



Town of Sudbury

Rail Trails Advisory Committee

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MINUTES

December 13, 2023 AT 7:30 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

Members Present: John Drobinski, Glen Pransky, Lana Szwarc, Frank Vitale, and Ken Holtz

Others Present: Marcia Rasmussen, Planning & Community Development Department

Absent: Laurie Eliason, and John Sugrue

Update from Chair

Mr. Drobinski reminded residents that the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) is an active construction site and people should not be trespassing on the trail.

Congress Woman Katherine Clark will be in Town on Monday, December 18, 2023 and be visiting a portion of the rail trails. The Committee has been invited to meet her there, more details to follow.

The Committee submitted two Community Preservation Committee (CPC) applications requesting funds for Articles to be submitted at the May 2024 Annual Town Meeting. He thanked Marcia Rasmussen for her work on the presentations, and mentioned that Representative Carmine Gentile thanked the Committee on a job well done.

Mr. Drobinski said starting in January 2024 the committee will be meeting on a regular bi-weekly schedule.

Review of Written Update from Fuss & O'Neill:

Nick LaPointe, Fuss & O'Neill and Matt Taylor, Fuss & O'Neill were present to discuss updates with the Committee.

Mr. LaPointe gave a brief update. He stated he believes the Town of Framingham has taken the next design steps with Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) with their segment of the trail.

Mr. LaPointe shared and discussed the latest plans. He stated they are waiting for the hydraulic analysis so they will be able to size the culverts, and show the appropriate impact on the plans.

Mr. LaPointe and Mr. Taylor reviewed the current plan set with the Committee. There was a discussion regarding the width of the path. The BFRT Northward had a standard 10-foot path, but a 12-foot path from Nobscot Road or the new parking lot North of the diamond may be reasonable, and will have little clearing/environmental impacts.

Mr. Taylor stated that they were in a good position for the Pre 25% submission, but still have a few items to add from some of the comments provided to them, including some amenities such as metering stations, benches, bike racks and adding markers.

Mr. Drobinski asked the Committee members if there were any questions or comments.

Mr. Holtz commented on the 12-foot-wide section from the parking area was hard to see the 2-foot difference on the plan. He also commented on the right turn on red signal at the Route 20 crossing, and asked if there was any consideration of removing that ability. Mr. LaPointe replied that the plan is to restrict a right turn on red. He also commented that there will be no turn on red at the Hudson Road intersection.

Mr. Pransky asked about the cattle crossing section. He commented that the slope was steep in that area and asked if a modification to the slope could be made on the East side so people could access that area easily. Mr. Lapointe replied he could look into grading the area of that section to allow people to walk down and access the area. Mr. Pransky also commented on cross sections on the plan where there was fencing near the trails that people often use, and wanted to make sure that there would still be access to them. Mr. Drobinski agreed. There was brief discussion on protective fencing in areas near wetlands, and ways to try to channel people to designated trail areas.

Mr. LaPointe updated the Committee again on the track for the Pre 25% Design tracking to be submitted in mid-January to early February and tracking the submission of the 25% to MassDOT in mid-June.

The Committee had a brief discussion about benches along the trail and wayfinding signs.

Staff Update

The Fuss & O'Neill field inspection report #12 covered work up to November 22, 2024, and covered some of the details Ms. Rasmussen has been working on including the culvert near the northern section of the trail near Fairview Farm. The contractor performed a camera inspection of the pipe which detected a few breaks in the pipe, and it was suggested to be replaced with the same size pipe. Fuss & O'Neill plan to prepare drawings with supporting information for the next Conservation Commission meeting on Monday, December 18, 2023 so that the work can proceed to move forward as recommended.

Fuss & O'Neill provided an updated plan illustrating the turning movement for the Ti-Sales driveway, which was forwarded to Mr. Tighe. We have not received a response from Mr. Tighe regarding the plan provided to him. The plan is an improvement over what is existing there now, including a wider driveway and improved sight lines in and out of the property.

The next (virtual) update meeting with MassDOT, the Contractor (AA Will), Town Consulting Engineer (Fuss & O'Neill), and the Town has not yet been scheduled yet.

The Planning and Community Development Department received resident complaints about houses vibrations and noise. The complaints were forwarded to the contractor and MassDOT. Responses received were provided to residents.

A meeting will be scheduled in January to coordinate and compile information for the rail trail interpretive panels and markers to be created and installed along the 2D Phase of the trail with Historical Commission members Jan Costa and Chris Hagger, and resident railroad enthusiast, Steven Greene.

The Town of Framingham just received notice of decision from the Surface Transportation Board and have been named as the Interim trail sponsor. Framingham is now in a position to acquire the CSX corridor, and are working on closing documents. They expect to have control of the corridor soon.

Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT)- Ms. Rasmussen followed up with Gerald Autler at Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) regarding the request to consider four additional bench locations along the MCRT that Mr. Holtz and Mr. Pransky discussed with Lori Capone Conservation Coordinator, and the initial waterline information for a hydration station near the Diamond intersection with the BFRT.

Community Preservation Committee meeting was held last week for hearings on both the Parkinson Field Driveway Improvement project and the BFRT Phase 3 design funding request funds for May 2024 Annual Town Meeting. The Committee had a lot of questions on the projects. Nick LaPointe, Fuss and O'Neill to provide an update with the information requested.

Outreach – An email blast went out to the interest list with the latest BFRT updates. A list of Public Works Directors and Planning Directors from various towns were identified for outreach for a survey. The survey will hopefully be sent out at the beginning of January.

Mr. Lapointe mentioned that the Committee may want to start thinking about steps for organizing a ribbon cutting ceremony. He said it can take a few months to organize the ceremony with MassDOT.

Public comment

None

Member Reports

Mr. Pransky shared that the MCRT Waltham section is almost completely done with lights at the crossing are functioning. He also gave a brief update on other trail work in other cities and towns.

Rail Tails Advisory Committee
Minutes
December 13, 2023

Minutes for Approval: November 29, 2023

Mr. Drobinski motioned to approve the minutes of November 29, 2023, as amended. Ms. Szwarc seconded the motion. It was on motion 5 – 0; Drobinski-aye, Szwarc-aye, Pransky-aye, Vitale- aye, and Holtz- aye

Next RTAC meeting January 10, 2024, 7:30PM via Zoom (pending confirmation no Planning Board conflict)

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 PM