

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2023

Hybrid Meeting (141 Keyes Rd & Zoom)

Call to Order

- January 26, 2023 meeting of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee (“BFRTAC”) was called to order at 7:06PM by co-chair Nat Welch

Attendees

- BFRTAC Members: Nat Welch, Adrienne Boardman, Richard Fahlander, Dorcas Miller, Tracy Hansen, Sam Stearns
- Town Representatives: Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management and Terri Ackerman, Select Board Liaison
- Members of the Public: 6 members of the community joined
- Recorder: Adrienne Boardman

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- A motion was made to approve the December 1, 2022 meeting minutes and seconded
 - The December 1, 2022 minutes were approved unanimously by roll call vote

Town Update Memo: Marcia Rasmussen presented the monthly project report, which is incorporated as an addendum to the meeting minutes.

- Phase 2A-2D: Carlene Hempel (from Friends of BFRT) is seeking status of each community’s input concerning the proposed uniform signage along the trail; likely to be a spring meeting to discuss logistics and next/final steps for implementation
 - Nat Welch indicated that he has responded to Carlene with the information needed
- Phase 2B: The completion date is expected to be extended to the end of May 2023
- Phase 2C: Information about the proposed short-term improvements to Junction Park is being sent to the MBTA staff this week to determine whether a formal submittal is required; inquiry from rebutter regarding trees that have not survived and discussions are underway with DPW
- Last ½ Mile & Phase 2D Sudbury: Construction has officially begun with vegetation clearing on January 23 (starting on the southern end of the trail); construction baseline schedule has been received and will be posted to the BFRTAC page
 - Richard Fahlander inquired about whether there is a line item in the Public Works budget for maintenance to the rail trail; Marcia indicated that discussions are needed - Nat Welch suggested that Richard could reach out to DPW and report back to the BFRTAC

Committee Business

Member Terms

- The majority of the current BFRTAC members have upcoming expiring terms (or are facing upcoming moves out of Town); in an attempt to recruit new members it was realized that many Green Cards were quite outdated
- Recommendation for the future of the BFRTAC to be folded into the Transportation Advisory Committee
- Richard Fahlander inquired about how the BFRTAC would fold in exactly; Terri Ackerman indicated that discussions could follow to outline
- Sam Stearns encouraged us to think about the future needs of the BFRTAC scope as the Rte 2 bridge opens and what additional assets (ex: paved or unpaved) might benefit from falling within the scope
- Barbara Pike (118 Border Road) shared that she felt the BFRT is as much a recreational asset as it is for transportation and suggest perhaps the Trails Committee
- Nat Welch summarized the conversation and asked if the Select Board can review and further discuss; Terri suggested that we should discuss at an upcoming Transportation Advisory Committee; Terri also suggested that we could decrease the size of the Committee to 5 members
- Marcia Rasmussen reminded everyone that the final phases are wrapping up at the end of May (along with her retirement) so perhaps the BFRTAC needs to reevaluate its charge and re-examine membership
- Nat Welch suggested we should first re-examine our charge and then determine where the work best aligns
- Barbara Pike (118 Border Road) suggested that Concord may want to adopt what many communities do which is around a "Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee"

Junction Park Update

- Update already provided as part of Marcia's town update

Member Reports & Correspondance

Safety Sub Committee Update

- Only two remaining members on the Safety Sub Committee; Dorcas and Mary Beth to make a recommendation at the next BFRTAC what is needed going forward

Art Work

- Mural was originally proposed in 2019 and will include a BFRT map of Framingham to Lowell (8 ft high and 24 feet long) at Barhallel Street near the bike rental kiosk
- Mural being made on panels so he can be moved if the building changes
- Project installation date of May 20, 2023 (to align with "Spring into West Concord")
- Feedback is open for the next several weeks

Correspondence and Public Comments

- February meeting conflicts with school vacation week; discussion around rescheduling meeting or canceling - decision to cancel February meeting
- West Concord Advisory Committee seeking approval to add two additional cultural district signs on the BFRT so trail users (not just drivers) are aware they are in a cultural district (smaller version of the road sign)
 - BFRTAC looking for visibility into what the sign looks like and the exact location of the signs
- Barbara Pike suggested that a pollinator garden could be added along the prison wall to add more greenery to the trail (perhaps with a bench); and suggested that that section of the trail is “under benched” and not welcoming
- Terri Ackerman echoed support for the earlier suggested that BFRTAC could transition into a “BPAC” and become a sub committee under TAC

The meeting was adjourned at 8:16PM.

Next meeting on Thursday, March 30 @ 7:00PM