

**RAIL TRAIL CONVERSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Town of Sudbury, Massachusetts**  
**Minutes of Meeting on September 26, 2013**  
**Town Hall, Lower Level**  
**322 Concord Road, Sudbury**

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

**Absent:** Eric Poch

**Also Present:** Dan De Pompei, Jim Nigrelli

**Pat Brown volunteered to draft the minutes for this session.**

**There was no community input at this time.**

**The meeting was convened at 7:34 P.M.**

**Minutes:** The RTCAC unanimously approved the March 5, 2013 RTCAC minutes.

**New Liaison Assignments from the Board of Selectmen (BOS):** Both Selectman Bob Haarde and Selectman Lenny Simon will serve as liaison to the RTCAC for 2013-2014. Pat Brown also mentioned that she no longer has access to the RTCAC mailing list maintained by the town. Members who need to modify their e-mail addresses should request the change from the town technology department.

**Staff concepts and recommendations for the rail trail:** The members of town staff tasked with developing concepts for the north-south rail trail from the Concord line to the MBTA crossing presented those concepts to the BOS on July 30, 2013. These were the concepts that staff discussed with the RTCAC on March 5. The analysis was included in a memo dated July 26 and forwarded to the RTCAC by e-mail. Town Planner Jody Kablack, Conservation Coordinator Debbie Dineen, and DPW director Bill Place developed the concepts. Ms. Dineen presented staff's recommendation for a greenway to the BOS at its July 30 meeting.

**The BOS accepts the offer to “Bring the Trail to Sudbury” by the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (FBFRT):** On August 8, 2013 Tom Michelman, President of the FBFRT, sent an updated offer to the BOS. The RTCAC had received a copy of this offer. The BOS discussed the offer by the FBFRT to fund

the 25% design adhering to MassDOT guidelines of the 0.5-mile section of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail in Sudbury extending from the Sudbury-Concord border to Route 117 in Sudbury at their August 20, 2013 meeting. At their September 17, 2013 meeting the BOS approved the following motion:

*Move to advise the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail that the Board of Selectmen are receptive to and will vote to accept a gift of \$58,700 from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (FBFRT) for the purpose of funding 100% of the cost of a 25% design study in the Right of Way (ROW) and according to MassDOT guidelines for the extension of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail for the approximately ½ mile segment of the BFRT from the Concord/Sudbury town line to the south side of Route 117 in Sudbury, plus a parking count for the Davis Field Recreation Field parking area.*

There was some discussion of an article in the September 26 Sudbury Town Crier which may have implied the money was for construction; the offer is clearly for design. Several members remarked that the FBFRT have stated numerous times that accepting this offer does not oblige the town to proceed with construction.

(MassDOT is the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.)

**Status of other rail trail segments:**

- 1) The east-west MBTA right of way through Sudbury. Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has leased the east-west right of way from Waltham to Berlin from the MBTA to convert into a rail trail. This rail segment is part of a 102 mile right of way (ROW) that has been designated the Mass Central Rail Trail. Paul Jahnige from DCR asked Dick Williamson who in Sudbury he (Paul) could talk to concerning the community consensus and environmental issues associated with building such a trail. Dick suggested Paul talk to Town Planner Jody Kablack. Jody's summary of this conversation was forwarded to the RTCAC on July 29. Jody stated to Paul that Sudbury was not planning for the east-west trail at the present time, that the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) was controversial in Sudbury and that we had not progressed as far as neighboring towns. In response to Jody's question Paul indicated that DCR would file an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) for the entire Waltham-to-Berlin project. Pat had forwarded a link to an article published September 5 concerning the Wayland section of the trail and a reference to not less than \$1,000,000 to be expended for improvements to the Mass Central Rail Trail in Wayland and Weston in Chapter 242 of the Acts of

2012 (the Massachusetts Transportation Bond Bill). Dick distributed to the RTCAC a document he had received from Larry Kiernan, a rail trail advocate in Wayland; several members of the RTCAC asked for clarification on who wrote the document, when and why. Dick said he'd ask Larry for this information. Pat mentioned that 1998 Sudbury Town Meeting had voted in favor of this trail in Sudbury (Article 50); it's actually 1997.

- 2) The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail north of Sudbury. Pat mentioned that three segments north of Sudbury were funded in the 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) approved by the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The segment in Acton (Phase 2A) is funded for construction in 2014 with \$8.8 million in statewide Transportation Enhancements (TE) funding and \$2.3 million in statewide Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program funds. The segment in Concord (Phase 2C) is funded for construction in 2016 with \$6 million in statewide CMAQ funding. The segment connecting Acton and Concord (Phase 2B—the bridge over Route 2) is funded for construction in 2017 with \$6.5 million in statewide CMAQ funding. Dick Williamson reminded the RTCAC that Phase 2B had been split off from the Concord Rotary project over the past few years, so that while the rotary project is not yet included in transportation planning the trail crossing can move forward. Carole Wolfe had attended a meeting of the Concord Rail Trail Committee on September 17 and reported that Concord will be seeking \$500,000 of CPA funds at next year's town meeting to go towards the final design of the Phase 2B bridge over Route 2 and the small Concord section of 2B that is included with the bridge. More money will be needed from Acton for its section of 2B. Pat mentioned a couple recent errors in the MPO maps for Sudbury's trail—1) in 2012, adding Concord as a project proponent for the 4.4 mile ROW south from the Concord border to the MBTA crossing in Sudbury and 2) in 2013, shortening the project in Sudbury so that it did not include the ½ mile of ROW north of Route 117. Both of these errors were corrected through the MPO with the help of Town Staff.
- 3) The CSX owned ROW south of the MBTA crossing in Sudbury. Pat reminded the RTCAC that the Town of Sudbury had applied for an extension from the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) to negotiate a rail-banking agreement with the CSX railroad on April 24. Dick clarified that CSX had filed a petition to abandon the corridor; the extension prevents CSX from abandoning the right of way (ROW) and selling the land piecemeal.

**Future Meetings:** The RTCAC tentatively agreed to meet briefly at 7:00 pm on October 24 to approve the minutes of this meeting and to consider a preliminary draft of the RTCAC 2013 Town Report. The report is due January 31, 2014.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

**Community Input:** Dan De Pompei stated that he believes that CPA funds cannot be used to acquire the CSX ROW if the corridor is rail-banked; under rail-banking the land continues to be administered by the STB and can be returned to use as an active rail corridor. The town could agree to permit CSX to consummate the abandonment and then could acquire the land as a “fee simple” owner. Dick stated that the state, specifically MassDOT, has a say in how the land is used. It was also mentioned that the town is currently using the CSX corridor south of Route 20 as part of the Nobscot walkway.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Brown, September 28, 2013  
Resubmitted October 11, 2013