



Town of Sudbury

Rail Trails Advisory Committee

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MINUTES

August 5, 2026 – 7:30 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

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

Others Present: Marcia Rasmussen, Interim Rail Trails Coordinator

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM by Chair John Drobinski, Mr. Pransky volunteered to take minutes of the meeting.

Update from Chair:

- Chair Drobinski congratulated Glenn Pransky and his wife, Terry, for completing their 30th Pan Mass Challenge. He noted that legislation for e-bikes is progressing and new restrictions on usage of these devices may be enacted soon. He spoke to the need for the RTAC members to think about a more proactive approach to problematic rail trail behavior. Lastly, he observed that the MCRT is now officially opened, thanks to collaborative work by Eversource, Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation, and the Town.

Staff Update:

BFRT Phase 2D

- On August 5, Ms. Rasmussen met with DPW Director Tina Rivard and Planning Director Adam Burney to discuss plans for BFRT maintenance. Ms. Rivard stated that DPW staff have already conducted some brush clearing near intersections, and a lighting contractor is now available to maintain crossing lights. DPW will deploy a brush / leaf sweeper in the fall. When they hear about concerns, a work order is prepared – so if something needs to be addressed (Fence broken, tree down, etc.), Ms. Rivard suggested that people reach out to dpw@sudbury.ma.us. Mowing will be within the gravel path. Regular cleanup will start in the spring, frequency to be determined by needs. For issues like overhanging weeds growing out of the gravel path, that should be addressed by mowing, since most of these weeds grow out of the side gravel area. Surrounding communities have varying approaches to mowing – some weekly, some monthly, and the width of area mowed varies.
- MassDOT reported that AA Will's contract has been extended, enabling them to do the work to modify the ramp at Broadacres Farm. They suggested that the Town file a variance request with the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB). They also indicated that AA Will can order the selected accessible drinking fountains and install them using

Town's funds allocated under prior Annual Town Meeting appropriations for BFRT section 2D construction.

- The accessible picnic tables have been delivered and will be assembled and installed at this location in a few weeks by Facilities Department staff.
- Trespassing at Fairview Farms continues; the Town is waiting to finalize the costs associated with handicapped access remediation at Broadacres Farm parking lot and plaza. Once that is done, remaining funds can be allocated to install fencing at Fairview Farm.
- Town staff is researching whether there is an existing easement for the overhead power lines on the Parkinson Field driveway for the benefit of Ti-SALES. Once this information is available, DPW Director Tina Rivard and Ms. Rasmussen will approach Ti-SALES about the next iteration of plans for driveway and parking lot improvements for Parkinson Field.

BFRT Phase 3

- Fuss and O'Neill have clarified the needed easements for planned construction during Phase 3, and have identified a need for confirmation of easements from the MBTA for the area around the "Diamond Intersection".
- DEP has reviewed and determined that none of the work related to replacement of 6 culverts on Phase 3 will need Chapter 91 (re: navigable waters) authorization.
- Fuss and O'Neill anticipate filing a NOI with the Sudbury Conservation Commission later this fall. Conservation Coordinator Lori Capone is reviewing the rationale for culvert replacement.
- Follow up with Chiswick Park about a lease, license, or easement for development of a small parking lot opposite the Crumble Station parking area will happen in early September. An agreement must be in place before design can move forward.

Framingham BFRT

- Framingham was awarded a \$200,000 MassTrails grant for their Phase 2 design, and a community meeting was hosted by the Mayor, demonstrating a strong commitment by the City to complete this section.

Mass Central Rail Trail

- The July 16th ribbon cutting ceremony for the MCRT Sudbury-Hudson (SudHud) section was well attended, and talks at the event were posted on social media.
- Ms. Rasmussen will place the bright pink lawn signs at MCRT road crossings to remind trail users to stop and wait to cross until it's safe to do so.
- Committee members asked if there had been any progress on trail connections in the Hop Brook Marsh / Memorial Forest area, as funding was authorized at the May Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Rasmussen will follow up and provide information at the next RTAC meeting.
- Ms. Eliason asked about maintenance responsibilities for the MCRT. Ms. Rasmussen replied that the Town will only handle such issues as trees down across the trail, but that all other maintenance is the responsibility of the DCR.

Member Updates:

- Ms. Eliason observed that CPC applications are due soon after Labor Day and asked whether the RTAC should consider an application for developing further connections along both rail trails, perhaps engaging a consultant who can help develop a strategy for each of the priority connections (e.g., Thompson Drive, Featherlands playing fields, Meadow Walk, Mill Village, and the Coolidge). The priorities might be Town-owned or town-easement properties, as we may not be able to use CPC funds for access to privately owned land. Also, there is a need to first contact private property owners to see if they are interested in working on connections to the trails.
- Chair Drobinski noted that there have been several complaints received about poor trail user etiquette, such as cyclists not yielding to trucks at the Cavicchio driveway and concerns about lack of flashing beacons at road intersections on the MCRT. Frequent complaints include people being startled by cyclists passing without providing a warning, people walking 3 or 4 abreast, bicyclists failing to stop at intersections (especially adults with young kids setting a poor example), and unsafe e-bike use. The Sudbury Police Department is planning to work with MassBike to conduct education sessions, develop trail user outreach toolkits, expand website and social media resources, and other ways to engage trail users about appropriate trail etiquette and safety. There may be a need for targeted communications to parents and school-age children. Police Lt. Perodeau is interested in working with the RTAC on these issues. Standardized BFRT rules signs will be placed in the fall. But it's hard to change poor cyclist behavior and some RTAC members favor police presence and enforcement/education by police in the fall, when students' use of the trail increases, observing that might be an optimal time to get the attention of trail users. That is an approach which seems to have been successful in Acton and other towns with busy trails.
- Mr. Wellemeyer suggested focusing on one main issue and using several strategies to address the issue. For instance, at the Cavicchio driveway intersection, a sign should state "Trucks have the right of way" and perhaps this is appropriate approach at other locations where cyclists should be yielding to traffic. Ms. Eliason noted that some of the lawn signs are obscured by tall grass. It was noted that trail etiquette and cyclist behavior will be ongoing topics for discussion, and Mr. Wellemeyer offered to reach out and invite Lt. Perodeau to join a RTAC meeting this fall to continue exploring these issues.
- Mr. Pransky raised the issue of wayfinding along the trails observing that businesses could benefit from encouraging trail users to visit them as seen in other communities with long-distance trails that attract both day and overnight visitors. Successful engagement of trail users requires good signage and maps, accessible routes from the trail to the businesses, and bike and walker-friendly businesses (bike rack, free filling of water bottles, trail snacks, etc.). The RTAC members may want to engage local businesses to find out about their interest in encouraging trail user business, what's been their experience to date, what they feel they need to be more successful, and educate them about the potential opportunities. Structured interviews might be the best approach. How many businesses and what kinds of businesses should be included? How far from the trail is too far to be included? Ms. Rasmussen offered to reach out to Acton to see how they collected info on businesses. The RTAC should define

the goals for this effort, and have a list of specific questions to identify what is needed and what can be accomplished. Several RTAC members expressed willingness to talk with businesses if there is specific information to be obtained.

Public Comment:

- Maura Carty, 15 Stonebrook Ln – wants to know when and how the maintenance on BFRT will occur; she has concerns about encroaching weeds, pine needles and debris covering trail surface. She also asked about the MCRT intersections at Horse Pond, Peakham, and Dutton Roads noting that drivers may not know that they are about to come upon a major crosswalk. She asked if it's possible to install blinking lights (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons) at these intersections, similar to those found on the BFRT? The Committee noted that DCR and MassDOT have different criteria for installing these lights; Ms. Carty was encouraged to send her concerns in writing to Ms. Rasmussen who would forward the comments to the DCR Project Manager Amber Christoffersen.

Approval of Minutes:

- Minutes of the July 15, 2026 meeting were reviewed. Mr. Drobinski moved to approve them, Mr. Menge seconded, and they were unanimously approved.

Next Meetings:

- September 16, 2026
- October 7, 2026
- November 4, 2026
- December 2, 2026

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 pm.