

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2021

Hybrid Meeting: In-Person and Zoom

Call to Order

- The June 14th, 2021 meeting of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee (“BFRTAC”) was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by co-chair Nat Welch

Attendees

- BFRTAC Members (in-person): Nat Welch, Richard Fahlander, Adrienne Boardman, Dorcas Miller, Deborah Adleman; BFRTAC Members (Zoom): John Soden
- Town Representatives: Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management (in-person) and Matt Johnson, Select Board Liaison (Zoom)
- Members of the Public: Approximately 3 community members joined via Zoom.
- Recorder: Adrienne Boardman

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- A motion was made to approve the June 3, 2021 meeting minutes and seconded
 - The June 3, 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.

- Phase 2B
 - Route 2 West Bound will be detoured from Friday, July 16th at 8:00PM until Saturday, July 17th at 1:00PM so steel beams can be set over Route 2. Advanced notifications, message boards, and communications will all be implemented as before.
 - Tour of Acton side of construction can be coordinated through the Mass DOT project Manager (M. Rasmussen will relay dates)
- Phase 2C
 - The curb ramp intended to be installed by the West Concord commuter lot/Nashoba Brook will now be included in the contract for the Commonwealth Ave. improvements with funds provided by the Community Preservation Committee’s grant approved at the 2021 Town Meeting; likely this Fall or next Spring/Summer
- Last ½ Mile of 2C
 - MassDOT comments on the 75% design plans have been shared with the design consultants for both sections of the project; it has been noted that use of the timber rail fence must be evaluated
 - Based on the MassDOT design guidelines the only timber rail fence that’s required is the fence near the vernal pool; Concord will need to decide if the fence should be included in the project as a non-participating cost meaning that

the Town would need to provide the funds; Town funding would need to be reviewed at a Town Meeting

- Phase 2D Sudbury
 - 100% design will begin in mid-August with an estimated design completion date in June 2022 and construction starting in 2023; schedule could be further revised following the full MassDOT comment review and resolution
- Community Connections Grant
 - Final authorization to order the equipment was received and order was placed on Monday, July 12, 2021; Anticipated delivery is late August 2021 with installation to be coordinated with Concord Public Works in the fall.
 - Some Committee discussion confirming equipment specifics and intended locations
- As a result of concerns raised about speeds along Old Marlboro road and safety risks to users of the BFRT; a grant application has been submitted and approved to fund an upgrade to the crosswalk where the BFRT crossed Old Marlboro Road and also the addition of one for the Williams Road crossing - the crosswalks would be auto signaled as people approach

Committee Business

- Nat Welch welcomed Deborah Adleman to the BFRTAC
- Trail Count Report (presented by Casey Cooper; Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization)
 - Data was collected at 5 BFRT locations in Acton and Concord; across 76 observed hours
 - 3,444 total users counted
 - 1,663 bicyclists
 - 1,713 pedestrians
 - 68 “other”
 - Projections were done using a new calculator tool (Casey Cooper to confirm that it was applied correctly) to help anticipate usage once Acton and Concord are connected via the bridge
 - Projected annual average daily traffic: 394.20 trips
 - Projected annual traffic estimate: 143,883 trips
 - Discussion around how to continue counting efforts in the future and incorporate mechanisms for automatic counting
 - Commentary on relative equal usage of cyclists to pedestrians
 - Greg Mueller (95 Stone Root Lane): Asked if there is any existing baseline to compare these numbers to; Discussion around how this effort is establishing Concord’s baseline
 - Nat Welch: Asked if this data be shared with the Transportation Advisory Committee; M. Rasmusen has shared with Town Manager and Police Department and will also share with the Transportation Advisory Committee
 - Next count could be conducted in September 2021; further planning discussions to occur at later meeting

- Greg Mueller (95 Stone Root Lane): Traffic counts reinforce concerns that the Stone Root residents have about increased usage
- **Review of Last ½ Mile Site Walk**
 - Roughly 7 abutters attended one of the two site walks on July 13; in addition to several BFRTAC members and town representatives
 - M. Rasmussen effectively communicated what was in the plan, but reminded all in attendance that this continues to be subject to the Mass DOT comments
 - Committee discussion around how fencing decisions are made, and if other towns also experience breaks in fencing along their trails
 - Greg Mueller (95 Stone Root Lane): Expressed appreciation to Marcia and others for joining the site walk and the benefits of seeing the plan in person
 - M. Rasmussen confirmed she will leave the stakes in place for another week if additional residents want to walk
- **Committee Liaison Reports**
 - Co-Chair Richard Fahlander discussed that the Transportation Committee has agreed to have a bicycle sub committee; Richard will serve as the liaison
 - Junction Park safety related discussions continue around new signage and pavement markings which will be installed; a site walk will be scheduled in the near term
 - Disability Commission: looking for confirmation that mobility assisted devices can be used on the trail and also through Junction Park
 - Prison; recognition of prison history and cemetery along the trail - M. Rasmussen will be contacted about possible signage
- **Member Questions and Comments**
 - Committee discussion needed around electric bikes

Correspondence and Public Comments

- Richard Fahlander received a reply back from Mass DOT around the concerns regarding Lally Woods; a speed study would need to be conducted
 - Discussion around how (if at all) the BFRTAC can or should support their efforts

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Next Meeting – The Thursday, September 2 date would not allow for a quorum. Thursday, September 9, 2021 was proposed and a final date will be set in early September.