

West Concord Advisory Committee

a subcommittee of the Planning Board  
February 2, 2022

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the West Concord Advisory Committee (WCAC) held a virtual online public meeting at 7 p.m. via <https://zoom.us>.

**Members present:**

Geoff Walton, Acting Chair (GW)  
Susan Mlodozeniec (SM)  
Amy Robinson (AR)  
Ann Sussman (AS)  
John Cooley (JC) – joined where noted below

**Additional staff/committees represented:**

Marcia Rasmussen (MR), Director of Planning and Land Management

Honore Weiner & Bill Lott (public)

**GW called the committee to order at approximately 7:04 pm.**

H.Weiner and B.Lott introduce themselves, lived here 41 years and interested in learning what the committee does

Put aside January meeting minutes until JC arrives

BFRT Subcommittee on Junction Park Usage and Safety update

- GW provides update
  - Conducting 2 major outreaches for community input
  - Survey re users of Junction Park on wheels, wayfinding
  - Holding public meetings for input re how to improve that area
- MR says they will compile survey information as of the 8th to review at public forum
  - Forum 4-6 PM Wednesday 2/16
  - Will have presentation of issues, possible short- and long-term plans
  - No major push on survey yet but already have had 240+ responses
  - Encouraging people to circulate it, spread the word
  - Paper copy to be available at polling locations tomorrow
  - Survey open through 2/18
  - Further conversations in March
  - Plan is to finalize recommendations to Select Board to address resident concerns being raised – aiming for May, must be complete by June
- SM saw a survey at library re how to meet transportation needs (point A to point B)
  - MR says Concord working with other neighboring towns, underserved by transit
  - Working to identify and meet needs of residents who don't drive

- GW back to BFRT, encourages taking survey

#### Plowing BFRT discussion

- AS raises this concern, she commutes by BFRT from home and notes it is not plowed
  - Other towns plow a path for walking, keep some snow covered for skiing
  - Safety and environmental issue
  - Especially for aging population
- SM asks about neighboring towns with path longer than us, what do they do
  - MR says when trail planned, public works had no funding so Town decided policy is no plowing
  - Still no funds, no equipment, no staff
  - Until it comes from residents to rethink this policy, this won't change
  - Process would be take suggestion to BFRT committee, ask them to propose it to Select Board, who would then have to find funds
- AR asks about access to Club Car, raises concerns expressed by Ron (owner/lessor)
  - MR says Town is to ensure access through snowbanks from parking lot to Junction Park and to Club Car itself
  - MR explains Club Car is leased from MBTA, so Ron could contact them but is responsible for removing snow at Club Car access points himself
  - AR will convey
- \*JC joins meeting
- GW agrees BFRT is impassable (for walkers) in ice, suggests writing letter to BFRT Committee
  - Notes that parts of BFRT in Acton still are not plowed, so not all Towns do this or do it the same way
  - AS notes Lexington does plow, suggests outreach to coordinate
- AR suggests prioritizing stretch from Old Marlboro to Junction Park, most used for access to town and commuting, good starting point
- GW asks AS to draft letter, she agrees
- SM urges keeping part snow covered for skiers, fat-tire bikes
- AR suggests it might fit in with safety focus of BFRT, maybe additional topic for their public forums
- JC raises safety concern specific to runners – without plowed BFRT, and without consistent/plowed sidewalks, traffic patterns get thrown out of balance because runners are rerouted from BFRT to street
- **Action items:**
  - AS to prepare letter and circulate
  - MR reminds that comments should go back to only AS (no deliberating)

#### Follow-up from “quick wins” bike-ped improvements for West Concord Junction

- SM updates re meeting today between her/AS and Public Works
  - Showed slides
  - 4 areas identified were sidewalks, crosswalks, signage, bikeability
- Feedback was these issues are on their radar already, but chronic underfunding and dealing with deferred maintenance all over the place
  - They will ask at Town Meeting for additional funds to catch up

- Going forward, goal is debt exclusion (funding for capital improvements, not necessarily from town budget)
- SM explains all of this means current focus is Complete Streets plan
- Steve Dookran will attend next WCAC meeting to update us on this
  - Final plan, timing, information to update residents about status
  - Goal is to plan timing around any major local festivals/annual celebrations
  - Possibly will give us a tentative calendar
- AS notes “Spring into West Concord” event coming up on Saturday, May 21st (10am - 3pm), should plan around that
- AS says Dookran open to maybe adding a crosswalk at Laws Brook based on feedback from our walkabout
  - Also not opposed to colorful crosswalks, etc.
  - Just need to ensure protocols are being followed (liability concerns)
  - Hopeful, positive meeting
  - New staff, time of transition in Town, open to new approaches
- SM gave example PW showed (Rideout drone view, used to have 3 crosswalks, now 1)
  - Sometimes things done for a reason, balancing different factors
  - 1 crosswalk channels people to one place, but 3 is more inviting and convenient for walkers
- AS says they shared map of Cultural District, PW hadn’t seen it
  - PW noted all the signage, etc., was done before Cultural District status
  - Worth reexamining now, make plan include/consider Cultural District status more
  - PW seemed interested in this
- SM says when Complete Streets changes happen, possible opportunity to add in related projects (like the crosswalk at Kenneth Dunn Square)
  - PW willing to see the project as opening to fit in other related projects
  - Willing to be playful (colorful crosswalks)
  - Also pointed us to Aaron Miklosko, can invite him to next meeting
  - Must consider this (the need for funds for infrastructure) when voting on other things at Town Meeting
- **Action items:**
  - Invite PW (Cathcart, Dookran, and Miklosko) to March meeting
  - Center March meeting on this, possible projects to add into Complete Streets

### Membership Outreach

- GW asks about flyer
- SM made one to hang, did not circulate it electronically yet
- AS will put flyer up at the Mill, Fowler
- AR will hang at BFRT kiosk
- GW had posting put on Select Board minutes
  - MR says no need to post again – it will remain there until filled
  - MR also will arrange for flyer to be posted to WCAC webpage
- AR suggests information/a presence/recruiting at the May 21 Spring festival
- GW asks about having information available outside Town Meeting
  - MR suggests checking with Administrator or Moderator (Town Manager’s Office)

- Town Meeting is 5/1

#### Liaison Updates

- GW update was re BFRT
- AS in touch with Bill Posner (TAC) but missed last meeting, will attend next one
- AR reached out to WCJCDC, no meeting until next week
- AR update about DEI Commission
  - Green Card replaced with Volunteer Card
  - Survey done recently, focus on making safe/welcoming spaces for all people to gather
- AR update about Planning Board
  - MR describes status of grant application for Assabet Bridge (pedestrian, connecting Baker Ave to Junction) – different from Route 62 bridge
  - MR describes Assabet Bluffs land acquisition, near BFRT/Old Marlboro/Upland
  - Would be 1 acre for affordable housing, 6 acres for open space

#### Public Comment

- H. Weiner, emphasizes need to clear BFRT, walkability in general
  - Notes need for sidewalks across from Concord Greene
  - Issues addressed are important, thanks committee for work and efforts
  - Interested in getting more involved down the road
  - AS invites feedback/input going forward, especially on issues about walking/biking in West Concord

#### Approve Minutes from January Meeting

- JC has incorporated comments from AR and GW already
- JC shares current version for review, “green card” corrected to “volunteer card”
- GW moves to approve as amended, SM seconds, unanimous approval after roll call vote
- JC to email final to AR for submission

AS moves to adjourn, SM seconds

**Meeting adjourned at approx. 8:02 pm**

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Robinson