

MEMORANDUM

REF: GPI Project #: MAX-2010031.12
MassDOT Proj. #: 608164

DATE: September 21, 2021

TO: Ms. Carrie Lavallee, P.E.
Acting Chief Engineer
Massachusetts Department of Transportation - Highway Division
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160
Boston, MA 02116

ATTN: Ms. Marie Rose, P.E. – Director of Project Management

FROM: Matthew Kearney, P.E., Project Manager

RE: Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Phase 2D - Concord Fence Request
BFRT Phase 2D
Concord / Sudbury, MA
MassDOT Project Manager – Eamon Kernan

INTRODUCTION

Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI) has prepared this letter on behalf of the Town of Concord to request the review and support of additional proposed timber rail fencing along the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) between the Concord/Sudbury town line and Powder Mill Road. This 0.5-mile portion of the project was previously included in Phase 2C as part of the 3.0 miles of shared use path within Concord. However, this portion was removed in order to end construction at a logical terminus point at Powder Mill Road. With the continued design and proposed construction of the trail through Sudbury, the last 0.5-mile section in Concord will be constructed. The local abutters along this 0.5 mile have expressed concerns of trespassing on private property and would like to discourage that practice as much as possible.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The property is located on the former Lowell Secondary railroad line of the New Haven Railroad line and is part of a 25-mile shared use path. The recently constructed 2.5 miles of Phase 2C was opened on September 27, 2019 and extends from Commonwealth Ave near the Route 2 rotary to the underpass of Powder Mill Road. The remaining 0.5-mile section of the former railroad bed within Concord is overgrown and wooded, yet still utilized by many walkers and bikers. The railroad steel rails and wood ties remain in place for most of this section.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The proposed Shared Use Path design within the Town of Concord includes approximately 3,100 feet of two-rail timber fence, 200 feet of three-rail timber fence and 500 feet of ornamental metal fence to serve three distinct purposes. These are as follows:

- The two-rail timber fence is proposed to define the path in locations where trail users may be inclined to meander off of the paved surface and onto undesignated areas. These locations include the backyards of the abutters on Stone Root Lane to the west of the project area, and White Pond and White Avenue to the east of the project area. More specifically, the two-rail timber fence is proposed at the following stations:

- Sta. 1+00 LT to 28+50 LT – with several intermittent openings for emergency access
 - Sta. 10+15 RT to 12+50 RT – at the approach to the ornamental fence
 - Sta. 17+50 RT to 18+00 RT – at the end of the ornamental fence
 - Sta. 22+45 RT to 23+45 RT – at the end of the three-rail timber fence protecting the vernal pool
- The three-rail timber fence is proposed in locations with a steep drop-off within five feet of the edge of the trail. This occurs from Station 20+50 RT to 22+45 RT where a certified vernal pool exists to the east. The trail is centered between two depressions, so shifting the trail west would have only presented a similar concern on the left side of the trail.
 - The metal ornamental fence is proposed in the area of White Pond, a 40-acre great pond. The pond is adjacent to the trail and the ornamental fence is proposed between Sta. 12+50 RT and 17+50 RT. In some locations, this sensitive resource area is situated as close as 50' from the edge of the trail and 30' below it. The steep slope to the pond has experienced erosion issues already which could be exacerbated by the increased foot traffic from the trail. The proposed fence will provide security to the slope and, most importantly, safety for the trail users while still allowing views of the pond.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed fencing along this 0.5-mile portion of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail has been designed to meet the guidelines of the 2012 AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities and provide a context sensitive solution. While all locations may not necessarily meet all of the safety requirements for the trail users, the proposed fencing will serve a purpose to the surrounding community, which we know is a high priority for MassDOT. For these reasons, GPI, on behalf of the Town of Concord, respectfully requests that the proposed fencing be included as a part of MassDOT Proj. No. 608164.

Should you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact me directly at 978-570-2962, or Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning & Land Management for the Town of Concord at 978-912-3290 or mras mussen@concordma.gov.

Sincerely,

GREENMAN-PEDERSEN, INC.

Matthew Kearney, P.E.
Project Manager

enclosure(s)

cc: Marcia Rasmussen – Town of Concord
Eamon Kernan – MassDOT Project Manager