

RAIL TRAIL CONVERSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Town of Sudbury, Massachusetts
Minutes of Meeting on January 12, 2012
Sudbury DPW Building Conference Room
275 Old Lancaster Road

Present: Pat Brown (chair), Madeleine Gelson, Bob Hall, Bridget Hanson, Jennifer Pincus, Nancy Powers, Dick Williamson

Absent: Eric Poch, Carole Wolfe

Also Present: Thaddeus “Todj” Gozdeck, Jim Nigrelli

The committee determined that Pat Brown would draft the minutes for this session.

The Meeting was convened at 7:38 P.M.

There was no public comment.

Minutes: The minutes of the meeting on October 13, 2011, were approved unanimously after amendment.

RTCAC submission to Sudbury’s 2011 Annual Report: Pat Brown handed around a paper copy of the approved draft (“Draft 3”) of the report printed in the accepted format, which Committee members signed. Pat will deliver this to the Selectmen’s office prior to the January 17, 2012, deadline.

Updates since the October 13, 2011 meeting

Status of concept plan

Town Planner Jody Kablack indicated that Town Staff has spent no time on the concept plan in an e-mail message to the RTCAC on January 3, 2012.

Status of CSX Negotiations

Town Planner Jody Kablack indicated the town was still negotiating with CSX and was investigating alternate funding sources in an e-mail message to the RTCAC on January 3, 2012.

Estimated parking requirements to “Bring the Trail to Sudbury”

Tom Michelman, President of the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, submitted an estimate of the parking requirements for the half-mile extension of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail from the Concord border to Route 117 in Sudbury.

This estimate was e-mailed to the Board of Selectmen and forwarded to the RTCAC on October 31, 2011. Dick Williamson pointed out that there is no established methodology for estimating rail trail parking requirements, and questioned how much reliance could reasonably be placed on this attempt. He mentioned that the parking capacity of the gravel Davis Field parking lot was estimated by superimposing an aerial photo of the (paved and painted) Lincoln-Sudbury school parking lot, and counting the enclosed spaces, a method which indicated there is currently space for about 100 cars. The organization imposed by painting spaces would increase current lot capacity. Bridget Hanson mentioned that while paving the lot would be expensive, lines could be painted on the gravel. Dick, Bridget and Jennifer Pincus stated that it was unlikely that Davis Field would be expanded because this would require substantial and expensive fill on the east side and would likely encounter permitting issues. The RTCAC recognized that periods of peak parking demand for playing fields and for the rail trail—lovely weekend or after-school days—tend to coincide.

Recommendations concerning “Bring the Trail to Sudbury” to the Board of Selectmen from other boards and committees

Planning Board: The Planning Board held an initial discussion of this offer at their December 14 meeting. In general, the Planning Board would like to see some progress on this project. In addition, the Town Planner had sent the Planning Board her input on December 8. The Planning Board met on January 11—the night prior to the RTCAC meeting—to formulate a recommendation; Dick Williamson attended this meeting. The Planning Board had considered parking requirements in comparison to the 40 space parking area in Bedford at the north-west terminus of the Minuteman Bikeway, recognizing that commuter parking was “staggered” with respect to recreational parking, that is, Bikeway users tended to park during weekends, while commuters park on weekdays. Dick reported that the Town Planner had stressed that Town Staff were extremely busy, and that they were wary of taking on oversight of a new project such as planning the rail trail extension, which promised to be both long-term and highly intensive. Dick had suggested that perhaps the RTCAC would be willing to accept responsibility for the project, as it had done for development of the RFP for the preliminary engineering assessment in 2005. The RTCAC had received a copy of the Town Planner’s comments e-mailed December 8.

Conservation Commission: The Conservation Coordinator forwarded a copy of a draft of the Conservation Commission’s response to the questions posed by the Town Manager in regard to the “Bring the Trail to Sudbury” project on January 3. In general, the Conservation Commission found the offer premature and recommended that the Selectmen reject it. Bridget mentioned that many of the

considerations voiced by the Conservation Commission were not directly related to their conservation responsibilities.

Park & Recreation: Both Dick Williamson, an elected member of Park & Rec, and Todj Gozdeck, also a Park & Rec representative, agreed that the Park & Rec Commission had not discussed this proposal nor offered a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.

Other bodies: Bridget suggested the Board of Selectmen consider requesting a recommendation from the Board of Health on the grounds that a trail would provide the opportunity to exercise. Pat mentioned that Concord's Rail Trail Advisory Committee (RTAC) had formulated a recommendation on the "Bring the Trail to Sudbury" at their November 17 meeting, and wondered if the Selectmen's mention of a recommendation from "RTAC" referred to that board; the consensus was that the Selectmen were probably referring to the October 24 recommendation from the Sudbury RTCAC.

Consideration of the "Bring the Trail to Sudbury" offer by the Board of Selectmen

The Board of Selectmen have included the following agenda item at 7:45 P.M. in the January 17, 2012, agenda:

- Discussion regarding acceptance of funds from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

The entire committee was invited to attend; Bob Hall, Dick Williamson, Pat Brown, Madeleine Gelsinon, and Nancy Powers plan to be present.

Documents for posting on-line

- *RTCAC recommendation of October 24, 2011, to the Sudbury Board of Selectmen concerning the "Bring the Trail to Sudbury" proposal by the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail*: The RTCAC unanimously approved posting this document.
- *Estimate of parking requirements for "Bring the Trail to Sudbury" provided by Tom Michelman of the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail on October 31, 2011*: The RTCAC did not approve posting this document, because the estimates are imprecise and ad hoc; it might be seen as acceptance of these numbers.
- *RTCAC Submissions to the Sudbury Town Annual Report (years 2005 to 2011, inclusive)*: The RTCAC unanimously approved posting these documents.

Pat will post the approved documents on-line in the “Documents” section of the RTCAC web page.

Proposed agenda items

Date of next meeting

The RTCAC proposed a tentative date of February 9, 2012, for a brief meeting to approve the January 12 minutes.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:22 P.M.

Community Input

Todj Gozdeck complemented the Committee on the dispatch of its meeting. Jim Nigrelli concurred.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Brown January 16, 2012

Resubmitted by Pat Brown February 1, 2012

Approved April 26, 2012