



# Belmont Citizens Forum

## Is Belmont Ignoring 50 Years of Rain Data?

By Anne-Marie Lambert

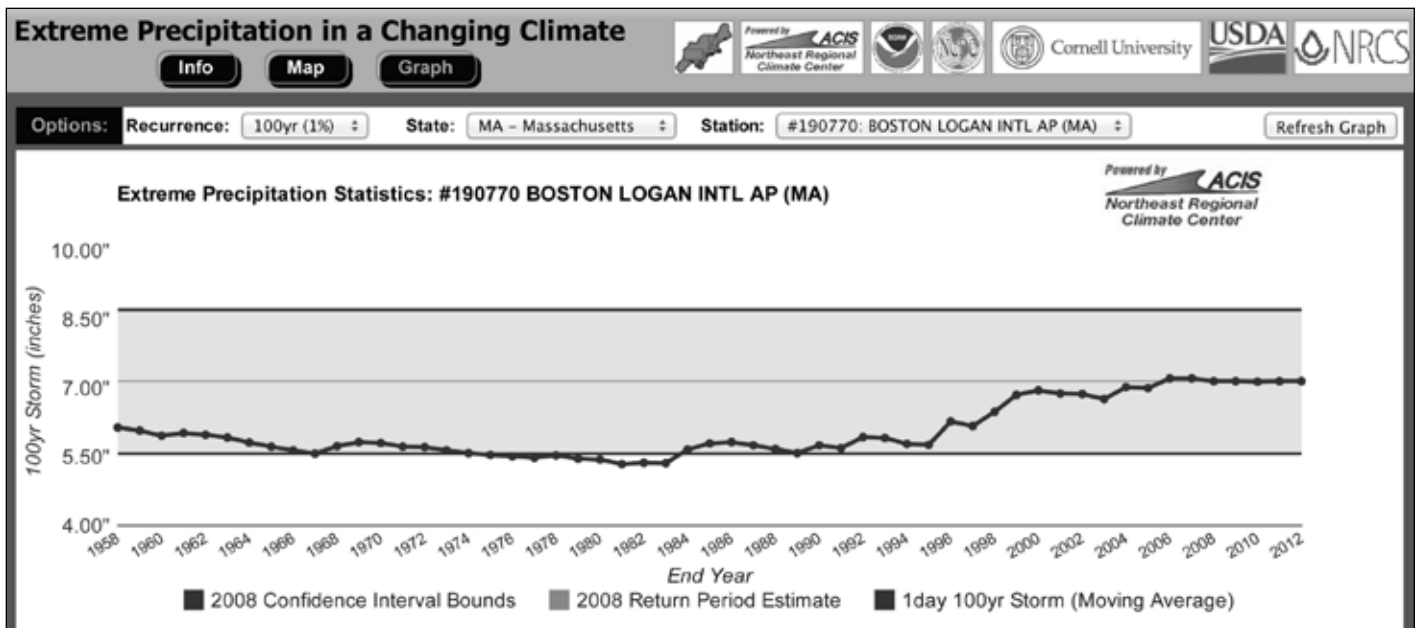
Do we know enough about climate change to say whether a large development in a low-lying part of town will function safely in the future? The town should consider this before issuing a building permit for large projects like the 298 residential units proposed at the Belmont Uplands. State regulations ignore over 50 years of precipitation data collected by the National Weather Service. The town does not have to.

An extra few inches of rain can make a big difference in the design of stormwater management systems, especially for large projects. According to a joint project of the Northeast Regional Climate Center (NRCC) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) ([precip.eas.cornell.edu](http://precip.eas.cornell.edu)):

*The climatology of very large precipitation events is a critical component of engineering design and regulations for structures and facilities that must*

*withstand or protect against such events. These events can produce localized urban and widespread flooding with damage to property, degradation of water quality, and potential loss of life. On a national level, a comprehensive climatology of rainfall events has not been updated since the early 1960s.*

At mid-latitudes like Boston, “100-year storms,” one-day storms with a 1 percent chance of happening in any given year, are getting worse. National Weather Service precipitation data show the Northeast has seen some of the nation’s most dramatic increases in severe storms in the last few decades. The estimated severity of a 100-year storm increases when recent data are included in NRCC and NRCS climate models. For example, the estimated rainfall in a 100-year storm at the Logan Airport measurement station rises from 6.14 inches to 7.14 inches depending on whether data after 1958 are considered.



Graph of the changing estimates of how much precipitation would fall in a 100-year storm, a precipitation event that has a 1 percent chance of occurring in a given year.

Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) regulations are based on a 1961 Technical Paper (TP-40) that uses precipitation data collected through 1958. Updated models published by the NRCC and NRCS in 2011 include an additional 50 years of precipitation data. Precipitation values from NRCS models are being incorporated in local stormwater regulations in towns including Norwell, Sudbury, and Cohasset. Even without a stormwater regulation, public safety demands sensible consideration of known precipitation data.

Experts are speaking out to groups like the Boston Society of Civil Engineers (BSCE) to

explain the math behind NRCS-based data modeling and display tools available at [precip.eas.cornell.edu](http://precip.eas.cornell.edu). Dan Zarrow, a meteorologist for NRCC and for the Office of the New Jersey State Climatologist, did just that when he delivered the 2014 Thomas R. Camp Lecture, "Extreme Precipitation in the Northeast US in a Changing Climate," at MIT on April 28, 2014. According to Zarrow, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) will not have updated models for the Northeast until September 2015.

## Belmont Citizens Forum

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**Belmont Citizens Forum Inc.** is a not-for-profit organization that strives to maintain the small-town atmosphere of Belmont, Massachusetts, by preserving its natural and historical resources, limiting traffic growth, and enhancing pedestrian safety. We do this by keeping residents informed about planning and zoning issues, by participating actively in public hearings, and by organizing forums. Our **Newsletter** is published six times a year, in January, March, May, July, September, and November. Published material represents the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the Belmont Citizens Forum.

Letters to the editor may be sent to P. O. Box 609, Belmont MA 02478 or to [info@belmontcitizensforum.org](mailto:info@belmontcitizensforum.org).

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## NRCS models predict that a 100-year storm will produce 8.6 inches of rain, not the 6.5 inches estimated by TP-40's 1958 data.

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In addition to more rain, we can expect rising tides in the Northeast. At a height of 11.5 feet, the Amelia Earhart Dam in Medford protects low-lying parts of Belmont along the Little River of Belmont from daily tides. NOAA measurements of sea level in the Northeast show a 10-inch rise in the last 100 years at the Boston Harbor tide gates.

Whether due to melting ice caps, increased temperature, or other climate factors, this sea-level rise is cause for concern during extreme weather events. As previously described ("Hurricane Surge Maps May Predict Floods," *BCF Newsletter* May/June 2011), the Army Corps of Engineers provides maps showing the effects of storm surges generated by different categories of hurricanes. If the storm surge occurs on top of a rising sea level, damage from future hurricanes could be even greater than previously assumed.

The proposed development on the Belmont Uplands is a particularly worrying example of how regulations are not keeping up with

current data. According to Idith Haber of the Coalition to Preserve the Belmont Uplands, the WPA permit application for this 298-unit residential project uses the 1958 data in TP-40 to estimate that, in a 100-year storm, the 4.31 acres of new impervious surface will generate an extra 34,638 cubic feet of runoff compared to existing conditions. The applicant proposes that during a 100-year storm, 20,895 cubic feet of runoff from the Uplands development will either infiltrate into the soil or be stored in underground tanks, while 13,743 cubic feet will flow into Little Pond during the 100-year storm.

Unfortunately, NRCS models, which include the last 50 years of precipitation data, calculate that a 100-year storm in Middlesex County will produce 8.6 inches of rain, not the 6.5 inches estimated by TP-40's 1958 data. The WPA permit process did not consider the additional 31,610 cubic feet of water resulting from the two additional inches of rainfall now predicted in a 100-year storm. That would mean that more than 45,000 cubic feet would flow into Little Pond, not 13,743 cubic feet



Flooding near the Uplands site, March 30, 2014

Belmont Director of Community Development Glenn Clancy continues to review and maintain a checklist of outstanding items required before a building permit can be issued for the proposed Belmont Uplands project. While the state Highway Department issued the necessary highway access curb-cut permit in March, other documents and payments are still outstanding. On April 18 Clancy reviewed these with the applicant, who is expected to provide detailed responses to questions and concerns in the coming weeks and months.

If the town acts swiftly, there is ample opportunity to perform due diligence on the public safety issues raised by new climate data. The state building code provides sufficient grounding to do so. A Climate Change Vulnerability Study is underway in Cambridge and Boston and will make even more data available later this year.

The NOAA is taking years to update precipitation models region by region. Even in advance of the planned release of updated models for the Northeast in September 2015, the town and financial investors in this project should also invest in expert studies to understand the public safety implications of relying on 50-year-old data that ignore marked increases in extreme precipitation and rising tides.

Anne-Marie Lambert is a director of the Belmont Citizens Forum.

## New Rainfall Calculations

To view local rainfall estimates predicted by the new NRCS models, go to [precip.eas.cornell.edu](http://precip.eas.cornell.edu) to a web page titled "Extreme Precipitation in New York & New England: An Interactive Web Tool for Extreme Precipitation Analysis."

Click on the Data & Products top tab, and select Extreme Precipitation Tables from the left menu. You can enter a street address, or the latitude and longitude of a site, or double-click on the map on the screen. The site will generate a new page with a grid showing the expected rainfall for one-year storms up through 500 year cataclysms.

Using the approximate coordinates of the planned Uplands project (42.399769, -71.155053), the site calculates that a 100-year storm will produce 8.88 inches of rain in 24 hours.

# Volunteers Clean Up Lone Tree Hill

On April 12, 26 volunteers gathered at Belmont's Lone Tree Hill Conservation Land to clean up trash, improve trails, and spread wood chips along trails to prevent erosion. In all, they collected seven full bags of trash, a box of recyclables, a rusted chain, and a metal pipe, and covered the entire length of Pine Allee with wood chips.

The Belmont Citizens Forum would like to thank the volunteers and co-sponsors Belmont Land Trust, Belmont Partners in Play, Friends of Joey's Park, Judith K. Record Memorial Fund, Belmont Land Management Committee for Lone Tree Hill, Mass Audubon Habitat Sanctuary, New England Mountain Bike Association, and Sustainable Belmont.



DAVID CHASE

A volunteer is awed by the massive mound of wood chips donated by Barrett Tree Service.



RADHA IYENGAR

We would also like to thank our event sponsors:

- Gold Level

Cambridge Savings Bank, Cityside Subaru, East Boston Savings Bank, Gentle Dental, and Watertown Savings Bank.

- Silver Level

Artefact Home and Garden, Belmont Savings Bank, Coldwell Banker, East Cambridge Savings Bank, The Great American Rain Barrel Company, Lawndale Realty, Middlesex Savings Bank, ReMax Real Estate, and Vintages—Adventures in Wine.

Finally, the Belmont Citizens Forum thanks Barrett Tree Service for its generous donation of the wood chips that were used for trail maintenance.



RADHA IYENGAR

Bags of trash collected by volunteers at Lone Tree Hill.



RADHA IYENGAR



RADHA IYENGAR

Proud volunteers await their assignments. Top photo, left to right: Kate Grimble, Noah Merfeld, Chris McMullin. Bottom photo, left to right: Kate Grimble, Maciej Sobieszcel, Lynn Read, Tan Weija.

# Ann Coit Sifneos, 1925-2014

By Sharon Vanderslice

The Belmont Citizens Forum lost a dedicated founder, friend, and supporter on March 26, 2014, when Ann Coit Sifneos, our longtime newsletter illustrator, died of emphysema at a hospice in Cambridge. She was 88.

Beginning with this newsletter's second issue in March 2000, Ann's delicate pen-and-ink drawings of Belmont landscapes, streetscapes, and historic buildings helped define the character of the publication and fulfill the organization's mission of preserving and enhancing Belmont's small-town atmosphere.

Over the years, Ann completed more than 150 drawings while sitting on a small stool on street corners or plopped down in local woods and gardens, and, despite her advancing age, she never missed a deadline.

Born in Duluth, Minnesota, and raised in Maryland, Ann was educated at Sidwell Friends School in Washington, D.C., and at Wellesley College. She met and married her husband of 32 years, Peter Sifneos, the late Harvard Medical School professor of psychiatry, and lived with him in Germany for three years following World War II.

When Ann and Peter returned to the States, they lived on Beacon Hill and then in Belmont, where they raised three children in the historic Thomas Clark house, built in 1760, at 59 Common Street. This house was moved in 2012 to the vacant lot near the high school fieldhouse to make way for new development.) After Ann's

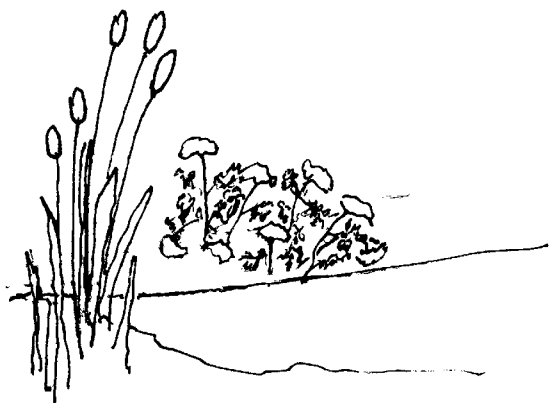


ANN COIT SIFNEOS

children had grown, she and Peter divorced and Ann moved to a second historic home in Belmont on Pleasant Street, a Victorian that she lovingly restored and surrounded with flowering plants.

When the redevelopment of the McLean Hospital property was first proposed, Ann became concerned about the potential impact on Belmont traffic and, in 1999, she helped found the Belmont Citizens Forum. Indeed, it was in her living room that summer that the upstart citizens group was given its name. In addition to being a Forum board member, Ann generously volunteered to supply drawings to the group's bi-monthly newsletter. She had minored in art at Wellesley College, attended architecture school at the Darmstadt Technische Hochschule in Germany, and later studied portrait painting at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Along with her participation in a variety of community and charitable activities, Ann worked part-time in the business office at the Buckingham School in Cambridge for many years and was a member of Belmont's oldest

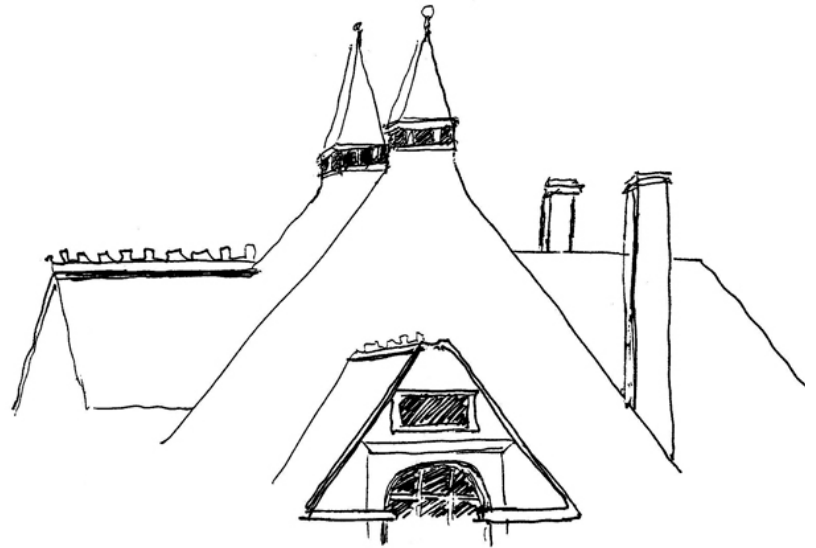


ANN COIT SIFNEOS

book club, the weekly “Thursday Club,” founded in 1890, until the time of her death in March.

She is survived by her sister, Mary, of New York City and three children—Ann, Gray, and Jeannie—and their families. She was remembered by friends and family at a memorial service at The First Church in Belmont on Friday, May 9. She and her many kindnesses will be sorely missed by all who knew and worked with her.

Sharon Vanderslice was the founding editor of the Belmont Citizens Forum *Newsletter*.



ANN COIT SIFNEOS

## Belmont Farmers' Market Opening Day

The Belmont Farmers' Market opens on Thursday, June 12, 2-6:30 pm, in the Belmont Center municipal parking lot, rain or shine. An all-volunteer organization now in its ninth year, the Market offers a variety of organic and conventionally produced food in a range of prices. Visit [www.belmontfarmersmarket.org](http://www.belmontfarmersmarket.org) for vendors and updates.

The Market accepts SNAP benefits (food stamps) and matches up to \$25 for each SNAP shopper each week, thanks to generous donations to the Market. Benefits are processed quickly and easily at the blue Market tent. Please let your friends and neighbors know about this service so that we can better serve the community.

The Market also works with Food for Free, which collects unsold produce and bread from vendors that would otherwise be wasted and donates it to food pantries and shelters in the greater Boston area. In addition, the Market tent is a weekly collection point for non-perishable food for the Belmont Food Pantry; check their web site for what's needed: <https://sites.google.com/site/thebelmontfoodpantry/>

The Market will feature Storytime for preschoolers again this year, partnering with the Belmont Public Library and children's librarian Denise Shaver. Market Music will be back along with chefs' tastings, art, and more.

For weekly Market news during the season, sign up for our weekly e-Newsletter at [www.belmontfarmersmarket.org](http://www.belmontfarmersmarket.org). We are an all-volunteer organization, so if you'd like to join our team, e-mail [belmontfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:belmontfarmersmarket@gmail.com).

The Belmont Farmers' Market is a project of the Belmont Food Collaborative, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



BELMONT FARMERS' MARKET

# Belmont Center Redesign May Be Outdated

By Meg Muckenhoupt

It's clear to drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists that Belmont Center needs improvement to make it a safer and more enjoyable destination. What isn't clear is whether plans for a proposed redesign will be enough of a change to help—or hurt. Since the Belmont Center redesign plans were finalized in 2011, Belmont has conducted a parking study with another consultant, and commissioned the Community Path Advisory Committee (CPAC) to evaluate bicycle routes through the Center. Finally, Macy's, the Center's longtime anchor store, closed in March 2013, leaving the site (owned by Locatelli Properties) vacant.

## Redesign Origins

The current Belmont Center redesign plan dates from 2005, when the town hired the BSC Group, an urban planning and engineering consultancy based in Boston, to rethink the Center's configuration ahead of the scheduled repair of the Center's roads. Belmont's Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) held a series of public meetings to gather citizens' opinions, and the BSC offered several plans based on this input, including eight options for managing traffic. The BSC Group's suggestions included traffic lights or roundabouts for the intersections on either side of the railroad bridge; making either Leonard and Claflin or Leonard and Cross pairs of one-way streets; and barring traffic from Leonard Street altogether, converting it into an outdoor pedestrian mall.

None of the proposed changes passed muster. "Ultimately the volume of traffic during the peak hours and geometric limitations of some of the roadways surrounding the Center made it impossible to consider any alternative other than the patterns that currently exist," according to a June 3, 2011, memo to the Board of Selectmen from Glenn Clancy, director of Belmont's Office of Community Development. Those geometric limitations include factors like the railway bridge.

With the traffic patterns set, TAC looked at the BSC Group's suggestions for improving parking, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities. The

salient suggestions from the TAC's June 8, 2011, Belmont Center Concept Plan Traffic Advisory Committee Recommendation, were:

- A single travel lane through the Center
- Curb extensions at each crosswalk
- A new crosswalk system at the intersection of Channing Road, Concord Avenue, and Leonard Street
- An extended delta in front of Belmont Savings Bank in the direction of the existing sidewalk along the bank parking garage
- New green space, an optional bike trail, and additional parking created by widening Concord Avenue
- Improvements at the Channing Road intersections of Cross and Claflin Streets
- A new crosswalk on the south side of the bridge.

The plan also adds 10 public parking spaces by widening Concord Avenue between the old electric light building and the bridge; three parking spaces would be added beside a new green space in front of Belmont Savings Bank.

## Parking: Adding Excess Capacity?

In March 2012, less than a year after the TAC issued its recommendation, Nelson Nygaard, a Boston-based transportation-planning firm, released its Belmont Center Comprehensive Parking Management Plan final report. This new study found that even at the busiest times of day, only 70 percent of Belmont Center's 1,000 parking spaces were being utilized. Although up to 96 percent of parking spaces on Leonard Street are occupied during weekend peak hours, parking on streets in the vicinity of the Claflin Street lot (Claflin Street, Channing Road, Cross Street, and parts of Alexander Avenue), is less than 50 percent utilized.

The TAC wrote in the recommendation that, "The [Belmont Center] merchants feel strongly that reducing parking spaces will have a detrimental impact on their businesses." However, if close to one-third of the parking spots in Belmont Center are going unfilled due



to poor parking management, adding more parking spaces won't help matters.

In a nutshell, the problem in Belmont Center is that many of the most attractive, short-term parking spots for customers are monopolized by cars that park for two hours at a time or more. The most obvious and desirable parking closest to stores is free, while the Claflin lot is invisible and has a confusing, poorly signed mix of free and paid parking with no obvious access to Leonard Street.

In March 2012, Belmont's Selectmen voted to adopt the Nelson Nygaard parking management plan, which had six basic tenets:

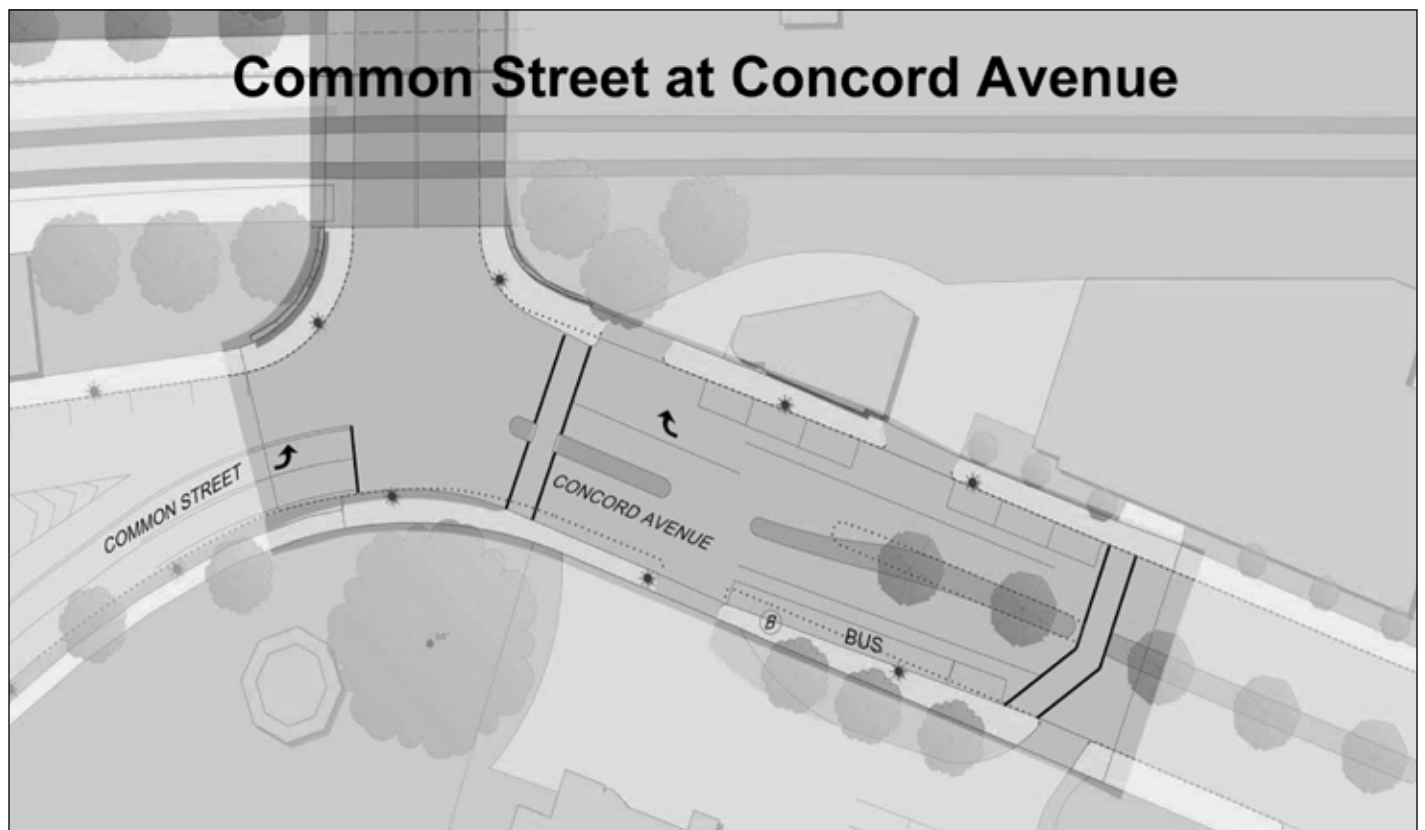
1. Revise parking permits so that employees will park farther from attractive spots
2. Establish more convenient customer parking by encouraging long-term parking away from the most coveted spaces
3. Introduce commuter parking
4. Improve walking conditions to help pedestrians navigate between the Claflin lot and Leonard Street

5. Create clear signage indicating which spots in the Claflin lot are for short-term use and which are for long-term use
6. Use modern meter technology so that drivers don't have to fish around for quarters.

## Where Should Bicycles Go?

The TAC's Recommendation presents only one idea for bicycles—and two thirds of that isn't even about bicycles: "Widen Concord Avenue to create a new green space, an optional bike trail, and additional parking." Clancy's June, 2011 memo mentions making space for bicycles on Leonard Street by restricting automobiles to a single travel lane each way.

Unfortunately, these bicycle accommodations do not reflect the recommendations made by groups that have actually studied bicycles in Belmont. The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) published its Belmont/Waltham Community Trail Alignment Study in January 2012. That same year, Belmont's CPAC started work to establish the best route through Belmont. The CPAC's final report is expected in



A view of the Belmont Center Redesign at the Common/Concord intersection. No bike lanes are provided for cyclists turning from Concord Avenue onto Leonard Street or Common Street.

June, and a public forum is planned for late June. See the CPAC page on [town.belmont.ma.us](http://town.belmont.ma.us) for more information.

MAPC's goal was to establish a route through Belmont to connect the Alewife/Brighton Street Path to the Mass Central Rail Trail route through Waltham. When completed, the Mass Central Rail Trail will run 104 miles from North Cambridge to Northampton in Pioneer Valley. The Alignment Study recommended an off-route path running along the north side of the railroad tracks from Brighton Street to Belmont Center, then turning off onto Concord Avenue, heading through the railroad tunnel, and continuing on Royal Road.

The Belmont Center redesign has no space for bicycles to enter or leave an off-road path on Concord Avenue between Leonard and Pleasant Streets—just an on-street bicycle lane. Instead, the redesign envisions widening Concord Avenue to provide even more parking, adding excess capacity to the Center's 300 existing unused spaces.

The BSC Group's January 2011 presentation on the Belmont Center redesign included a slide of three different routes that MAPC proposed for a bike route through Belmont Center, including a route along Channing Road. In the

redesign, Channing Road gains a median at the intersection with Leonard Street, but no bike lanes.

MAPC also listed a path on the south side of Concord Avenue, to the east of the railroad bridge, as an alternate route through Belmont Center, but cautioned, "A possible shared use path could be provided on the south side of Concord Avenue to a point where it would cross over into high school property. A shared-use path, however, would require significant widening of the sidewalk, impacting parking, the bike lane, or landscaped median." Of course, if a bicycle path were built, a bike lane would be redundant.

However, using the south side of Concord Avenue east of the railroad bridge means that bicyclists would have to travel through the notorious Concord/Common/Leonard/Royal Road intersection to continue on the path, and cross Concord Avenue to get to Belmont Center. The more times a bicycle route crosses streets with cars, the less safe it becomes.

Belmont's CPAC has been considering routes across the Belmont Center as well. Several of CPAC's potential routes involve using land north of the railroad tracks alongside Concord Avenue for a path; again, in the current Belmont Center redesign, there is no space for bicycles except on the street.

## Future Development

Macy's is gone, and there's no word on how many tenants Locatelli Properties may install in the building. The police headquarters and former light department building may be sold at some point. A widened Concord Avenue would provide even more excess parking spaces for the Center, but it would also limit the possibilities for developing those buildings. The more prudent course might be to wait and see what could be done with the buildings rather than paving yet another parking space, adding more stormwater runoff to our waterways, and limiting developers' imaginations.

Meg Muckenhoupt is editor of the Belmont Citizens Forum *Newsletter*. Vincent Stanton Jr. is a Belmont Citizens Forum director, and assisted in reporting for this article.



# Running Lights Make Biking Safer

By Sumner Brown

My interest in bicycle safety got a jolt on December 3, 2013, when my son, through no fault of his own, was hit by a car while riding his bicycle. In a world where distracted, impatient drivers cause accidents, running lights and high-visibility clothing can make bicyclists safer.

One sure way to avoid being hit on a bicycle is not to ride. But that solution has costs. Exercising is necessary for your health, and although you can drive to a gym to exercise, you may end up spending a lot of your time in a car. My son was coming home from classes at Brandeis. Combining commuting time with exercise is efficient and environmentally mindful—an unbeatable combination unless you get hit.

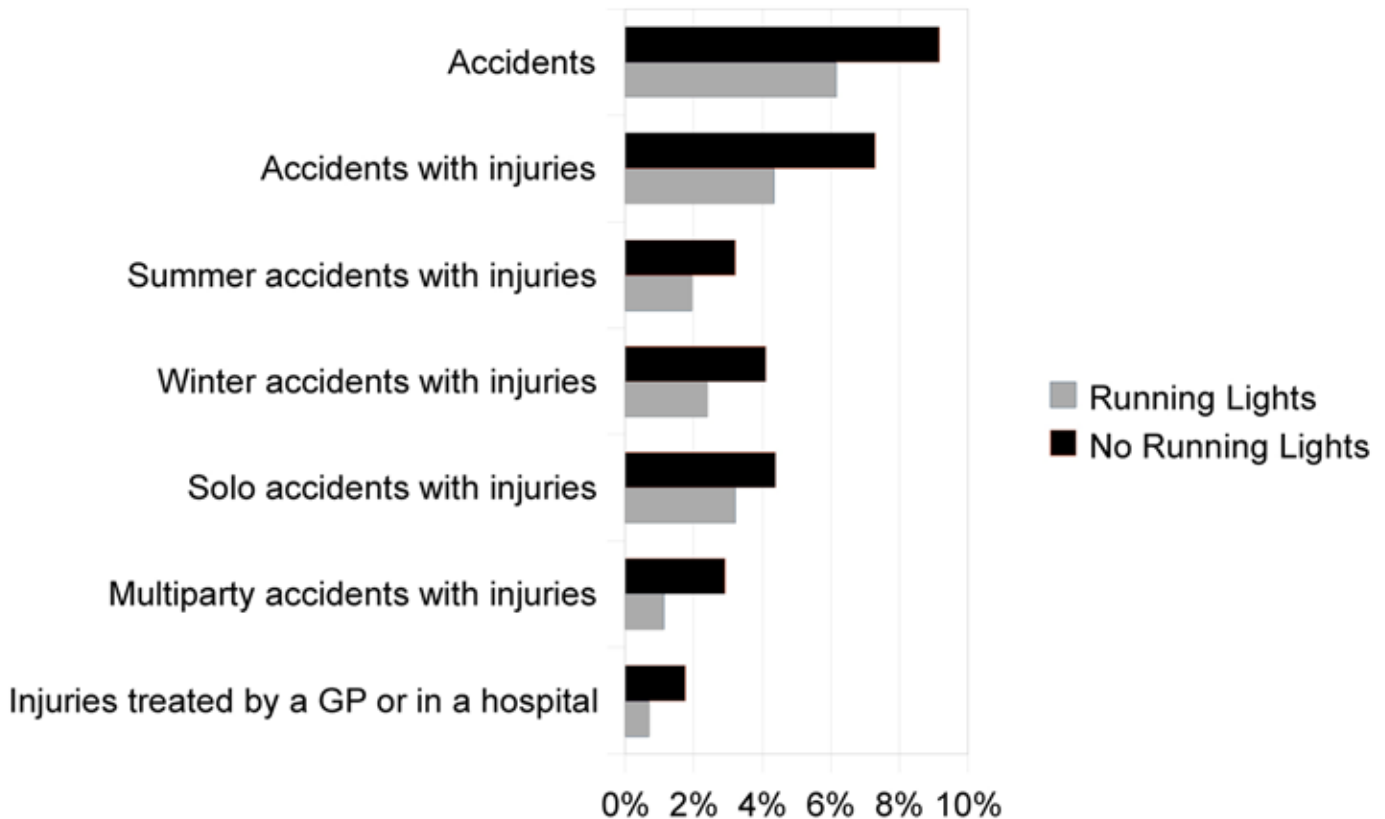
Bicycle running lights reduce bicycle accidents. They stay on day and night, and by helping to identify the size, position, and

orientation of your bike, they give distracted drivers a better chance of noticing you.

A Danish study in 2004 and 2005 tested the effect of running lights on bicyclists' safety. Blinking running lights were mounted on both the front and rear forks of 1,845 bicycles, and their accident rate was compared with that of 2,000 bicycles without running lights. The researchers chose to use data only from participants who filed a report every month for the year of the study. Below are some of the aggregated data.

The effect of running lights in multiparty accidents is impressive. Riders without running lights had 2.6 times as many multiparty accidents as those with running lights, and were treated in a hospital or by a general practitioner 2.5 times as often.

In the US, cars have daytime running lights in front only. Bicycles should have both front and



Accident rate for Danish cyclists using bikes with and without front- and rear-mounted running lights. Data from Madsen JC, Andersen T, Lahrman HS (2013). Safety effects of permanent running lights for bicycles: A controlled experiment. *Accident; analysis and prevention*, 50:820-9.

## Get This Newsletter Online

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You'll get a link to the newsletter when it is posted on the BCF website and occasional mailings about important meetings in Belmont. We send out mailings about once per month.

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rear lights. The lights in the Danish study were mounted low. Mounting them higher should make them even more visible and more effective.

### Choosing Lights for Safety

My personal recommendation is to mount Blackburn Flea front and rear lights on a Bell Muni helmet. The Fleas are tiny, weigh about as much as a pencil, have rechargeable batteries, and can run for five hours when flashing. Muni helmets have a mount for a Flea headlight built into the visor—which may be a unique helmet feature—as well as a mount for a taillight, which is more common.

I also recommend high-visibility bicycle clothing, although I know of no research proving that it enhances safety. Belmont police officers wear high-visibility jackets when working traffic details, and many states require people working on roads to wear high-visibility clothing. It makes sense.

Here are the facts of my son's crash. He was wearing a bright yellow helmet. He was going east on Linden Street in Waltham in late afternoon in heavy traffic. A car going west wanted to turn left into a parking lot. The driver stopped and waited for a break in traffic. She saw what she took to be an opportunity, turned, and hit my son, who was coming at about 20 miles per hour. The driver said the sun was in her eyes.

My son sustained a broken pelvis and a dislocated shoulder. His bicycle was totaled. The car had to be towed away. After six weeks my son

was walking without an obvious limp. He had about four months of physical therapy for his shoulder, which may never be quite the same. He is riding a bicycle to Brandeis again. He now uses running lights and high-visibility clothing, which are almost free compared with the cost of a night in the emergency room.

Sumner Brown is a director of the Belmont Citizens Forum.

## BCF Volunteer: Ginny Jordan



VIRGINIA JORDAN

Ginny Jordan has been copy-editing articles for the Belmont Citizens Forum Newsletter since 2010. A long-time Belmont resident, Ginny is retired scientist. She was a founder of the Friends of the Benton Branch Library, and serves as a Town Meeting Member from Precinct 6.

When she isn't perfecting prose, Ginny enjoys her Rock Meadow garden and her grandchild.

## Environmental Events

### Edible Wild Plants

**Saturday, May 17, and Sunday, June 15, 1-3 p.m.**

Identify edible, medicinal, and other useful plants growing in the Alewife Reservation. Find out what plants and teas have been used for food, medicine, dyes, cordage, and other useful things. [Ejkobek@gmail.com](mailto:Ejkobek@gmail.com), [www.friendsofalewifereservation.org](http://www.friendsofalewifereservation.org). *Alewife Reservation Parking Lot, Acorn Park Drive, Cambridge.*

### Boston Greenbelt Walk

**Saturday, May 17**

Join the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, FreeWalkers, and many local and regional trail coordinators for the inaugural Boston Greenbelt Walk, a one-day, 30-mile walk largely in parks from Oak Grove Station in Malden to Riverside Station in Newton. The Boston Greenbelt Trail is an MAPC-proposed 90-mile walking trail circling Boston. [www.bostongreenbeltwalk.org](http://www.bostongreenbeltwalk.org). *Several locations along the Boston Greenbelt Trail.*

### Boston Greenbelt Walk: Waltham to Newton

**Saturday, May 17, 4-7 p.m.**

Join the Waltham Land Trust to walk either a three- or six-mile section of the Boston Greenbelt Walk (see listing above). Director Sonja Wadman will lead walkers at 4 p.m. down the Western Greenway Trail and on sidewalks three miles to the Waltham Common, then another three miles into Newton. WLT Board Director and trail mapping expert Dave Kehs will take folks back up the Greenway to Our Lady's for those not interested in making the journey into Newton. Learn more and register for all or part of the walk at [www.bostongreenbeltwalk.org](http://www.bostongreenbeltwalk.org). *Our Lady's Church, 920 Trapelo Road, Waltham.*

### 18th Mystic River Herring Run and Paddle **Sunday, May 18**

The annual Mystic River Watershed Association Herring Run and Paddle includes a 5K run/walk race, three paddling races (3, 9, and 12 miles), educational booths, children's activities, and more.

[www.MysticRiver.org/herring-run-paddle](http://www.MysticRiver.org/herring-run-paddle). *Blessing of the Bay Boathouse, 32 Shore Drive, Somerville.*

### Know Your Fresh Pond Pollinators!

**Monday, May 19, 6-7:30 p.m.**

Meet one of Fresh Pond's beekeepers to learn about bee biology, ecology, and what it takes to beekeep, then see some bees up close and visit the Lusitania hives. [friendsoffreshpond.org](http://friendsoffreshpond.org). *Water Treatment Facility, 250 Fresh Pond Parkway, Cambridge.*

### Indigenous Urban Ecology at Alewife

**Saturday, May 24, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.**

Dr. David Morimoto leads a tour of the Alewife Reservation's urban wild ecosystem. [www.friendsofalewifereservation.org](http://www.friendsofalewifereservation.org). *Alewife Reservation Parking Lot, Acorn Park Drive, Cambridge.*

### Fish Ladder Open House

**Saturday, May 24, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.**

As part of World Fish Migration Day, the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Mystic River Watershed Association are hosting an open house at the DCR Upper Mystic Lake dam in Medford. Stop by to witness the migrating herring as they make their way from the ocean up the Mystic River to the Mystic Lakes to spawn. We'll also explore the mysterious American eel migration. [www.MysticRiver.org](http://www.MysticRiver.org). *Upper Mystic Lake Dam, 1001 Mystic Valley Parkway, Medford.*

### Accessible Outdoor Recreation Fair

**Saturday, May 31, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.**

A free fun-filled day of celebrating accessible outdoor recreation available for individuals, families, and friends of people with disabilities hosted by DCR. [www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/accessibility](http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/accessibility). *Artesani Park, Brighton.*

### Seventh Annual Fresh Pond Day

**Saturday, May 31, 11 a.m.- 3 p.m.**

Celebrate Fresh Pond with live music, kids' games and face paint, meet & greet tables by city, community and sustainability groups, or enjoy a walk at the Woodland Restoration Project. [friendsoffreshpond.org](http://friendsoffreshpond.org). *Water Treatment Facility, 250 Fresh Pond Parkway, Cambridge.*

## Little River Nature Walk

**Sunday, June 1, 10 a.m.-noon**

Travel along the river, meadow, and forest habitat—home to wildlife such as red fox, coyote, river otter, mink, cottontail rabbit, voles, snapper turtles, and over 40 residential birds such as hawks, wild turkey, blue heron, cat birds, hummingbirds, and goldfinches. [www.friendsofalewifereservation.org](http://www.friendsofalewifereservation.org). *Alewife Reservation Parking Lot, Acorn Park Drive, Cambridge.*

## Sustainable Belmont Meeting

**Wednesday June 4, 7–9.p.m.**

Active members will share progress on various initiatives; discussion and planning will ensue. We

invite you to attend, share your expertise, volunteer your time, and relay your experience around sustainable activities in our community. [www.sustainablebelmont.net](http://www.sustainablebelmont.net). *Flett Room, Belmont Public Library, 336 Concord Avenue, Belmont.*

## Scentless Spring: Ecosystems Under Siege by White-tailed Deer

**Wednesday, June 4, 7-8:30 p.m.**

Thomas Rawinski, botanist, USDA Forest Service discusses the extensive damage caused by deer overpopulation on the Blue Hills Reservation and how we can solve the problem by restoring the predation that once kept deer populations in check. [GrowNativeMass.org](http://GrowNativeMass.org). *Cambridge Public Library, 449 Broadway, Cambridge.*

## Western Greenway Hike

**Saturday, June 7, 8 a.m.-noon**

Take a 6.5-mile spring hike through the Western Greenway with Roger Wrubel, Habitat's Sanctuary Director and a founding member of Friends of the Western Greenway. Learn about the natural and cultural history of the properties in the greenway and progress towards completing the 12-mile greenway loop. Fee \$20 Audubon members, \$25 non-members. [www.massaudubon.org](http://www.massaudubon.org). *Habitat Education Center and Wildlife Sanctuary, 10 Juniper Road, Belmont.*

## Woodland Habitat Restoration Tour

**Monday, June 23, 6-7:30 p.m.**

Meet volunteers from the Friends of Fresh Pond Reservation who have spent the past three years restoring the Lusitania Woodland and tour the restoration site. For more information contact Kirsten at [kblindquist@cambridgema.gov](mailto:kblindquist@cambridgema.gov) or (617) 349-6489. No registration necessary. [friendsoffreshpond.org](http://friendsoffreshpond.org). *Water Treatment Facility, 250 Fresh Pond Parkway, Cambridge.*

## Community Water Chestnut Removal

**Saturday, June 28, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.**

Help the Mystic River Watershed association control this invasive aquatic plant. For more information and to register for this event see [mysticriver.org/water-chestnut-removal-project](http://mysticriver.org/water-chestnut-removal-project). *Location TBA.*

## Interns Wanted

The Belmont Citizens Forum (BCF) is accepting proposals and resumes for 2014 summer internships from college and high school students. Project proposals should align with the BCF mission statement on our website. BCF internships are unpaid. Previous summer interns were able to complete enough work to publish articles describing their research in the Belmont Citizens Forum *Newsletter*.

This summer, we are looking for interns to assist with water quality monitoring, and with research that will inform and encourage local home and business owners to install green infrastructure for stormwater management. We are also seeking team leaders for our next clean up event at an open space location in Belmont.

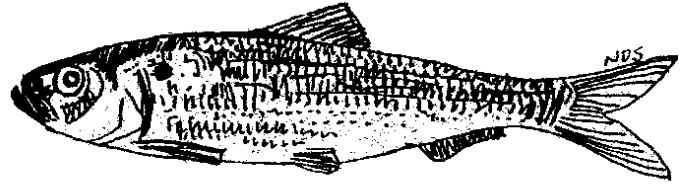
BCF internships offer a great chance to gain experience with the legwork and research behind local community organizing. If interested, please contact [bcfprogramdirector@gmail.com](mailto:bcfprogramdirector@gmail.com) with your resume and any project proposal by May 30, 2014.

## Farming in Waltham

**Saturday, June 28, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

Sonja Wadman, Waltham Land Trust program director, Sally Zimmerman, senior preservation services manager at Historic New England, and Amanda Cather, Waltham Fields Community Farm farm manager, discuss past and current farming at the Lyman Estate. After the presentations, see the property's fields currently in agricultural production and tour the historic Lyman Estate Greenhouses. Fee \$5 for Historic New England,

Waltham Fields Community Farm, and Waltham Land Trust members, \$10 nonmembers. Registration recommended. [www.walthamlandtrust.org](http://www.walthamlandtrust.org). Lyman Estate, 185 Lyman Street, Waltham.



*Blueback Herring*

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- Writing or editing for the Newsletter
- Community path work
- Newsletter mailings
- Event organizing

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**May/June 2014**



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