

Sudbury Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Task Force
Minutes of Meeting Held 7 p.m., Thursday, February 2, 2017, Town Hall
Approved February 16, 2017

Present: Daniel Carty, John Drobinski, Robert Schless, LeRoy Sievers, Lana Szwarc, Robert Beagan

Absent: Charles Russo

Also In attendance: Beth Suedmeyer, Sudbury Planning Department; William Miles, Sudbury Fire Chief; William O'Rourke, Deputy Director, Sudbury DPW; William DeSantis, Tracie Lenhardt, VHB

7:09 PM – Meeting called to order by Chairman Drobinski

7:15 Chief Miles comments and discussions:

- Sudbury has no rail trail so no hands on experience
- He has reached out to other towns to get their opinions and hear their experiences with both paved and unpaved trails. He specified speaking to staff in Lexington MA and Bedford MA
- He senses a tug-of-war between the Fire Department, Conservationists, and those that want to pave the trail
- From a public safety standpoint if we are to build a trail the Fire Department would like to see it paved and wide enough for an ambulance
- Non-paved trail would require ATV calls out of Station 2 (Route 20), requiring more time to retrieve the ATV and get to the destination on the trail than it would to dispatch an ambulance
- Ambulance is a 9' 2" wide mirror-to-mirror, 17,000 lbs. fully loaded, 10' tall and is equipped with paramedic level with life support equipment. Trail design should take this into consideration
- Chief Miles stated that he does not want the Town to forget about this meeting; If a narrow path is built he wants to make sure that his concerns about the slower response times via ATV on the narrow/unpaved path are understood
- Problem isn't necessarily the ATV itself but rather the time it take to retrieve it from Station 2 on Route 20
- Incidents with multiple patients would require a mutual aid call to neighboring towns if a narrow path is built. ATV can carry one patient and some medical equipment but would not have life support equipment on board
- He would be Ok with locked gates along the trail; Town uses Knox Boxes and could weld one right to the gates much like at other locations in Town
- Chief Miles commented that he had not seen any alternative routes. Alternative routes identified to date were shown on screen
- Committee discussed protective barrier options along side of Union Street if we were to go with alternative route
- Robert Beaton asked Chief Miles if he had data form other towns regarding the number of calls related to rail trails Chief Miles responded that no he did not
- The Committee thanked Chief Miles for attending

7:32PM William O'Rourke comments and discussion:

- Has concern that non-paved (dense gravel) paths erode leading to increased maintenance
- Voiced concern with boardwalks through wetlands and their inherent maintenance needs. Also questioned whether they would be rated for a fire truck or ambulance and stated they are subject to damage by fallen trees.
- He would recommend a concrete path
- William DeSantis (VHB) spoke re: boardwalk construction. They have a 50 year design life, would support an ambulance, and are "H10" rated. Mr. Carty asked for clarification of the term H10 rated. Mr. DeSantis stated that it essentially means it can support a 10-wheeled vehicle.
- Mr. O'Rourke asked if Town planned on plowing the path. If unplowed it would allow for skiing but could elevate risk for rescues. If plowed, there would be additional expense.
- Mr. O'Rourke also stated that he felt the culverts along the either at or close to end-of-life. He'd like to see them all inspected and if necessary repaired/replaced.
- Mr. DeSantis stated there are pros and cons to plowing. If paved in winter it may invite cyclists to ride but they could experience unsafe icy conditions
- Committee engaged in a discussion about the intent of the trail in winter – plow or no plow, bike or ski. No decision made but topic was noted for further discussion at a later time.
- Len Simon, Meadowbrook Circle was recognized by Chair at which point he asked about DPW spring and fall seasonal maintenance needs. Mr. O'Rourke stated that a truck would travel up and down the path to clear brush, perhaps utilize a sidewalk sweeper, blowers, chain saws for fallen trees, etc. Mr. Simon asked about cost and Mr. O'Rourke replied the cost would be minimal
- The Committee thanked Mr. O'Rourke for attending

7:41PM – Roadway crossings reviewed

- Preliminary plans were distributed to Committee showing roadway crossings along route
- Ms. Lenhardt from VHB began stepping through crossings
- Sheet 1 – Narrow driveway and restricted parking along crosswalk near Methods Machine. Town needs clarification that Methods have legal right to park where they currently do. All crossings along path will be setup in such a way that those on path should yield at crossings; they will not have the right of way. Ms. Suedmeyer stated that they have received comments from Methods Machine. Mr. DeSantis stated that vegetation removal may be required at this site to assure good sight lines
- Codger Lane crossing reviewed next. Ms. Lenhardt stated that a meeting with Cavicchio's was needed. Ms. Suedmeyer stated that screening and/or vegetation would likely be required to keep people on trail and off of farm property
- Old Lancaster Road crossing – will have push-button activated crosswalk with beacon. Beacon will only be on when activated
- Hudson Road crossing – Ms. Lenhardt stated this intersection warrants a pedestrian signal and crosswalk. Would like to see the Ti Sales driveway pushed over a bit. Driveway currently is in

the right-of-way. This crossing would have a HAWK high intensity crosswalk beacon mounted on an overhead mast arm. Committee questioned whether this would present an aesthetic issue in the historic Town Center. Ms. Szwarc stated it would be helpful to have a barrier at this intersection to prevent drivers from driving up onto path in order to get around traffic. Mr. Carty asked how this crossing may have to change if Sudbury Station development goes forward. Ms. Lenhardt said she did not have the supporting data but that it would most likely warrant a full traffic signal.

- Morse Road – similar crossing to Codjer Lane. Ms. Lenhardt stated this would likely require removal of vegetation to improve sight lines. Committee stated concerns with traffic coming around the bend and down the hill on Morse towards the crossing and that having signage up the hill towards the horse farm may help slow drivers. Discussion had regarding a bollards to stop cyclists. Mr. DeSantis recommended no bollards for cyclist safety. Ms. Lenhardt showed pictures of splits integrated into crossing to slow and guide cyclists. Discussion about a change of paving materials also to help guide and slow cyclists. Ms. Lenhardt stated that all crossings would have signage on trail 75 to 100 feet in advance of crossings
- Haynes Road – Will have flashing beacon at cross that will be dark unless activated
- Pantry Road – Ms. Lenhardt stated this was the trickiest crossing on entire trail. Wetlands on all sides, retaining walls would be needed abutting the wetlands. Chief Miles stated his concern of his trucks making the turn along the tight radius of this crossing. He felt it warranted an alternative design, perhaps a gate.
- North Road/Rt 117 – Will have a full pedestrian crosswalk with HAWK system mounted on overhead mast arm. This is the heaviest traffic crossing along trail. Committee discussed extra treatment warranted to slow cyclists down and perhaps mimicking the crossing design at Pantry Road. Mr. O'Rourke questioned the cycle time of the light – would pedestrians be able to continually activate the lights. Mr. DeSantis stated that the systems are designed to prevent continuous pedestrian activation. Mr. Drobinsky asked about the possibility of a tunnel at this crossing. Mr. Beaton asked about parking at Davis Field and how the Park and Rec department was looking at other projects at Davis and would like to know how this may impact them. Ms. Lenhardt mentioned that the Concord trail ends at Powder Mill Road. Ms. Suedmeyer stated that construction of the final ¼ mile in Concord would likely occur at the same time the Sudbury section is constructed. The Concord project that will start construction will cease at Powdermill Road – the design is complete for the final Concord section but it is not being constructed at this time. Chief Miles stated that the Town Center intersection has an Opticon system where fire trucks can control the lights. He would like to see the HAWK systems at Peakham/Hudson and North Road/117 crossings on the same system due to proximity of both to Fire Stations.
- Driveway on page 9 – simple crossing, minimal discussion

8:35PM – Alternative Routes and Environment Constraints Maps

- Ms. Suedmeyer suggested that in the interest of time a detailed discussion and decisions about alternative routes be tabled. This may also allow for Conservation Commission comments to become available.

- Ms. Suedmeyer mentioned that Ms. Lenhardt has updated the maps with challenge areas highlighted.
- Mr. Drobinsky asked if mitigation is something to consider for challenge areas. Ms. Lenhardt responded yes. Ms. Suedmeyer stated that if we impact wetlands we would have to replicate wetlands elsewhere.
- Ms. Lenhardt displayed slides showing alternative routes along roadways and stated that an extension (widening) of the roads would be needed.
- Mr. Carty asked about the state of the railroad bridge over Hop Brook and is the Union Ave. alternative being considered due to a poor state of the bridge - Ms. Lenhardt stated the bridge over Hop Brook is fine. There are no anticipated impacts to wetlands in the southern section. Ms. Suedmeyer said the Town does not currently know exactly where Union Road fits in relation to the right of way and that a survey would be required.
- The Committee asked VHB to develop a better comparison of the alternatives with swags at the cost for the alternatives. Examples of level of detail requested included the examples of "Alternative 1 – 2 bridges, 10 right of way easements/abutters, Alternative 2 – zero bridges, 20 right-of-way easements/ abutters".
- Mr. Carty raised question of abutter easement permission for roadway alternatives and Ms. Szwarc recalled 100% permission to grant sidewalk building; need to confirm.
- Ms. Suedmeyer stated that Concord Road, Haynes Road, Morse Road, Old Lancaster Road, Pantry Road, and Peakham Road were considered scenic roadways. She added that Alternative Route #3 that cuts between Union Avenue and the tracks go through conservation land and the Conservation Commission would have to comment if it was even a permissible use.

9:10PM – Outreach activities

- Ms. Suedmeyer shared dates for various committee meetings: Park & Rec Feb 27 6:30 pm, Council on Aging Mar 9 3pm, Board of Health Feb 14 4pm and Mar 14 4pm, Historic Districts Commission Feb 16 (joint meeting with BFRT Committee), LSHS Feb 14, Feb 28, and Mar 14, SPS Feb 15, March 8. She stated that she needed to follow up with Energy and Sustainability and that she learned that the Frost Farm housing is not affiliated with the Town of Sudbury. She can reach out to the property management regarding comments.
- Mr. Beagen would discuss with Park & Rec, Mr. Carty with Planning Board and Chamber of Commerce. CPC to be handled by existing committee membership. Ms. Suedmeyer mentioned doing direct mailing to abutters. Agricultural Commission requires follow up.
- Committee discussed the abutter letters to be mailed. Ms. Suedmeyer mentioned that two letters would go out, one to abutters of primary path and a second letter to abutters on alternative paths. It was decided abutters would be invited in for discussion at the March 2 meeting.

Approx. 9:20PM – Chairman Drobinsky called for motion to close meeting. Motion made, seconded, unanimously approved.