

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee Meeting

July 10, 2019

Harvey Wheeler Community Center, Clock Tower Room, 7pm

Attendees: Jim Lyon, Suzanne Knight, Kent Carlson, Jon Soden

Also in attendance: Dean Sullender, Barbara Pike, Marcia Rasmussen, Bob Armstrong, Craig Jackson

Recorder: Suzanne Knight

Call to order: 7:01pm

1. **Phase 2A Update:** This phase of the trail has been completed and is open for all to enjoy!
2. **Phase 2B Update:** The Notice of Intent under the Wetlands Protection and Rivers Protection Acts application was opened by the Natural Resources Commission at the May 15th meeting and continued to June 19 then to July 10th to consider an Order of Conditions. The hearing is expected to be closed July 10th, which is critical to allow the project to continue moving forward in anticipation of an August 31st advertisement date.

MassDOT Right of Way staff has asked the Towns of Acton and Concord to review the existing 99-year lease agreements and confirm whether Phase 2B is included in the lease, which we are doing.

This should be completed by July 26th.

The coordination meeting with Consulting Engineering GPI, Acton and Concord town staff and representatives from the State Police Mounted Unit on Monday, June 10th went well. The goal for the State Police Mounted Unit is for protection and safety of the horses throughout the construction process and afterward – some revisions to the specifications were made to allow for fencing to be installed as early as possible in the construction process.

The concern is about the protection of the horses. Interfering with them – including feeding – is a felony. A sign will be installed notifying trail users about this.

The plans for the new Gerow Recreation area are being refined and they show changes to the existing BFRT 2C parking lot on Commonwealth Ave. and connections between the new recreation area and BFRT 2B. I'll bring plans of the Gerow Recreation area and the BFRT 2B plans to review at the meeting.

The plans will be updated to indicate the proper location of the benches and coordination is underway to address access into and out of the Recreation area from the BFRT. The plans indicate bike racks will be installed in front of the bath house

3. **Phase 2C Updates** – lots of final details being addressed:
 - a. MassDOT has been in contact with Keolis and we are waiting for Keolis to complete the signal arms and install the fencing between the commuter rail tracks in West Concord.

- b.** Almost everything else has been completed by the contractor with the exception of the three granite post signs (Flanger, Semaphore and Whistle Post) and three historic interpretive panels. The Contractor has identified a sign fabricator who will be preparing the signs; Town staff is amending the information developed to meet the requirements of the sign fabricator (with assistance from BFRT Advisory Committee member Jim Lyon). I'll bring one of the historic panels with me tonight to illustrate how the information is being converted for the sign fabricator.

The Advisory committee examined the historical panels and made suggestions for changes.

- c.** The informational/directional sign and map that was to be featured in the wood kiosk at Main Street and Commonwealth Ave. was not included in the contract. Once the above three interpretive panels have been submitted to the sign fabricator, Town staff will amend the information for the informational/directional sign and get a quote from the sign fabricator to prepare this sign for future installation.
- d.** Three property owners have approached Natural Resources Director Delia Kaye and me with concerns about the need for additional plantings to screen their properties. Delia and I will be working with these three property owners to prepare planting plans and will be ordering materials for planting this fall. Previously approved CPA funds would be used for this work.
- e.** The owner at 38-42 Williams Road has observed some confusion and unsafe behavior by people in vehicles when they approach the intersection of their driveway and the rail trail. Natural Resources Director Delia Kaye and I believe installation of additional wood fencing will help define and delineate the rail trail, which we'll work to have installed this fall. Previously approved CPA funds would be used for this work.
- f.** The 100 feet of chain link fence along the CMS/Sanborn School site was included in the contract, but is too urban a material for this woods trail and isn't a useful addition when there's actually 500 feet of school frontage along the trail. The Town intends to remove this fence once the trail has been transferred from the State.
- g.** Additional private property signs have been requested in several locations. Natural Resources summer crew may have time to make and install these signs. Previously approved CPA funds will be used for this work.
- h.** Signature pages for the Eagle Scout Project to install a bicycle Fix-It station in West Concord were completed and submitted to the Eagle Scout candidate on July 9th.

There is no information about the existence of a "Go Fund Me" page to assist with the funding.

- i.** I'm still awaiting delivery of the updated Concord-On-Tap signs from proponent Janet Rothrock. She asked if there were an alternative way to mount the signs, since it is difficult to update the map in the current signpost located on Thoreau Street. Once I have the signs, I'll be able to explore posts and mounting systems. Previously approved CPA funds would be used for this work.
- j.** If there are funds remaining after the above-noted planting, fencing, posting of Concord on Tap signs and private property signs, we'll look at additional bicycle racks, shelters, and maps. Additionally, yellow 'flag posts' have been installed on the raised islands at street intersections in the Acton portion of the BFRT; Concord may want to do the same. It has also been suggested that a sign be added along the trail from the Powder Mill Road sidewalk alerting people to use caution because of the steep slope.

k. Ribbon Cutting After polling Town staff and hearing that the Friends anticipate nearly 400 people in attendance, the preference would be to hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony this summer – perhaps a Friday afternoon of August 2 or 9 – rather than wait until September when parking for businesses will be in higher demand.

The advisory committee discussed the issue with providing a date which would not inconvenience local businesses and when parking would be less of an issue. However, given the short time-line for putting together the event (about 3 weeks) and that multiple people would need to be contacted, including state and local politicians, local businesses, and the police department, it was decided that with the Friends of the BFRT taking the lead, the celebration date would be scheduled for September. Barbara and Marcia will work on this event together and pull in the Advisory Committee, as needed.

Phase 2D Sudbury: I didn't seek an update from Sudbury for this update memo. MassDOT Project Manager David Shedd has asked me about the construction funding for completion of the rail trail between Powder Mill Road in Concord and the Sudbury Town Line. We'll be discussing how to approach this issue after Phase 2B is advertised, perhaps with an amendment to the funding for Phase 2D.

3. Operations and Maintenance
 - a. Barbara Pike monitored the PMC kids ride while Marcia R coordinated it.
 - b. Marcia is following up on safety signage at Powder Mill Rd. ramp
 - c. Granite piers with the BFRT logo have been installed and comments have been very positive.
4. Member Comments/Committee Liaisons/Correspondence
 - a. There were no committee reports
5. Next Committee Meeting:
 - a. There will be no meeting in August. The next meeting of the Advisory Committee will be September 5th at 7 PM.
6. Public Comments:
 - a. Bob Armstrong suggested that articles be placed in the Concord Journal about the opening of the Trail and also the Ribbon Cutting, once a date has been set.
 - b. Dean asked about the timing of the Gerow Recreation area and 2B. If plans are approved by the fall, park construction could be started in the summer of 2020 and both the Gerow Recreation area and 2B of the BFRT could be completed around the same time – in 2022

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13