

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee
Proposed Agenda – Thursday, April 5, 2018
**Location: Harvey Wheeler Community Center,
Clock Tower Room, 7pm**

Meeting called to order 7:03

Committee members present: Kent Carlson, Jim Lyon, Suzanne Knight, John Soden, Gretchen Roorbach

Also in attendance: Pam Gardner, Dean Sullender, Barbara Pike, Carol Steele, Marcia Rasmussen,

Recorder: Gretchen Roorbach

1. Review Minutes from March 1, 2018 Meeting.

Minutes approves as amended

2. Phase 2A, 2B, 2C Update.

Phase 2A Update:

The trail was opened for public use April 3rd. Anticipated grand opening/ribbon cutting for 2A most likely in May – no specific date, yet.

Phase 2B Update:

Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI) staff has been working on the 75% design for Phase 2B – the bridge over Route 2. The Environmental Notification Form was submitted to the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Agency (MEPA) on February 28th, after MassDOT completed its review. MEPA scheduled a site meeting/consultation for the first day of spring with Town staff from Concord, Acton and Sudbury and representatives from MassDOT and MEPA attending. We walked through the snow to view the intermittent stream that flows from the State Police Horse Barn site through the BFRT right-of-way and drains into the wetlands on adjacent State land. GPI anticipates submitting the 75% design package to MassDOT in May 2018.

Phase 2C Updates:

The preliminary signal work for the rail trail crossing of the MBTA Fitchburg commuter line has been underway on weekends this winter. This work is being done by Keolis' 'force-account' crews. Town staff from Public Works and Planning have been meeting members of the Green Thumbs (group responsible for working with CPW Engineering Division to design improvements in Junction Park and responsible for assisting with maintenance of plantings in the park) to discuss the revised Commonwealth Ave./Main St. intersection and extension of Junction Park. A new landscape plan is expected to be developed for discussion and possible implementation as part of the construction activity this year. The changes may require a "change order" to address all of the suggestions.

MassDOT and the contractor have not yet scheduled a meeting this spring to discuss the project construction schedule. Storm damage needs to be removed before work can continue. We anticipate the next major activity will be the installation of new traffic signals and reconstruction of the intersection at Main Street and Commonwealth Ave. The redesign will eliminate the small triangular-shaped traffic island in front of the 99 Restaurant and 2 extend Junction Park to reduce the distance to cross the street, thereby creating a safer experience for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Phase 2D Sudbury:

After a series of delays, the 25% design of Phase 2D in Sudbury (Concord town line south to Station Road near Route 20) was submitted to MassDOT in November 2017. Celebration of that milestone was premature as MassDOT said that drawings of bridges and a boardwalk need to be done before the design is accepted. The Town will need to provide additional funding and contract with a consultant to complete this work. In the meanwhile, beavers were hard at work building an impressive dam a short distance upstream of where the BFRT crosses Pantry Brook. The abutments for the bridge consisted of stacks of sizeable granite blocks. The beaver dam was so effective that it created a large upstream flow-age that eventually crept into the back yards of homes along Woodmere Drive. After getting state authorization, a brontosaurus-style earth-moving bucket was brought in to clear the dam. However, after taking out a small section of the dam, the entire dam gave way creating a major flood suddenly draining the entire flow-age. The resulting deluge undercut the granite blocks of one of the bridge abutments, which means drawings for the new bridge structure are needed. The Town also submitted a proposal to the Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation's Recreational Trails Advisory Board requesting most of the funds needed to buy the section of rail bed from Station Road south to Route 20 from CSX. This quarter-mile section is crucial to connect the BFRT and the eventual Mass Central Rail Trail to Sudbury's business district.

The TIP funding has a 2022 timeframe to start construction (calendar 2023).

West Concord Commuter Lot

- Benches and bike racks have been stored for the winter and should be returned to the platform soon. Using the bike racks between the bollards would help define the platform, and not impede the circulation
- There is money available as well as donated benches and bike racks and a coordinated effort should be established.

3. BFRT Storm Damage

Damage was extensive due to some large trees and branches that came down during the nor'easters', in March. The contractor will be responsible for cleanup.

4. Membership

There will be two openings on the committee in May.

Carol Steele has submitted a Green Card is retired, a cyclist and interested in the BFRT and was in attendance due to urging from Jim. Carol has not heard from the Town

regarding her green card. Ken will reach out to Tom McKean regarding Carol's availability.

5. Town Meeting

Town Meeting is next week. The two articles of interest for the committee are: (1) Article #26 – Item J will help fund the BFRT for Phase 2B or 2C use; and (2) Article #25 the potential acquisition of the 8 acre Gerow property by town for recreation uses. (located near where the trail crosses Commonwealth Ave. by the prison to the Warner's Pond boat ramp).

The Committee made a motion:

The BFRTAC supports Article 25 as written in the warrant. The Committee made a motion to support the procurement of the Gerow property do to it's proximity to the BFRT which will enhance the trail and for future recreational opportunities in the area.

The Committee unanimously endorsed the motion.

6. FOBFRT bench donation of approximately \$1,000 The Concord Runner's donated money to the FOBFRTC to set up a memorial granite bench with a plaque for Bob Hall. Marcia reported that the West Concord Advisory committee is working on the donation of memorial benches. Barbara Pike stated that the FOBFRT that the Concord runners could provide money towards other planned benches or to have the bench a mirror to the Kin Smith's bench.

The committee suggested that additional research for a possible matching granite bench to the Smith bench be further researched. The Garden Club should provide comments regarding this bench and possible locations.

As the trail becomes closer to completion it is likely that these types of memorials will become common. The Committee should research the Town policies and consider developing a policy for the acceptance of memorials along the trail.

7. Member Comments / Committee Liaisons / Correspondence

- Chair Breakfast: Suzanne Knight reported that the committee has requested our input into the Long Range plan that were germane to their jurisdiction. The Comprehension Long Range Committee is developing the plan. Section 4.5 and Section 4.6 are related to the rail trail.
- West Concord Advisory Committee: Kent Carlson reported on Thursday April 26 there will be an open house from 5:30 -7:30 at Harvey Wheeler. Kent will be on the panel and will present a drawing of the trail. Comments on the Long Range plan are due by Friday April 27th. Planned development at 13B Commonwealth Ave. was discussed; discussion of Articles 25 & 26; and Thursday's in July there will be a Thursday concert series in the Harvey Wheeler parking lot during the summer.

- Historical Commission: John Soden nothing to report
- White Pond Advisory Committee: Jim Lyon nothing to report.
- Trail Committee: Gretchen Roorbach nothing to report.

8. Next Committee Meeting: Thursday, May 3, 2018

9. Public Comment

- Barbara Pike queried if the Town was going to put mile markers on the trail. The marking of the miles has been shifted due to the Acton's detour around a lumber yard.
- Barbara Pike also reported that Acton kiosk does not have boxes for maps and she wanted to know if the Concord kiosk will have boxes for maps.

The Concord Kiosk do not have boxes for maps. Perhaps having the maps available in local stores to increase visitors to the stores.

Kent recommended that each BFRTAC meeting have a section called Operation & Maintenance for each subsequent meeting

- Dean Sullender wanted to know if West Concord gets a disproportional amount of affordable housing. Marcia pointed out that West Concord has had a higher amount of 40B projects recently. Prior to the recent projects in West Concord, Concord center developed the majority of affordable housing.
- Dean Sullender also questioned have the MBTA pay for bike racks
- Pam Gardner, commented that the Gerow land should be protected for a natural and recreational use and not be developed with affordable housing.

Meeting adjourned: 8:43PM