

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 4, 2021

Meeting held via Zoom

- **Call to Order**

- The March 4th, 2021 meeting of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee (“BFRTAC”) was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by co-chair Nat Welch

- **Attendees**

- BFRTAC Members: Nat Welch, Richard Fahlander, Adrienne Boardman, Carol Steele, John Soden, Dorcas Miller.
- Town Representatives: Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management; Terri Ackerman, Select Board Liaison.
- Members of the Public: Approximately 5-7 community members were present.
- Recorder: Adrienne Boardman

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- A motion was made to approve the February 4, 2021 meeting minutes and seconded
- The February 4, 2021 minutes were approved unanimously by roll call vote

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

- Interpretive Panel: After final edits of the historic interpretive panel administrative staff in the Planning Division is converting the panel into InDesign.
- Transportation Advisory Committee meeting will be discussing the concerns raised about Junction Park during their upcoming meeting.
- Letters are going out to Stone Root Lane abutters shortly with information on signing up for a site visits being held on Thursday, March 18th at 3:30PM and 4:15PM and Friday, March 19th at 8:00AM and 8:45AM
- Jim Coutre (114 Stone Root Lane) - Asked if the letters would be mailed to all abutters or only the Trustees
 - Response from co-chair Nat Welch - Nat is personally trying to reach out to the two trustees and remind them that they agreed that they would disseminate information to the rest of the abutters
 - Jim Coutre expressed frustration that the Town is unable to communicate with all Abutters directly
 - Nat Welch offered to put letters into individual mailboxes, but Marcia Rasmussen clarified the Town is unable to do so and we would need to use door hangers or another approach
- Arra Avakian (501 Powder Mill Road) - Very interested in attending a site walk, but seeking clarification on how to sign up.

- Marcia Rasmussen explained that the link should be posted to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee site by Tuesday.
- Len Simon (40 Meadowbrook Circle in Sudbury) - Update regarding where Sudbury stands with obtaining funding for the completion of 2D: Sudbury has indicated that 75% design is targeted for April and 100% design in December
 - Funding was expected for Fiscal 2022. Now tentative decision to push funding to Fiscal 2023. Largest issue is related to Chapter 91 and need to obtain a permit/license from Department from Environment Protection or waiver (Determination of Applicability) - Sudbury is seeking waiver and answer should come in May/June of 2021
 - If it is determined a license is required then process takes 9-12 months; and funding would be pushed out
 - Right now Sudbury is hoping for “negative determination of applicability” meaning that Sudbury would proceed as planned with construction planned for Fall of 2022
 - Co-chair Nat Welch asked for clarification from Marcia if Sudbury is delayed, would that also delay Concord’s timing; Marcia confirmed that was correct
 - Committee member Carol Steele further clarified that the last half-mile of Concord is included in the Sudbury scope so Concord would continue with design, but not go out to bid for construction until Sudbury is back on track; Marcia confirmed that was correct
- Community Connections Grant
 - Marcia is waiting to receive the final contract documents from MassDOT. Town Manager’s approval has been secured for the MAPC collective purchasing program so we will be able to order the equipment as soon as the contract for the CC grant is finalized.
 - Coordination with Concord Public Works will be required as to whether the Town staff can install the equipment or if an outside contractor is needed.

Committee Business

- Phase 2C “Last Half Mile”
 - Site walk in March with Abutters (discussed in Town Update portion of meeting)
 - Sudbury TIP Update (discussed in Town Update portion of meeting)
- Route 2A Neighborhood Support Letter
 - Co-chair Richard Fahlander summarized the discussion from the February 4, 2021 meeting to introduce the letter draft
 - Propose amendment to replace any reference in letter vaguely to “Rail Trail” to specify Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee or BFRTAC
 - A motion was made to approve Route 2A Support Letter, with proposed correction to Committee named reference and seconded; approved unanimously by roll call vote

- Trail Usage Count Updates
 - Co-chair Nat Welch asked if we can include language on the BFRTAC to ask for volunteers
 - Committee member Adrienne Boardman suggested offering a volunteer opportunity for high school students to assist with Trail Usage Counts; Adrienne to take action to liaise with a community service coordinator at the highschool
 - Co-chair Nat Welch also suggested ensuring we're engaged with the Friend of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
 - Barbara Pike (Border Road) - Seeking confirmation on timing to be able to reference in the Friend of Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Newsletter with content being finalized end of March; also mentioned that Pedal Power has agreed to let our efforts to their back parking lot
 - Marcia to coordinate specifics and Barbara will reach out before end of March to see what detail can be mentioned

- Committee Liaison Reports
 - Co-Chair Richard Fahlander - Transportation Committee has created the Bicycling Sub-Committee; open question is around whether the Committee will be expanded beyond the 3 current members, but there seems to be active attendance at meeting
 - Committee Member Dorcas Miller - Mentioned that Powder Mill Road and other access roads to the Rail Trail are becoming more congested with bicyclists and raises safety concerns (ex: little kids with training wheels)

- Member Questions & Comments
 - Stephen Goodman (Jennie Dugan Road)
 - Emphasized the importance of transparency, particularly with the Abutters and mentioned that Jennie Dugan residents are impacted, although not directly
 - Town paid for plantings, but many failed and he has been told that the Contractor will replace and is hoping that there's an assurance that they will be replanted in the Spring; Marcia Rasmussen clarified that they were paid for by the State and mentioned that she is working on following up with Residents, but is unsure of timing
 - There needs to be a connection between the Middle School Building Committee and the BFRTAC; for example one potential plan may place tennis courts along the trail which would take away from the aesthetics of the trail
 - Co-Chair Nat Welch announced that a member of the Middle School Building Committee will be joining the April BFRTAC Meeting
 - Stephen Goodman also volunteered to support the Trail Usage Count efforts and expressed the importance of having historical data to compare to future usage when further developments are made

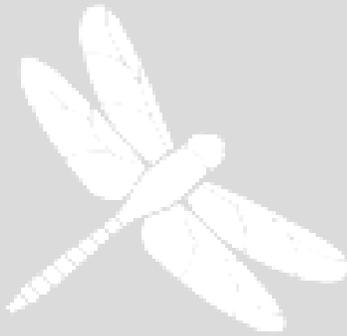
- Jim Coutre (114 Stone Root Lane): Expressed support of Trail Usage Counts efforts and the transparency of information sharing
- Ara Avakian (501 Powdermill Road): Mentioned how joyous it is to see kids sledding by the backside to the Powdermill ramp
- Topic of Recording Committee Meetings
 - No requirements to record meeting given this is an Advisory Committee, but recordings are helpful to promote transparency and ensure records are maintained
 - Discussion with Committee members and public on advantages of Zoom meetings and benefits of having a meeting record as point of record
 - Decision was made to record BFRTAC meetings going forward

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Next Meeting – Thursday, April 1, 2021 via Zoom.

BRUCE F. FREEMAN

RAIL TRAIL





Management

TOWN OF CONCORD

Department of Planning and Land

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BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL

MEMORANDUM

To: Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee
From: Marcia Rasmussen, Director DPLM
Re: **Update of Phases 2A, 2B, 2C, the last ½ mile of 2C, and 2D**
Date: March 4, 2021

- 1. Phase 2A Update:** This phase of the trail has been completed and is open for all to enjoy!
- 2. Phase 2B Update:** After final edits of the historic interpretive panel administrative staff in the Planning Division is converting the panel into InDesign, a software program that is used by the fabricator, and work should be completed by the end of March. I learned that the same fabricator that created the panels for Phase 2C will be creating this panel.
- 3. Phase 2C Updates:** A discussion of concerns raised regarding use of Junction Park in West Concord and conflicts between those on wheels and those walking will be part of the Transportation Advisory Committee meeting agenda next Wednesday afternoon. I will also be following up with MassDOT staff at the Central Transportation Planning Staff offices next week to request assistance in conducting counts in conjunction with other trail counts being done in May.

4. The last ½ mile of Phase 2C: Information has been received from the White Pond Advisory Committee regarding extending the fencing along the eastern side of the trail from the culvert south, and from Stone Root Lane abutters regarding the type of fencing desired on the west side of the trail from the Powder Mill Road culvert south. When discussing these requests with the Design Consultant, he raised concern with the additional fencing being requested on both the east and west sides of the trail (greater than had been shown on the 25% design plans) and the number of gates that may be needed. Four site visits have been scheduled for March 18 (late afternoon) and 19 (early morning), with letters being mailed to abutters this week. The revised 75% design plans are still expected to be submitted to Sudbury/MassDOT in April 2021, but may be delayed due to filing the NOI, which the Design Consultant is working on for submittal to the Natural Resources Commission.

5. Phase 2D Sudbury : From Sudbury Planner Beth Suedmeyer - The Sudbury- Concord BFRT project is presented in the TIP programming scenario for the MPO meeting tomorrow morning to remain in 2022.

Town staff and the design team from Fuss & O'Neill had a meeting with the MassDOT Project Development Engineer John Bechard and Project Manager Eamon Kernan Tuesday to discuss project readiness and TIP programming. Town staff stated we want to ensure the best possible outcome for the project, are interested in understanding the concerns MassDOT has, and that the Town and our consultants do not have concerns about delivering the project by third quarter FY 2022.

Chapter 91 permitting was discussed, as this was the primary concern identified by MassDOT at the Boston MPO meeting on February 18th. The Town's consultant Fuss & O'Neill are submitting a request for determination of applicability to MassDEP this week for the Ch. 91 permit. It was clarified that if a permit is required, and if MassDOT has concerns about the timing of the application submission as currently scheduled, we can revisit the schedule and accelerate filing if needed. All parties felt comfortable with this approach.

Ultimately, John Bechard stated he, on behalf of MassDOT, will recommend to the MPO that the project remain programmed in the FY 2022 TIP.

6. Community Connections Grant follow up: I completed review of the scope of work and contract documents for the grant and am waiting

to receive the final contract documents from MassDOT. I've also received the Town Manager's approval for the MAPC collective purchasing program so we will be able to order the equipment as soon as the contract for the CC grant is finalized. I will be coordinating with Concord Public Works as to whether Town staff can install the equipment or if an outside contractor is needed.

BRUCE FREEMAN

RAIL TRAIL

