

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

April 22, 2021

Meeting held via Zoom

Call to Order

- The April 22nd, 2021 meeting of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee (“BFRTAC”) was called to order at 4:02 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 15 community members were present.
- Recorder: Adrienne Boardman

Update on 75% Plan Proposal

- Committee Chair Nat Welch provided a recap of history of the fencing plan and reiterated that the focus of today’s discussion was on the 75% plan to be submitted next week; emphasized focus has been on protecting the pond, meeting safety requirements, and keeping people moving along on the BFRT
- Marcia Rasmussen expressed appreciation for comments received and provided overview of discussions that have taken place since last meeting; target submission of April 28; no further update from Mass DOT since prior discussion
- Plan will continue to show fence along the Stone Root properties - 2 rail fence with openings with landscaping (no gates); 3 rail fence in select areas with some areas for “bump outs” to provide options to step off of trail and view Whites Pond, and look at the interpretive panel, etc
- Gate to property for Old Pickard Trust Land
- Trailhead may need to be removed as it does not meet Federal Standards, but will be submitted “as is” on 75% plan and await direction from MassDOT
- Adjustments have been made which address some of MassDOTs prior concerns - changing fencing type (emphasis on visual vs safety) and balances the needs of the community with the requirements of the State
- Full two-rail fence with 6 breaks on last ½ mile (to align with individuals property lines)

Committee Member Initial Comments and Questions

- Jim Coutre (114 Stone Root Lane): Discussed concerns about bump out giving the impression of inviting people to explore off the path

- Katy Blair (20 Darton Street): Speaking as Acting President of Whites Pond - Agrees that a bump out with bike stations provides the wrong cues; also offered to write a letter of support if the town was seeking alternate funding
 - Andrea Okie (12 Stone Root Lane) - Appreciation for work that has gone into the revised plan; also expressed concern about the location of the bump out
 - Seeking clarification about fencing with regards to 100 ft right of way; M. Rasmussen re-reviewed
 - Clarification on signage; M. Rasmussen explained that private property postings would be placed along breaks in fence and that further discussion on signage would be needed to better understand neighborhood preferences (Example: Trust members would like explicit “No Swimming”, but others may want broader signage that does not introduce the idea of swimming in the area)
 - Brandon Roberts (80 Stone Root): Seeking clarification on height and where fencing would end; M. Rasmussen re-shared the plan to walk through appropriate placements; Mr. Roberts expressed preference to extend fencing until change in elevation which would require another estimated 100 ft
 - Co-Chair Richard Fahlander: Suggested that focus should be on fencing which aligns with where people can start to see the pond vs extend the last 100 ft
 - Marcia Rasmussen to discuss where change in grade occurs with Project Consultant and will make suggestion to increase fence perhaps another 20 ft beyond change in grade (with wooden fence) to help support visual cues to stay on trail
 - Josh Galper (65 Stone Root Lane): Fencing should also be considered along with the Town’s ownership of the Beach
 - Jim Coutre (114 Stone Root Lane): Suggested that rod iron fence should actually extend to end of Trust property; M. Rasmussen doesn’t believe the State would support the expense, but that a combination of the two fences would support the goal
 - Ellen Glendon (64 Stone Root Lane): Asked for clarification on beam vs easement location and also suggested that rod iron fence should align with the trail access; M. Rasmussen provided further clarification that the wood fence would accomplish
 - Beth Holmes (211 Stone Root Lane): Seeking west side clarification; M. Rasmussen recapped the details of that part of the plan
 - Carmen Jacquier (White Pond Advisory Committee): Offered letters of support as needed
- A motion was made to approve the plan as proposed with modifications discussed during the meeting including a transition from wrought iron fencing to wooden fencing (to extend fence) and removing the “bump out”; Motion was seconded and approved unanimously by roll call vote

The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting – Thursday, May 6, 2021 via Zoom