

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2022

Meeting Held via Zoom

Call to Order

- The June 14, 2022 meeting of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee (“BFRTAC”) was called to order at 7:00PM by co-chair Nat Welch

Attendees

- BFRTAC Members: Nat Welch, Richard Fahlander, John Soden, Deborah Adleman, Adrienne Boardman, Dorcas Miller
- Town Representatives: Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management
- 3 members of the community
- Recorder: Adrienne Boardman

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- A motion was made to approve the May 5, 2022 meeting minutes and seconded
 - The May 5, 2022 minutes were approved unanimously by roll call vote

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

- Phase 2B
 - The request to extend the completion date to November 30, 2022 has been approved and that the bridge will not be open to the public until the project is completed; ongoing delays to the anti-graffiti application
- Phase 2C Updates:
 - Draft report was shared with the BFRTAC and has been posted to the BFRTAC site; discussion to be provided later in the meeting
 - Marcia provided an overview of the Willard Service Day project which involved 19 5th graders and 5 adults from Willard School as held on June 2
 - Barbara Pike: asked if the overview and pictures can be shared in the Friends newsletter; Marcia indicated she would need to get approval from the school
- Last ½ Mile
 - The revised plans for the 100% design dated April 2022 have been posted on the BFRTAC webpage
 - On Friday, May 16, Delia Kaye (Natural Resources Director) and Marcia met via Zoom with representatives from the Old Pickard Farm Trust 2 to discuss the proposed path and break in the wood rail fencing; they discussed the possibility for future signs provided by the Town to inform trail users of the private land

- The contract with design consultant GPI was further amended to increase the budget by \$5,000; contract extension is also being considered by MDOT
- Phase 2D Sudbury
 - All environmental permits have been secured; target start of July
 - Nat Welch: asked if there's any indicated which end of the phase plan the contractor would begin at - the Concord last ½ mile or further on Sudbury; Marcia indicated it is at the discretion of the Contractor
 - Deborah Adleman: asked for clarification on the terms "right of way" and "easement"; Marcia provided an overview
- Community Connections Grant
 - The work to install the bike shelters and racks was completed by Concord Public Works crews; there is one roof panel missing which the manufacturer will be providing
 - Marcia indicated that there was \$8,200 available budget so the Town will be purchasing two adaptive bikes for the bike share program
- Concord Prison Cemetery
 - Marcia noted that there is no update on the project, but referenced a Mass Art presentation being held on Wednesday evening
- MOTT Wayfinding Grant
 - The Town of Acton is soliciting quotes for fabrication and installation of wayfinding signage along the BFRT in Acton and Concord; quotes are expected to be submitted by June 15 and Marcia has requested that the various signs be priced for individual purchase in the event the BFRTAC wants to use one of the sign elements in Junction Park

Committee Business

Junction Park Conceptual Redesign Report Discussion

- Nat Welch provided an overview of the charge from the Select Board and explained that a draft report has been prepared by the Chairs and shared with the Committee which contains three recommendations as voted on during prior BFRTAC meetings (short-term conceptual design, long-term conceptual design, and the importance of improving safety of the MBTA crossing)
- Nat Welch opened up the floor for any materials changes or comments and indicated that any typos or grammatical errors would be corrected in the final version
- Dorcas Miller: indicated that she felt the report was well written and thorough
- John Soden: referenced the importance of "show your work" and emphasized that the report does just that

- Deborah Adleman: referred the committee back to the preliminary principles and indicated that she feels the principles helped keep the committee within the boundaries of the charge
- Marcia Rasmussen: extended appreciation for the work and effort put into the report
- Richard Fahlander: indicated that the Select Board has extended an invitation to himself and Nat Welch to join the July 11 Select Board meeting to discuss the report; encouraged BFRTAC members to attend if possible
- Mike Urban (75 Baharrel Street): raised a question on the concern of safety on the trail; but it was recommended to wait for public comments to discuss further
- A motion was made to approve the report draft and authorize the Committee Chairs to create a final version of the report and make the changes discussed tonight to deliver to the Select Board including: grammatical errors and typos will be corrected; diagrams JP1 and JP4 will be updated by the Town Staff to visual clarify recommendations; appendix 1 title has been updated; approved unanimously by roll call vote

Willard School Service Day

- Richard Fahlander suggested that a letter of thanks of appreciation to folks at the Willard School; agreement from the Committee and Richard will coordinate appropriate audience with Marcia

Prison Cemetery Project Update

- Discussed prior during Marcia's update

Member Questions & Comments

- Review of the upcoming BFRTAC meeting July date and confirmation that committee members are available for the next meeting on July 7
- Richard Fahlander raised the topic of rotating committee chairs; Nat Welch indicated it would be addressed further during the July BFRTAC meeting
- Deborah Adleman asked if Marcia's retirement date is still upcoming; Marcia indicated her retirement is planned for January 2023

Correspondence and Public Comments

- Mike Urban (75 Baharrel Street): Indicated that he is a frequent user of the BFRT and has noticed "sloppy" cyclist behavior recently on the trail ranging from lack of signals to cyclists riding several across; asking the Committee to explore ways to educate on proper etiquette - perhaps through a public education campaign or through pavement markings
- Deborah Adleman: shared that she was recently in a head-on accident (cyclists to cyclist) and suffered a broken hand; emphasized the importance to highlight safety across all users and that this isn't a cyclist vs pedestrian issue only; suggested we see what other rail trails are doing to address safety concerns

- Barbara Pike: explained that after receiving Mike Urban's letter she reached out to other rail trail contacts and this seems to be an issue many are struggling with
- Dorcas Miller: expressed a similar situation has happened to her and emphasized the importance of this topic
- Richard Fahlander: indicated that bells are often better received than a cyclist shouting to a pedestrian that they are coming; suggested we look for opportunities to distribute bells to the community during upcoming events
- Marcia: indicated that Mike Urban's email has forwarded to the safety officer and supported the idea of developing a program to educate on safe use
- Nat Welch asked if Deborah Adleman and Richard Fahlander were interested in continuing work on the safety topic and share ideas with the Committee at the July meeting; Deb and Richard confirmed interest
- Barbara Pike: asked how organizations register events on the BFRT in Concord and indicated that in other Towns there is a specific form that gets filled out; Marcia indicated that this is handled through the Town Manager's office (TMO@concordma.gov); Nat Welch suggested that this information be added to the town website and Barbara also indicated it can be added to the newsletter
- Barbara Pike: indicated that the Friends are reviewing the trail rules and noted inconsistencies between towns; ideal is that someone riding from the north to south encounters the same signs across each town; Marcia indicated that the signs provided for Concord were the wrong size for the posts; Barbara indicated that if the correct dimensions can be provided, and quantity, she can look at having them provided - Nat Welch indicated he would measure and count and connect with Barbara and Marcia to confirm next steps
- Barbara Pike: suggested that members of all the towns rail trail committees should come together to discuss common issues, along with the Friends convening together, to review topics such as: safety, ebikes, plowing, general trail maintenance, etc; Nat Welch asked if the Friends can be the driving force and he can support planning over the summer for a meeting in the Fall
- Barbara Pike: indicated having a single map that included 2B and 2C would be a great resource for visitor centers, etc; asked if it would be possible to have support from the Town make the updates; Marcia to explore resource availability
- Dorcas Miller: mentioned that she walked by Warner's Pond and suggested it might perhaps relieve some congestion in Junction Park once the new park is open; asked about dredging to which Marcia mentioned it would take place this Fall or next Fall

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15PM

Next meeting on Thursday, July 7 @ 7:00PM