no further news so no further action on this Article.

3. Possible reconsideration, further review, and vote on Article 11: MBTA Easement

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to amend the Advisory Committee vote to align with the Select Board; by a **VOTE** of 21 in favor, 4 opposed and 1 abstention, the motion passes.

4. Possible reconsideration, further review, and vote on Article 19: Tobacco Control By-Laws

Possible reconsideration of this article will be taken up on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

5. Possible reconsideration, further review, and votes on the Committee's recommendations on other Warrant Articles for the 2019 Annual Town Meeting

- Article 9 (FY2020 budget): Amendment to increase the Department of Public Works budget by \$15,000 for composting services (Clint Richmond)

Funds for this project have been identified by the Town Administrator and the Superintendent of Schools so the petitioner will not move his amendment.

6. Other business

There being no further business, the meeting ADJOURNED at 7:00 p.m.