

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee Minutes – April 4, 2019

Harvey Wheeler Community Center, Clock Tower Room 7:00pm

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

Members from the public: Marcia Rasmussen, Judy Perrin, Ken Perrin, Pam Gardner, Steve Irza, Ray Andrews, Barbara Pike.

Recorder: Carol Steele

Call meeting to order: 7:04pm

1. Review Minutes from April 4, 2019. Minutes approved as is.

2. Phase 2A, 2B, 2C, and 2D Updates.

a. Phase 2A Update: This phase of the trail construction has been completed and is open for all to enjoy!

b. Phase 2B Update: No additional information heard this past month. I'm waiting to hear back from GPI Consulting Engineer Matt Kearney if he has heard any news.

c. Phase 2C Updates:

a) I received a proposal from the designer of the Assabet River/Scenic River sign panel and will be following up later this week or early next.

b) No update available regarding the dates for start of construction or potential completion.

c) A draft map was prepared by Town GIS Analyst Jill Moonheron using some of the Friends graphic features and distributed last Friday to the BFRT Advisory Committee for member's input – I will have copies with me tonight and will take any comments/input from the committee members.

d) The draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety brochure was updated by Administrative Assistant Heather Carey and my favorite was distributed last Friday to the BFRT Advisory Committee for member's input – I will have additional copies and the alternatives with me tonight for your consideration and discussion.

d. Phase 2D Sudbury: Information provided below was submitted by Sudbury Select Board member Len Simon for the Friends' spring newsletter:

25% Design Nears Completion in Sudbury

Sudbury continues to make progress on the design of Phase 2D of the BFRT. Last October's Town Meeting overwhelmingly approved a Citizen Petition by Selectman Len Simon to appropriate \$650,000 of free cash to fund the remaining 75% and 100% design. Friends of BFRT Board member Dick Williamson spoke eloquently in support. An attempt by opponents to reduce the design funding to \$100,000 was soundly defeated.

Funding for the construction of Phase 2D is included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and is slated to receive \$9,684,778 in federal and state funds for construction in 2022.

In January and February the Conservation Commission gave the green light to Jacobs Engineering, the design contractor, to proceed with field work to obtain geotechnical data needed for the 25% design submission. The borings will be done on the north and south sides of Hop Brook and Pantry Brook. The test pits for the boardwalk section, about 700 feet, will be dug just south of Hudson Road. New England Boring Contractors has been selected for the geotechnical work.

A survey of Pantry Brook and the adjacent area is needed to collect data to design the replacement Pantry Brook bridge abutments and for the design of the new bridge. A similar survey will be done at Hop Brook, but those abutments are intact and will not need replacement. The flood plain elevations adjacent to both brook crossings will be delineated. That survey work is actively in progress.

The geotechnical data for the boring and test pits, along with the bridge sketches, are the last pieces of information needed to complete the 25% design. They will be submitted to MassDOT by the end May for review and comment, after which the Design Public Hearing will be held in Sudbury.

The day when the Sudbury portion of the BFRT links up with the completed sections in Concord and further north is drawing closer. With 21.3 miles of unsurpassed scenic beauty for exercise and recreation that connects towns and people, who could ask for anything more?

On a separate note, last year Sudbury received a \$100,000 Department of Conservation and Recreation Recreational Trails grant toward acquiring the CSX right of way, Phase 3 of the BFRT. The Town has applied for an additional grant to further that acquisition. A decision is expected in late summer/early fall. Stay tuned.

3. Operations and Maintenance

The FOTBFRT generously donated four new Trail Rules signs to the town to be located along the BFRT. Thanks to Barbara Pike for spearheading this effort.

There was discussion and vote about the wooden structures and fencing on the embankment next to the Assabet River Bridge: Members discussed the safety of these structures and wanted a recommendation in place in case the town needed to act on this in the future.

4. Brochures and Map

Marcia provided a draft brochure and draft map of the Phase 2C portion of the BFRT. [Thanks to Heather Carey](#) for her work thus far! Committee members decided to look at drafts more closely and provide feedback at next meeting.

5. Member Comments/Committee Liaisons/Correspondence

Phebe Ham contacted Jim in regards to when the Phase 2C opening was scheduled and if she could sell her new book at the opening. The committee discussed and felt that may open the door to other vendors and take away from the focus of the opening. There may be certain permit requirements as well. The committee did suggest a table with flyers might be a way to approach it, along with Phebe contacting The Concord Bookshop, town libraries, West Concord days, and flyers around town as a way to promote her book.

Stephen Goodman contacted the BFRT with questions and concerns from the Jennie Dugan neighborhood. These issues were discussed and Marcia helped answer most questions. Jim will reach out to Stephen with answers to the following:

Opening date and Ribbon Cutting date and location? TBD.

- Many concerns and discussion about dogs. Dogs off leash without voice control is a chronic problem occurring weekly including dogs going off the trail onto private property. Try and educate owners and contact CPD.

- Will the town be communicating with abutters on any final, outstanding or resolved issues? No.

- People have heard that the committee will be dissolved after the opening of the trail; if this is true: 1. Why? 2. What would be the process to extend the life of the committee to ensure a voice in municipal government? 3. Who will be the point person/office for Trail issues after the opening? The committee will be dissolved once entire trail is open. After that, follow up will be with town government.

- There are concerns that the intersection at Williams is/will be dangerous; in particular cars at high-speed turning left from OMR onto Williams. Why is there no "flashing" light sign installed (similar to the type farther north) and is the signage enough? Not part of plan. Follow up with town once in town ownership if still an issue. This is an important concern.

- What does the "W" signify on the historical marker? Blow Your Whistle.

- At the switchback, the Tunnel Bowl (as it is now locally called) tends to pool significant amounts of water at the bottom; what will be done to mitigate mosquito breeding? See how it goes. Contact NRC if an issue once under town ownership.

- The Sensitive Wildlife Habitat sign is a great addition, can a similar sign be placed for northbound traffic? What does this sign mean and are their restrictions that go along with the posting? Not part of plan.

- There was discussion last year about the contractor replacing and caring for any landscaping/trees that have died (at no cost to town budget). It is in the contract for replacement by contractor.

- How will dawn/dusk hours be enforced? CPD.

- How will education be conducted regarding safety for the train crossing? Parents should educate their children and public safety brochures are in the works.

- How will the town track any new parking impact issues? Who should people call if they have a parking issue? CPD.

- "The middle-school fence to nowhere" What is the status and rationale for the short segment black chain-link fence at Sanborn? What is the near term and long-term plan? Can a wood, open air but non-chain link fence be considered to blend into the natural environment? There is significant support to have open access for children going to school including non-school hours for music, athletic practice and playground use. Checking on.

Were chemicals or defoliant used to remove the thick vegetation that borders Sanborn field? No, but following up further.

No committee reports.

6. Next Committee Meeting June 6, 2019 at Harvey Wheeler Community Center at 7 pm

7. Public Comment

Steve Irza asked if the BFRT committee would like a table at the West Concord Advisory Committee (WCAC) Open House on May 8 from 6 to 7:30 pm. The committee agreed that it would be a good way to promote the trail.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm.