



# Town of Sudbury

## Rail Trails Advisory Committee

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### MINUTES

February 4, 2026 – 7:30 PM

### VIRTUAL MEETING

**Members Present:** John Drobinski, John Sugrue, Chris Menge, Jason Wellemyer, Glenn Pransky, Ken Holtz, Laurie Eliason

**Others Present:** Marcia Rasmussen, Planning & Community Development

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM by Chair John Drobinski

#### Update from Chair:

- Chair Drobinski emphasized the importance of interconnectivity between critical infrastructure, schools, parks, and sidewalks to the Mass Central and Bruce Freeman Rail Trails. He also reminded attendees to submit any additional comments or additions for Phase 3 design, as the deadline for submittal was approaching.

#### Staff Update:

- BFRT Phase 2D – The Town has not yet accepted maintenance responsibility due primarily to the access ramp at Broadacres Farm that is not ADA compliant. Additionally, concerns about invasive species control need to be addressed. Some trailside signs have fallen off the granite posts and were delivered to Ms. Rasmussen's office; the Contractor and MassDOT have been notified. The Town is waiting for MassDOT to schedule a grand opening, likely in spring or early summer. Plans for a redesign of the accessible ramp at Broadacres have been submitted, and the likely choice will be an angled ramp with a switchback to reduce the slope angle. The plan requires review by the Conservation Commission due to the nearby wetlands.
- The sculpture to be placed at the Broadacres parking lot was delivered to Sudbury and is in the horse barn at Broadacres Farm. Sudbury Lumber donated their services for its transfer from Jamaica Plain.
- BFRT Phase 3 – Fuss & O'Neill has incorporated Mr. Pransky's comments on the design and they expect to get the 75% design plans to MassDOT by February 13<sup>th</sup>. They have included a side ramp to enable viewing of a cattle crossing. They asked if there were large abutment stones left over that could be used at the pocket park planned for the Route 20 intersection. Ms. Rasmussen informed them that there were stones available at Broad Acres Farm.
- The Planning & Community Development office is preparing a partial reimbursement request from the 2024 MassTrails grant (\$250,000 total grant) for Fuss & O'Neill's design services from July 2025 to January 2026.
- After the heavy January snowstorm, it was discovered that someone with an ATV and snowplow had plowed the Mass Central Rail Trail west of the Diamond, and the BFRT north

- to Hudson Road. This was illegal and unauthorized, and Town officials are trying to identify the operator to advise them that they are not allowed to plow snow off the rail trails.
- Town Counsel has prepared a draft license agreement for land near the Diamond on Chiswick Park property to be used to construct additional rail trail parking. The land is adjacent to the BFRT on the south side of the Chiswick Park driveway, and the parking would serve users of both the BFRT and MCRT trails. The license agreement will be forwarded to the owners next week. Town Counsel is also preparing a Town Meeting warrant article to allow a long-term lease of the land. In response to a question from Ms. Eliason, Ms. Rasmussen noted that design funding could come from remaining Phase 2D CPC funds, but that other funding sources will be needed for construction.
  - The Parkinson Field parking and driveway design efforts by TEC are proceeding with a 20-ft. wide path into the parking lot from Hudson Road. An easement will be needed from one of the abutting residential lots next to the driveway; and there are other issues related to electric service from Ti-SALES that will need to be investigated. A meeting with Ti-SALES staff will be requested after the snow melts.
  - Ms. Rasmussen attended the January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting with the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to provide an update on the Parkinson Field driveway and parking lot improvements as well as to respond to additional questions raised about that application and the MCRT accessible trail connections and parking area application. The CPC meeting resulted in the MCRT connections and parking area application being approved for placement on the Town Meeting warrant. The Parkinson Field application was not approved for placement on this year's warrant, but CPC members encouraged resubmittal after a design solution and permitting have been completed.
  - Member Chris Menge reported that State Senator Jamie Eldridge has secured an earmark of \$50,000 from the state budget to benefit the maintenance of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail in the towns he represents, Sudbury and Acton. The earmark is to be given to the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, which will then provide the funds to the towns for the purchase of capital equipment. The town of Acton's DPW has expressed interest in obtaining a riding leaf blower, which would cost up to about half of the \$50,000 available. Mr. Menge has reached out to Sudbury's DPW Director Tina Rivard to request a letter confirming that Sudbury is willing to accept approximately \$25,000 toward the purchase of equipment needed to maintain the rail trails in Town.
  - Ms. Rasmussen reviewed the January 13<sup>th</sup> Parks and Recreation Commission meeting and learned that Eagle Scout Brandon Ma proposed installation of two raised bed pollinator gardens at Parkinson Field on the south side of the access ramp from the parking lot to the BFRT. Ms. Eliason asked about maintenance and wondered if a garden club would be interested. She suggested following up with Conservation Coordinator Lori Capone to discuss species to be used.
  - Prior to the meeting, Ms. Rasmussen had sent RTAC members an image of the proposed lawn-style sign under consideration for placement at trail intersections with roads to encourage trail users to press the buttons for the crossing lights. After a final review of the sign, Mr. Drobinski moved to accept the sign and it was seconded by Ms. Eliason. Mr. Pransky suggested that a few signs be made with the MCRT logo for placement at its Route 20 and Union Avenue crossings. The sign design was approved unanimously.

- Ms. Rasmussen mentioned that Sudbury Weekly newsletter editor Kevin LaHaise attended the January RTAC meeting that featured Sudbury Police Lt. Perodeau, who made an excellent informative presentation on public safety issues relating to the rail trails in Sudbury. Mr. LaHaise wrote an article about the presentation that was featured in the Northeast Greenway Solutions Rail Trail e-newsletter.

### **Member Updates:**

- Member Glenn Pransky presented ideas for trail connections to the BFRT Phase 3 in Sudbury. Three main trails were observed and noted: one is through Raymond Reservation with a notable sand pit and wetland area, one connects to two fields one of which abuts Moran Circle properties including an easement to the road from the field, and the third is at a cattle-crossing. In discussion about potential access through the Moran Circle easement, John Sugrue explained that many cul-de-sacs in Sudbury have access easements to conservation land, which are often publicly accessible. Mr. Pransky said that he and his daughter walked the BFRT corridor from the Framingham town line to the end of Phase 3 in Framingham, noting the trail's condition and crossings, including a bridge over I-90.
- Mr. Menge described the many wayfinding signs that the Town of Concord is planning to install along the BFRT later this year. He mentioned that the initiative was intended to promote economic vitality. Discussion ensued about the value such signs could have in Sudbury, and Ms. Rasmussen stated that remaining Phase 2D funding could be used for such signs in Sudbury, and possibly the Friends of the BFRT could provide additional funding for the MCRT. Mr. Pransky mentioned that there is great potential for connections from the MCRT to Sudbury businesses at Meadow Walk, Mill Village, and other areas. There was also discussion about the need for connections to South Sudbury and the idea of a joint meeting with the Planning Board regarding sidewalks.

### **Public Comment:**

- John McQueen suggested wayfinding signs along the MCRT at Mill Village and Lotus Blossom would be helpful, but members noted that discussion with DCR would be needed and that funding is not yet available for MCRT amenities.
- Kay Bell attended the meeting to understand the status of the redesign of the trail access ramp from the parking lot at Broadacres Farm to make it ADA compliant. Ms. Rasmussen explained that wetlands, drainage, space, and safety considerations require the ramp to be angled and not straight. MassDOT is responsible for making the revisions to the ramp and covering the cost.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

- Minutes of the January 7, 2026 meeting were reviewed. Mr. Drobinski moved to approve them, Mr. Pransky seconded, and were unanimously approved.

### **Next Meetings:**

- March 4, 2026
- April 15, 2026

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.