

BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee (BFRTAC) focused on the 100% design for the Concord portion of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and the 25% design Route 2 crossing that connects Acton with Concord.

Article 39, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire the former railroad right-of-way for use as a multi-use trail, passed at the 2012 Town Meeting.



From left: Barbara Pike, Judith LaRocca, Chair; James Terry, Kent Carlson, Polly Titcomb, James Coutre; not pictured: Gerry Boyle, Alan Whitney

The BFRTAC reviewed design options and specifications for the bridges and tunnel and provided feedback to Mass DOT with the Committee's functional and aesthetic preferences for these structures.

Regarding West Concord center, the 25% supplemental submittal for the baseline design that utilizes the railroad spur and gated vehicular crossing at Commonwealth Ave. was completed. In parallel, a design firm was retained to produce sketch plans to show how the existing pedestrian crossing at the West Concord Depot could be gated to improve safety. Representatives from Concord and the MBTA held an onsite meeting to discuss the sketch plans. As an action item from this meeting, the BFRTAC is exploring one additional alternative at the MBTA's request.

The highway division of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) entered into a contract with a contracted design team to complete the design of the BFRT-bridge crossing of Route 2. The proposed bridge follows the alignment of the railroad right-of-way and crosses Route 2 at an angle with the highway.

In addition, representatives from the Town of Concord met with representatives of MCI Concord to discuss easements, parking, fencing, and other issues where the trail abuts Department of Correction property.

Construction funding for Acton was advanced to FY 2014. Concord remains in the FY 2021-2025 construction time band, but it is hoped that the Concord portion will also be advanced as the design progresses.

WHITE POND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chris Leary, Chair
Arra Avakian
David Caruso
Jerry Frenkil
Jim Lyons

The White Pond Advisory Committee (WPAC) was established in 1973 as an advisory and liaison Committee to review and analyze the concerns of the White Pond watershed and play a leadership role in acting as steward for the pond and its environs. White Pond was described by Thoreau as the "Gem of the Woods". Today, it remains a prime Town resource for passive recreation and fishing.

White Pond Reservation

Many efforts have evolved over the years from the Committee's concern about the Town-owned property known as White Pond Reservation. It is located on the southwest shore of the Pond, extending back over forty acres of woods and trails to the Sudbury border. While it has been proposed before, there is currently no management plan in place for this spectacular property since its acquisition by the Town in 1992. The WPAC continues its working relationship with the Division of Natural Resources (DNR) to encourage the proper use of this area, along with Town officials promoting this valuable resource to Town residents.

Comprehensive Pond Management Plan

In 2011, a Community Preservation Act (CPA) application for a comprehensive White Pond Watershed management plan was approved by the Town. In 2013, the WPAC looks forward to the selection of a consultant and the development of a plan that will provide baseline data on the health of the pond, a program for maintaining the ongoing water quality, quantify issues associated with private land ownership within the White Pond

watershed, and a recommendation on the recreational uses and limitations of the Pond. The Town made this application on behalf of the WPAC and the plan is being carried out by the DNR. The WPAC feels this plan is of the utmost importance to ensure that White Pond and its watershed will maintain its clear waters for the enjoyment of future generations.

Building and Renovations in the White Pond Area

A continuing responsibility of the WPAC is to work with the Building Commissioner and other Town committees in review and advice in regards to new construction (e.g., additions, landscape changes, etc.) in the White Pond Watershed to ensure that the health of the pond and its environs is preserved. A number of these reviews were performed in 2012 and the committee approved each with a quorum. Of particular concern to the WPAC is any activity that would have an adverse affect on the quality of the Pond water and surrounding habitat.

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT)

The WPAC has been actively involved in the discussions surrounding the BFRT, to ensure that the Pond is properly protected given that the proposed trail passes closely to White Pond. The WPAC is working with the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee and other groups such as Concord-based Friends of Rural Trails and the Friends of the BFRT. The WPAC feels it is important to elevate awareness of the impacts of the trail construction, activities, and increased visitor traffic on the health and aesthetics of the Pond, and on the wildlife corridor, while encouraging Town usage of this great asset.

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Jennifer Hashley, Chair
Charles Poutasse, Clerk
Bill Kenney
Dudley Goar
Susan Macone
Associate Members
Brian Cramer
Emily Wheeler

Since formation as a Town Committee in 2006, the Agricultural Committee has worked to promote agriculture in Concord.

The 2012 growing season was relatively successful. Despite many hot dry days with stretches without regular rainfall through the season, supplemental irrigation kept crops growing, thus most farmers had a very good year. Retail sales are strong. The passing of Pat McGrath was a sad event for the agricultural community and much has been discussed about the future of the farmstand (which has been managed this season by faithful volunteers and supportive customers) and the property he leased from the Town. The Agricultural Committee has provided input to the many groups and organizations considering the future of the house and property. The Ag Committee strongly recommends that a “farmer-in-residence” remain part of the character of the 40-acre farm property at this site to preserve the farmstead and provide much-needed farm housing in Town.

Ag Day

The Committee sponsored the seventh annual farmers market festival on September 15 on the Milldam. The annual “Ag Day” remains popular with townspeople and visitors and is a worthwhile public relations and promotional activity for growers who can then drive traffic to their farm stands throughout the season.

Guide to Concord Farms

This spring/summer, the Committee updated the Guide to Concord farms with over 21 listings of Concord farms and how to purchase their products. Informative brochures are available at locations throughout Town. It is a useful guide for residents and visitors alike.

Stone Soup Dinner

The fifth annual Stone Soup Dinner was held on September 30 and featured Concord grown produce prepared by Concord chefs and restaurants. The event was held at Verrill Farm and more than 330 people attended. The Stone Soup Dinner has its own Steering Committee and operates separately from the Ag Committee. Proceeds from the dinner contribute to a “Plant a Farmer” grants program to support new farmers in Town.

New Committee members

Jim Catterton stepped down after completing his term. Jennifer Hashley was approved as new Committee Chair. The Board of Selectman approved two new Ag Committee members: Dudley Goar and Susan Macone. Both bring new perspectives to the Committee.