

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 6, 2022

Meeting Held via Zoom

Call to Order

- The January 6, 2022 meeting of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee (“BFRTAC”) was called to order at 7:02PM by co-chair Nat Welch

Attendees

- BFRTAC Members: Nat Welch, Richard Fahlander, Dorcas Miller, Adrienne Boardman, Deborah Adleman, Sam Stearns, Tracy Hansen, and Marybeth Barker
- Town Representatives: Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management and Matt Johnson, Select Board Liaison
- Members of the Public: Approximately 5 members of the community joined
- Recorder: Adrienne Boardman

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- A motion was made to approve the December 2, 2021 meeting minutes and seconded
 - The December 2, 2021 minutes were approved unanimously by roll call vote

Town Update Memo (Covered later in the meeting after ebike and Junction Park topics) - Marcia Rasmussen presented the monthly project report, which is incorporated as an addendum to the meeting minutes.

- Phase 2B
 - The project will be shut down for the winter and spring start-up is weather/temperature dependent
 - The design consultant GPI is reaching out to Town staff to resolve the bio-retention basin issue over the winter so work can proceed in the spring.
- Phase 2C
 - The BFRTAC will continue to address the concerns around Junction Park
- Last ½ Mile of 2C
 - MassDOT Project Manager Eamon Kernan provided the MassDOT position on the proposed 2-rail fence along the westerly side of the trail (Stone Root Lane abutters) and the decorative metal fence along the easterly side of the trail near White Pond in a letter dated December 8, 2021 and received by the Town on December 20th
 - The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) application has been reduced to \$30,000 and funds will be used for design and installation of additional

planting/landscaping, signage, benches, and other trail amenities.

- Phase 2D Sudbury
 - The Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs issued the MEPA Certificate
 - Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is not required
- Community Connections Grant
 - CPW Highway and Grounds staff were unable to complete installation of the bicycle shelters and racks by the December 31, 2021 deadline
 - Marcia was able to prepare an extension of time request to May 31, 2022, which has been approved
- Concord Prison Cemetery:
 - GPI has provided an estimate for the survey and design work to install an ADA-accessible path from the BFRT to a point at the base of the prison cemetery with a small area for a bench and interpretive panel
 - Richard Fahlander explained that he has a planned discussion with Patricia Ruiz around private funding to also support the prison project

- Clarification on the fencing discussed - State will not allow the proposed fencing on their property, however homeowners could put fencing on their property
- Steve Wright (137 Stone Root Lane): Expressed disappointment that after the time and energy put into coming up with a cohesive plan with the BFRTAC the State will not allow any fencing which means that the BFRT will now allow easy access to a private beach as a “highway to the pond” and asked what can be done
- Nat Welch recommended that concerned residents raise the issue with state legislatures to have this decision adjusted with the goal of protecting the pond; Marcia Rasmussen clarified that the state follows design criteria, but supported engaging legislatures to see what might be possible
- Josh Galper (65 Stone Root Lane): Speaking as Co-Chair of White Pond Advisory Committee - Summarized the efforts of the White Pond Committee over recent months and expressed determination to work to protect access to White Pond for environmental reasons (not personal gains); Referenced a White Pond Committee Meeting on January 26 where information from Marcia and the BFRTAC might be needed
- Barbara Pike (118 Border Road): Asked for clarification on the bio-retention topic; Marcia explained it has to do with how stormwater is handled and managed

Committee Business

E-Bikes

- Deborah Adleman drafted an informational white paper in coordination with Marcia Rasmussen who Deb noted was indispensable in providing background information and context
- Deborah presented slides to provide a summary of the information gathered including: a description and history of e-bikes, a legal and regulatory review which references that Massachusetts is drafting legislation (whereas many other states have established already), and challenges and fears related to their usage on a rail trail.
- Committee discussion around how ebike usage is enforced in states where there are regulations limiting their use
- Barbara Pike (118 Border Road): Mentioned that she has seen ebikes used on the BFRT and it's often hard to distinguish them from regular bicycles
- MaryBeth Barker: Referenced an ebike share program that she is familiar with in Madison, WI and the safe usage that she has observed
- Discussion around next steps - Deborah to provide a detailed plan for next steps (with proposed dates) to review during the February BFRTAC meeting
- Idea to have Friends of Bruce Freeman bring together contacts from surrounding towns to further discuss this topic cohesively

Junction Park Conceptual Redesign

- Draft design principles were shared and Committee feedback, including weighting, was reviewed; Committee members felt the results accurately reflected the approach
- Proposal to targeting the week of February 7 for a late afternoon / early evening meeting for a hybrid forum for the BFRTAC and the public to come together to discuss potential ideas
- Discussion around how to best introduce/position the project to the public to ensure that the public's comments are in line with the scope of the project and perhaps using the Town Special Election on February 3 to spread the word with posters and handouts
- Determination to have a sub-committee meeting with Nat Welch, Tracy Hansen, and Adrienne Boardman on January 19 at 7PM to focus on planning the public forum
- Discussion around fully remote or hybrid meeting and pros/cons of both approaches

Last Half Mile

- Discussed during Marcia's update

2022 Planning & Committee Liaisons

- Nat to send list to the Committee and ask members to reply and indicate which areas they would like to focus on including:
 - Junction Park
 - Last ½ Mile
 - Bridge Opening
 - Ebike Policy Work

- Train Counts
- Concord Middle School Project
- Safety Signals
- White Pond Advisory Committee

Discussion re: Election of Officers for 2022

- Motion to maintain Committee leadership of Nat Welch and Richard Fahlander as co-chairs until a vote in July 2022 meeting; motion was seconded
 - Motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote

Member Questions & Comments

- None

Correspondence and Public Comments

- None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51PM.

Next Meeting – Thursday, February 10 @ 7:00PM (Rescheduled from Thursday, February 3)