

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2022

Meeting Held via Zoom

Call to Order

- The February 10, 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, John Soden, Adrienne Boardman, Deborah Adleman, Tracy Hansen, Marybeth Barker
- Town Representatives: Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management
- Members of the Public: Approximately 10 members of the community joined
- Recorder: Adrienne Boardman

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- A motion was made to approve the January 6, 2022 meeting minutes and seconded
 - The January 6, 2022 minutes were approved unanimously by roll call vote

Town Update Memo: 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
- Phase 2C Updates:
 - The BFRTAC sub committee met four times to begin planning for the public forum scheduled for February 16 to address concerns regarding Junction Park
 - A survey was created and disseminated through a wide variety of venues, resulting in over 500 responses in 2.5 weeks
 - BFRTAC@concordma.gov has been set up to receive comments and suggestions from the community
- Last ½ Mile of 2C
 - Marcia attended the January 26 White Pond Advisory Committee meeting at the request of the Chair to share the letter from MassDOT regarding its’ 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

- Members of the WPAC expressed their concerns with this decision and the potential impacts to White Pond - Based on that meeting with WPAC, Marcia has since reached out to MDOT to suggest an additional 200 feet of 3-rail wood fence along White Pond and extending southerly toward the town line that the Town could fund and a preliminary plan has been prepared for MDOT's consideration.
- Phase 2D Sudbury
 - On track for design completion in June of 2022 and construction contract advertising later in 2022.
 - The 100% design plans and associated materials were submitted to MassDOT on January 18, 2022.
- Community Connections Grant
 - The extension of time request was approved by the State and Federal Highway and a contract amendment has been signed.
 - Work will be scheduled for the spring, with installation prior to May 31, 2022.
- Concord Prison Cemetery
 - No updates.
- Richard Fahlander asked for clarification where funding would come from for the additional 200 feet of the 3-rail fence; Marcia indicated she would work with the interim Town Manager
- Tracy Hansen asked if the location of the bike racks has changed; Marcia confirmed it has remained the same
- Deborah Adleman asked for clarification on the shared bike grant; Marcia confirmed that the bike share program will begin April 1 under a different grant from the Community Connections Grant
- Adrienne Boardman asked for confirmation on Sudbury projected timing for completion; Marcia indicated construction might start in 2023 with construction taking two years

Committee Business

Last Half Mile Fencing Discussion

- Josh Galper (65 Stone Root Lane) - Attending on behalf of the White Pond Advisory Committee and to provide an update on the discussion that have occurred within the Advisory Committee since
 - 274 units in Sudbury on Rte 117 will start being occupied this spring, of which they are advertising access to the paths/trails

- Acknowledges that the Town is proceeding with care and is appreciative of the fencing request recently submitted by Marcia; seeking continued support from the BFRTAC
- Learned that the Old Pickard Trust 2 property could ask for permission to install fencing in coordination with Delia Kaye (Natural Resources Director)
- Nat Welch asked for determination if the White Pond Advisory Committee was reaching out to State Reps to gain support; Josh indicated the Committee was in contact around other topics related to the Pond but not specifically on the fencing topic
- Jim Coutre (114 Stone Root Lane): Expressed the importance in seeing the plan that Marcia was pushing forward to ensure understanding of the 200 foot extension

Assabet River Bluff

- Christa Collins; Land Production Director for Sudbury Valley Trustees - Has been working on an application for the Community Preservation Committee; asking for a recommendation from BFRTAC to the interim Town Manager to put signs up on the trail to raise awareness of the plan prior to Town Meeting and around fundraising efforts
- Deborah Adleman raised the observation that the topic of signs along the trail has repeatedly come up
- Richard Fahlander suggested that the signs should be neutral to learn more about the Article, but not to suggest that the BFRTAC has an official stance on the vote
- Jim Coutre (114 Stone Root Lane): Shared that he felt signage should be limited along the BFRT
- Christa Collins clarified that the signs would only be displayed for 8 weeks leading up to Town Meeting
- Motion was made to have one Committee member write a letter to the interim Town Manager to support the Sudbury Valley Trustee request to place 3 informational signs along the BFRT from March to April
 - Discussion around limiting the number signs given the small area
 - Motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote; Richard Fahlander to write the letter to the Town Manager on behalf of the Committee

Junction Park Conceptual Redesign

- Nat Welch reviewed the charge from the Select Board; Tracy Hansen provided an overview of the Sub Committee work to date over the past several weeks
- Nat Welch provided an overview of the survey data and provided an analysis for each question; as well as a synopsis of comments
- Committee discussion around whether the survey accurately represents the town demographics, the demographics of BFRT users, or perhaps neither
- Richard Fahlander expressed his appreciation to the Sub Committee; Tracy Hansen summarized her key takeaways from the data
- Deborah Adleman highlighted the unique nature of the BFRT intersecting with Junction Park and the train tracks

- Nat Welch explained that he feels we shouldn't judge prior decisions but rather assess where we are today and the best plan forward
- Discussion around agenda for February 16 Public Forum; and approach that proposed ideas will be shared to solicit dialogue
- Each Committee Member presented their ideas for short and long term conceptual redesigns and themes were identified
- Greg Mueller (Stone Root Lane): Asked for indication of the funding sources that would allow for these changes; Committee discussion around how this is an ideation exercise for a conceptual redesign for the Select Boards consideration and budget would need to be secured to further design and execute
- Ellen Quackenbush: Asked for clarification how the data and proposed designs can be accessed; Nat Welch indicated that materials would be accessible on the BFRTAC area on the Town site

2022 Planning

- Trail Counts - Committee volunteer(s) needed to spearhead the effort to coordinate logistics and volunteers in May
- Rte 2 Bridge Opening Celebration - Richard Fahlander shared the idea of coordinating something more substantial than a traditional ribbon cutting; working to determine when a date could be identified with MassDOT or we could separate the official ribbon cutting with another more local celebration
 - Marcia expressed strong support for hosting a local celebration in coordination with the state celebrations and not separate; felt that a September date was likely
 - Senator Barrett's office is looking into the access issue from Rte 2A including sidewalks and other measures

Member Questions & Comments

- Nat Welch shared pictures from the Middle School "Pools, Ponds, and Produce" enrichment course

Correspondence and Public Comments

- None

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07PM.

Upcoming Meetings (more info on BFRTAC site on the Town's page):

- Junction Park Sub Committee - Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 7:00PM
- Junction Park Conceptual Redesign Forum - Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 4:00PM-6:00PM
- Monthly BFRTAC Meeting - Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 7:00PM