



Town of Sudbury

Rail Trails Advisory Committee

railtrails@sudbury.ma.us

Flynn Building
278 Old Sudbury Road
Sudbury, MA 01776
978-639-3387
Fax : 978-639-3314

<https://sudbury.ma.us/bfrr/>

MINUTES

November 6, 2024 AT 7:30 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

Members Present: John Drobinski (Chair), Glenn Pransky, Ken Holtz, Lana Szwarc, and John Sugrue

Others Present: Marcia Rasmussen, Planning & Community Development Department, Amy Sarli and Amber Christofferson, DCR

Absent: Laurie Eliason

Meeting called to order 7:31 p.m.

Update from Chair

Mr. Drobinski gave a brief update on the following:

- While many people are enjoying the trail, a reminder that the rail trail continues to be closed due to the ongoing construction activity and asked residents to be careful.
- A future agenda item for discussion should be related to horses on the trail. Several towns have restrictions and do not allow horses, we may want to consider this as there have already been some issues.
- There will be some discussions with owners of businesses near the “Diamond” intersection about potential use of parking for trail users since the business is closed on weekend.

Update on Massachusetts Central Rail Trail (MCRT) and Introduction of Amber Christofferson from the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR):

Glenn Pransky introduced Amber Christofferson, Trails and Greenways Planner for DCR. Ms. Christofferson is the Project Manager for 2 of 4 current MCRT segments and shared updates on these projects:

- The segment linking Weston and newly completed Waltham portions is slowed by complexities around portions of the project, however DCR is fast-tracking the bridge rehabilitation portion of the project.
- The Sudbury to Wayland segment is in 75% design and in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process with an advertisement date of 2026.

- In August 2024 DCR received a \$5-million EEA grant to complete the Sudbury-to-Hudson segment of the trail. This will go out to bid this winter with hopes of securing a contractor in February and begin construction in the spring.
- Current plans for the “Diamond” intersection with the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) include the rails being laid in the center with a granite curb and brick stamped concrete.

Mr. Pransky inquired about potential wayfinding signs in the “Diamond” area as well as the possibility for adjacent land to be utilized for parking for trail access. Ms. Rasmussen reminded the Committee of the spring 2024 Town Meeting vote to support the Town’s acquisition of the building and property from the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) if possible.

Mr. Pransky asked about maintenance of the trail once it is complete and what agreements DCR has with other towns regarding trail maintenance. Ms. Christofferson noted that Mr. Autler would know more about this as it is a different division of DCR, however, she was aware that there are currently agreements with the Towns of Wayland and Weston. Typically, major capital repairs, like repaving or repairing an underpass, would be DCR responsibility while routine maintenance and day-to-day operations would be the towns.

A final question about allowing horses on the MCRT was asked, but the answer was unknown. It was noted that the BFRT north of Sudbury does not allow horses, but that there are some trails in the southern portion of the state that do. An observation was shared that horses had disrupted the plantings located on the sides of the trail in the area of Dutton Road. It was reiterated that this is an issue the Town should address and have clear rules about.

Fuss & O’Neill shared comments from Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) on Phase 3

Ms. Rasmussen provided the Committee with an update on the comment resolution meeting with MassDOT with two primary issues for the Rail Trails Advisory Committee (RTAC) to be aware of.

- The Nobscot Road parking area was the primary item in question from MassDOT. The design calls for 18 spaces, but the MassDOT team believe additional parking is needed in this area. There was discussion about options for increasing parking utilizing a one-way design and angled parking which may have potential, but the constraints of the site will limit the ability to increase spaces.
 - The discussion prompted consideration that looking at angled parking may create a safer condition for people loading and unloading bicycles as well as how a one-way circulation would impact the traffic condition or safety at the intersection.
 - Mr. Holtz added that there may need to be discussions with adjacent business owners about potential weekend use or off-hours use of their parking lots.
- The second primary question from MassDOT relates to the short-term impact at Eaton Road West in Framingham while the trail ends at this location prior to extending south through Framingham. Signage and other measures will be needed to limit users parking in the neighborhood at Eaton Road West.

Staff Update

Ms. Rasmussen provided the Committee with an update on several additional items. (For additional details on items below, see the Update on Sudbury Rail Trails memo dated 10/31/2024.)

- Fuss & O'Neil and MassDOT have done an inspection of the traffic signals on 10/29 and will have an update meeting tomorrow (11/7).
- Lynn Horsky is working on the graphics for the interpretive historic panels which will be presented to the Historical Commission at the November 12th meeting for discussion.
- The DPW Director Tina Rivard is working on plans to accept trail maintenance from MassDOT once the construction is complete and approved.
- Approximately \$225,000 has been either spent or committed from Article 47 of ATM 2022 and, while there needs to be further confirmation with MassDOT related to non-participating items, there is enough remaining funds to allocate \$15,000 to the installation of art from the Friends of the BFRT.
- Eagle scout Ryan Barret is proposing restoration of the cattle pass at Hudson Road near Parkinson Field. Further discussion with the town staff and Conservation Commission is needed.

Proposed sculpture for BFRT

Amy Sarli from the Friends of the BFRT presented a proposed sculpture on behalf of Len Simon, who was unable to attend, to be placed along the trail at a location to be determined. The Friends of the BFRT have agreed to the project with \$15,000 to fund the artwork and request that the RTAC recommend that the Select Board accept the gift and allocate funds from the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for installation.

The RTAC voted 5-0 to recommend the Select Board accept the gift.

The RTAC voted 5-0 to recommend the Select Board allocate \$15,000 from the Article 47 of ATM 2022 for the installation of the gift.

Image from presentation:

Sculpture Project – Presented to RTAC Nov. 6, 2024

Sculpture Project Concept:

- Project is being driven by Len Simon – a long-time supporter of the Rail Trails.
- His vision is to pay homage to the railroad as an important part of Sudbury's history while the rail trail will look to the future in reconnecting residents with the natural beauty and topography of our town.
- He is bringing metal pieces of the railroad into the sculpture to bridge the transition from the old to the new use.

Status of Approvals:

- FBFRT has agreed to support this project with up to \$15,000 towards the cost of the sculpture.
- Town of Sudbury has earmarked an additional \$15,000 from CPC Article 47 for transporting and securing the sculpture to the base.
- Town manager has granted permission to use two 5-foot lengths of rail for the sculpture. It will be cut with fire dept oversight.

Requests to the RTAC:

- Recommend to the Select Board that they accept the gift of a sculpture from the Friends of the BFRT for placement along the BFRT.
- Recommend to the Select Board that they approve use of up to \$15,000 of CPC funds allocated for BFRT amenities, for siting and installation of the sculpture.
- Provide input into possible site locations for the sculpture.



Sculpture Details:

- Approximate size: 5 Ft tall x 6 Ft wide.
- Secured to a base that is offset from the path to maintain traffic flow.
- Final location to be determined – possible sites at the Diamond, Parkinson Field, Morse Road.



Member Report

Mr. Pransky attended the Moving Together conference 2 weeks ago and a key message at the conference was that Mass Trails grants are available and towns should apply.

Public Comment

No additional comments were made.

Review and Approval of Minutes

Minutes of October 9, 2024 were reviewed and unanimously approved as written.

Next RTAC meetings via Zoom at 7:30PM:

- December 4, 2024
- January 8, 2025
- February 12, 2025