

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee

August 2, 2018

Harvey Wheeler Community Center, Clock Tower Room, 7pm

Attendees: Kent Carlson, Jim Lyon, Suzanne Knight and Carol Steele

In attendance: Members from the public: Marcia Rasmussen, Dean Sullender, Patricia Bruttomesso, Tom Bruttomesso, Barbara Pike, Judy Perrin, Ken Perrin, Jane Hotchkiss, Walley Johnston

Recorder: Suzanne Knight

Call to order: 7:00pm

1. Review Minutes from April 5, Meeting, approved as amended.

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

- i. **Phase 2A Update:** This phase of the trail construction has been completed and is open for all to enjoy!
- ii. **Phase 2B Update:** GPI submitted plans at the end of June; they have been posted on the BFRT Advisory Committee's website at <http://concordma.gov/980/Bruce-Freeman-Rail-Trail-Committee>. The Phase 2B 75% design is listed on the left side of the page.
- iii. **Phase 2C Updates:**
 - a) Attached for your information and use is a Q&A memo I prepared following a meeting with Barbara Pike in July, which responds to questions and concerns that she raised at prior meetings.
 - b) Marcia met with Concord-On-Tap proponents Janet Rothrock and Barbara Nicolson on July 12th to discuss locations for new Concord-On-Tap signs. We walked along the trail in West Concord and felt the following three locations would be useful for cyclists and pedestrians using the trail:
 - The first is at the intersection of Main St. and Commonwealth Ave. – a C-O-T sign will be installed, either on the upright kiosk or on a stand-alone post next to the bike racks that are located at the edge of the rail trail.
 - The second will be adjacent to the rail trail and new parking spaces adjacent to the commuter rail parking lot. The C-O-T sign will be on a stand-alone post in the landscape island adjacent to the bicycle parking area to be reclaimed from 2 automobile parking spaces.
 - The third will be at the end of the BFRT parking area closest to the Nashoba Brook bridge. The C-O-T sign will be on a stand-alone post; final location to be determined upon review of activity in the area.

A fourth location identified is the Commonwealth Ave. parking area located opposite MCI Concord. I'll review the plans at this location to determine possible locations for a stand-alone post.

Marcia indicated that she would like to review these locations and the sign post with the BFRT Advisory Committee for a vote to accept and recommend installation of the four signs to the Town Manager and Select Board.

c) Contractor D.W. White will continue work at the Main Street/Commonwealth Ave. intersection during August, in addition to other locations along the trail (Powder Mill Road and Nashoba Brook bridge deck) – anticipated completion of paving and fencing in these locations by September 1. A sleeve was installed by the Contractor across Main Street (while the street was open) for a future water line to be located on the south side of Main Street (near the kiosk and bicycle parking area), but CPW Water & Sewer needs to confirm that there is adequate space for the water meter pit.

d) The Contractor is reaching out to Woods Hill Table restaurant staff to coordinate construction preparations in advance of installing the path behind Woods Hill Table. The Town will be allowing ten spaces on the town-owned portion of the commuter lot to be used by WHT staff (as agreed during discussions about the special permit for the restaurant. A wooden guardrail which will be installed in the parking lot behind Woods Hill Table will eliminate access to the Club Car Café service door. Discussions will continue with the contractor and project engineer and the restaurant.

e) MassDOT project engineers will be following up with Keolis Commuter Services (under contract to the MBTA) regarding installation of the crossing gates and paving the path over the rails.

f) The change order requesting additional landscaping at the Main St./Commonwealth Ave. intersection (both sides of Main Street at the Junction Park extension and area opposite Junction Park plus an area near the Assabet River bridge behind 72 Cottage St.) has been submitted (July 25th) and is being reviewed by District #4. I hope to hear the status of the change order at the next construction meeting on August 9th. I also shared contact information with property owner at 72 Cottage St. so she could coordinate access to the trail for her contractor to install additional landscaping on her property. The Garden Club is waiting to hear if space for a garden will be available on the Main street side of the trail at the intersection with Commonwealth Ave. The town has installed a water main conduit in anticipation of the garden.

g) MassDOT and Town of Concord staff continues to remind residents and visitors that the trail continues to be a construction zone in 2018; neither residents nor visitors should be walking on or using the trail, especially during the week when construction activity is underway.

- iv. **Phase 2D Sudbury:** Sudbury resident/Selectman Len Simon provided the following update to Friends member Barbara Pike - At long last the contract

to complete the 25% design has been awarded to Jacobs, where former GPI Project Manager Becky Williamson is now working.

3. Operations and Maintenance

Marcia reported on Stephen Goodman's concerns from the July BFRT meeting:

- Coir balloons that were missing will be replaced.
- Debris appears to have been cleared, but no report yet on removal from abutters land.
- Marcia will check on speeding construction vehicles, however, this is a construction zone and their speed is not within town control. The main concern would be people crossing by Beharrel Street as they walk to the commuter rail.

4. Q&A Sheet from Barbara Pike and FOBRT

As Phase 2A in Acton is being used, there have been issues with some design elements:

Q. The raised islands with curbing at the intersections are a hazard. There have been reports of cyclists hitting the vertical curbing and falling - at least once into the intersection itself and it is difficult for cyclists to enter the trail from the street.

A. MassDOT believes that these splitter islands are designed and installed as required because cyclists are NOT slowing down at intersections; MassDOT will NOT entertain any redesigned splitter island. And, MassDOT is very concerned about potential motorized vehicular activity similar to what happened in NYC a couple years ago.

Q. The warning lights used at busy street crossings require the trail user to push a button to activate. I think Acton will try to change them to automatic activation.

A. The warning lights have already been purchased by the Contractor for BFRT Phase 2C; MassDOT will NOT entertain any requested change order.

Q. The trail rules signs that have been posted do not conform with the rules agreed upon at the multi-town uniformity committee meetings.

A. There were no trail rules signs included in the contract. We should be able to get these added or use funds from the CPA to install the trail rules as agreed. I will need to follow up with GPI.

Q. The shoulders are stone dust - which is washing out and covering the asphalt surface.

A. This is a design detail that has been revised for 2C. Phase 1 in Chelmsford used stone dust shoulders but did not add a weed barrier underneath the stone dust – there was no long-term problem with washouts onto the asphalt. Phase 2A did install the weed barrier, which is part of the reason why the washouts are occurring. The weed barrier has been eliminated from the Phase 2C design. The stone dust shoulders were provided for those running along the trail who didn't want to run on the asphalt surface.

Q. The kiosks have locks which do not work. Literature boxes will be an add-on provided and installed by the Friends.

A. The design details in Phase 2C do not show locking kiosks, so there should not be an issue. Literature boxes will need to be added, if desired.

Q. The streets, themselves, do not have signs to name them.

A. Street signs have been included in the construction drawings (although one may be missing) so this should not be a problem.

Q. Acton is in the process of incorporating maintenance and management of the trail into the town departments: event registration, maintenance, litter pickup (organizing volunteers), long-term repairs, safety. siting additional porta-potties, ...

A. As we discussed, the Town Manager has added funding to the Concord Public Works budget to address maintenance, the Police have accepted responsibility for patrolling the trail, permitting and programming have yet to be identified but discussion would likely begin with the Town Manager's office.

Phase 2B

Q. What is the status of designing the off-ramp from Phase 2B to the conservation land in Acton and Concord? I get asked about this a LOT.

A. 75% design drawings will be posted on line the week of July 16th. A hard copy of the full set of plans is available in the Planning Office at 141 Keyes Road.

Phase 2C

Q. Will there be handicap parking south of the Assabet River?

A. The construction drawings continue to show a handicapped accessible parking space and path on Williams Road – see attached plan.

Q. What is the construction schedule for 2018: RR crossing, intersection reconstruction, final paving, etc.?

A. A construction schedule has not been provided to me, however, work on the Main St./Commonwealth Ave. intersection is expected to start in earnest the week of July 16 – the contractor anticipates removing the traffic island next week, then beginning incremental work at that intersection with a completion anticipated by the end of August. They will try to coordinate the work schedule to minimize impacts to the morning and evening commute.

Q. I was wondering how the new plantings will be watered. They look nice now.

A. I observed a Contractor's water truck watering trees this morning – the Contractor is required to maintain the plantings and replace any that die.

Q. The Friends have created and are distributing a map of Phase 1 and 2A. (Very popular, by the way.) It is available on the Friends website. SOMEDAY...we could have one for the whole trail from Lowell to Powder Mill.

For now, it makes sense to have a separate one for Phase 2C, and the one Jill made for us would be a good start. Who would decide what to add - historical info, public restrooms, ice cream (!), ...

A. If you have info that you think should be added let me know. The BFRT Advisory Committee may want to provide input, too.

Q. Do you have any more information about the bike rack that Buddy Bates has donated money for to honor his friend?

A. No, I'm waiting to hear more from Carlene Hempel.

5. 75% Phase 2B Design Plans

Marcia distributed the Phase 2B 75% design plans. The BFRT Advisory Committee will review these and bring comments and questions to the September meeting.

6. Member Comments/Committee Liaisons/Correspondence

- Kent suggested that the Advisory Committee create leaflets, publish articles in the paper and place information on the town website regarding vehicle and rider education. For instance, pedestrians have right of way over bicycles even if bicycles are being walked. Bicycles follow the same rules as cars.
- Jim will follow-up with Stephen Goodman about his questions from the last meeting.
- Kent noticed that plantings are closer to the trail than seems logical. The trees near the Assabet bridge are 4 feet from the trail, but much closer to the stone dust path. This concern was discussed early in the planning stages, but not followed-up with the landscapers. Marcia will investigate if re-planting the white pines is possible.

7. Public Comment

- Dean Sullender suggested painting the edges of the islands to warn bikers of the cement islands. Marcia replied that this would become a maintenance issue for the town.
- Dean Sullender also suggested warnings to bicyclers to pause at intersections as not all drivers slow down or stop at crossings at the side streets.
- Kent questioned the timing for 2B. Marcia suggested that construction would probably start in 2020.
- Patricia Bruttomesso wondered if the Public Works department had done a traffic study to look at the traffic issues on Main Street. Marcia commented about a potential past study of Church street, going to Route 2. Jim will contact Public Works and email Patricia with a response. Patricia remarked that traffic is at a standstill along Route 62 from Rt 2 into West Concord and she has concerns about people living along Main Street trying to access their driveways.
- The Acton soccer field access is not the current focus of Phase 2B
- On August 10th, 2:00 PM there will be a ribbon cutting celebrating the opening of the Acton-Maynard section of the Assabet River Rail Trail. The celebration will be at the South Acton trailhead and commuter station.

Next Committee Meeting: Thursday, September 6, 2018
at Harvey Wheeler Community Center

Meeting Adjourned: 8:10 PM