



Town of Sudbury

Rail Trails Advisory Committee

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MINUTES

September 16, 2026 – 7:30 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

Members Present VIA ZOOM: John Drobinski (Chair), Glenn Pransky, Ken Holtz, Jason Wellemeyer.

Absent: John Sugrue, Laurie Eliason, Chris Menge

Others Present: Marcia Rasmussen, Interim Rail Trails Coordinator; Lt. John Perodeau, Sudbury Police Department

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

Update from Chair:

- Chairman Drobinski welcomed Lt. Perodeau to the meeting. He then noted that the committee is at a turning point with both the Mass Central and Bruce Freeman Rail Trail projects with regard to new issues and concerns, including:
 - Maintenance of Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) by Sudbury Department of Public Works DPW).
 - Safety concerns which have been raised (not giving audible signals when passing, not stopping or slowing before crossing streets, speeding, e-bikes/dirt bikes, etc.).
 - Wayfinding and connectivity – outreach to the community and businesses for their input and how to get them involved.
- Chair Drobinski then turned the meeting over to Lt. Perodeau.

Update from Sudbury Police Dept. – Lt. John Perodeau

- Lt. Perodeau presented the Sudbury Police Department's (SPD) approach to trail safety, which emphasizes education over enforcement. He noted that the Department patrols the trails using specialized equipment, including UTVs, electric motorcycles, drones and e-bikes.
- He reported that the SPD has held "whistle stop" community outreach events at key trail intersections, including one recently at Cavicchio's, where coupons for free ice cream were handed out to kids to promote safe bicycle-use behavior. Mr. Pransky noted that similar police presence has been effective on the BFRT.
- The group discussed the Route 20 crossing on the Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT), where pedestrians and cyclists frequently ignore the traffic signals. Lt. Perodeau explained that enforcement is difficult due to the trail's narrow width and uncertainty about the legal authority to cite violations under M.G.L. c. 85 §11B, though visible police presence tends to deter inappropriate behavior. Possible solutions such as stop signs or physical barriers were

discussed, with Lt. Perodeau observing that any new signage must comply with DCR guidelines, since the trail is state property.

- The group discussed the idea of adding bike and e-bike safety to the middle school STARS (Students Thinking and Acting Responsibly) program. Lt. Perodeau explained that the sixth-grade program currently covers safe cell-phone use, nicotine, drugs and alcohol, and suggested adding bike safety components including e-bike dangers and fire hazards would be valuable. Mr. Wellemeyer expressed interest in pursuing this with school administrators, and Lt. Perodeau confirmed SPD would support the effort by providing relevant information.
- Chair Drobinski raised concerns about intersection safety at Horse Pond Road, Dutton Road and Peakham Road on the MCRT. No specific solutions were discussed. Lt. Perodeau noted the 25 MPH speed limit is enforced near the rail trail, and that sight lines are challenging at some intersections such as Peakham Road, requiring patience and awareness from drivers.
- The planned “Bike 101” educational event was canceled due to anticipated low attendance (only 2-3 people signed up in advance). Lt. Perodeau is working to reschedule the event with MassBike instructors teaching bicycle and pedestrian laws.

Staff Updates:

- MassDOT completed a walkthrough of BFRT Phase 2D to assess plantings and invasive plant removal, in order to finalize conditions and be prepared to request the Certificate of Compliance from the Conservation Commission. MassDOT indicated they will conduct the required survey and documentation but no date of when this information will be submitted was provided.
- Ms. Rasmussen is preparing a variance application to the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board for an extension of time to allow reconstruction of the access ramp at Broadacres Farm and other remediation to provide full handicapped access in the plaza. Unfortunately, a schedule for this work by AA Will has not yet been provided.
- Rail trail information on the Town’s website has been updated.
- As a result of walking the BFRT Phase 2D with Sudbury DPW Director Tina Rivard, she stated that DPW staff will begin maintenance work on the rail trail in October or sooner, addressing mugwort overgrowth and pine needle buildup which is making the trail narrower and will take some serious effort to clear that build up.
- Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) Phase 3: Ms. Rasmussen attended comment resolution meeting between Fuss and O’Neill and MassDOT staff. One of the comments asked about the note to preserve the signal post near the Sudbury/Framingham town line and whether the preservation/restoration would be a participating or non-participating item in the contract. Ms. Rasmussen offered to follow up with Sudbury Historical Commission and others about this item. Another topic was related to the traffic signal upgrades at the Nobscot/Boston Post Road intersection, which will include a separate bicycle signal. Fuss & O’Neill suggested that MassDOT Traffic may want to consider exploring potential coordination/timing issues with the Route 20 signals at Nobscot Road and Union Avenue as a result of this new bicycle signal. Traffic signal law has changed, now requiring a bicycle crossing signal separate from the pedestrian signal on Route 20. Lastly, Fuss & O’Neill

commented that a Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) review will be likely due to the amount of bordering vegetated wetlands and culvert work; a follow-up meeting will be scheduled for later this month. MEPA review was required for Phase 2D but Fuss and O'Neill was hoping to find ways to minimize impacts on Phase 3.

- Ms. Rasmussen reported progress on obtaining a permanent easement from Chiswick Park to install a small parking area near the Diamond intersection of the MCRT and BFRT.
- Ms. Rasmussen has submitted a Community Preservation Act application seeking additional funding for design work of the Chiswick Park parking area, acquisition of temporary and permanent easements required for Phase 3 and potential non-participating items, such as a drinking fountain at the Nobscot Road parking lot and invasive species removal near the town line.
- Regarding the Parkinson Field access driveway and parking lot – Ms. Rasmussen indicated that research is continuing into formal easements for the electric service along the driveway. A follow up meeting with Ti-SALES management and owner is anticipated later this fall.
- In response to questions and concerns raised by Paul Cavicchio about trail users parking along and using Codjer Lane to access the rail trail, Ms. Rasmussen reported that Codjer Lane had been previously determined to be a “statutory private way” by Town Counsel so access could not be restricted, but parking could be prohibited. This information has been shared with Mr. Cavicchio, but he has not yet responded.
- Ms. Rasmussen reported ongoing challenges with trail users trespassing at Fairview Farm, as well as cyclists not stopping for trucks at the driveway intersection (even though trail users have the stop sign, not the trucks). Additional fencing is planned once the Broadacres Farm issues are resolved.
- In response to wayfinding and connection issues raised at the last meeting, Ms. Rasmussen provided committee members with Acton’s survey/report conducted during COVID to assess what business owners viewed as supportive of the commercial area.
- Ms. Rasmussen reminded the committee that a year ago they had discussed the idea of memorial plaques installed on benches along the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. Now that the Town is responsible for the BFRT Phase 2D, the committee can reconsider its initial draft for memorials, starting with individual memorials but also think about commemorating all the Sudbury residents who helped make the rail trail a reality.
- Ms. Rasmussen noted that Planning Director Adam Burney had applied to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for funding of a study to improve trail connections to local businesses, schools, and community centers and develop a prioritized list to begin improving such connections.

Member Reports and Updates

- Mr. Pransky asked whether the committee should start asking local businesses about connections or wait for CPC proposal. Ms. Rasmussen observed that that Fuss and O'Neill has already included some proposed signage similar to Acton’s in the plans for BFRT Phase 3. Mr. Pransky suggested that each Rail Trails Advisory Committee (RTAC) member could

approach a few local businesses. Ms. Rasmussen and Mr. Pransky agreed to develop a uniform set of questions for the committee to discuss at the next meeting.

- Mr. Wellemeyer raised possible parking and connections in South Sudbury, including a vacant Eversource lot. Ms. Rasmussen noted that the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is currently using the lot for rail trail construction. Mr. Pransky suggested possible use of abandoned railroad spurs. Mr. Pransky recommended postponing exploration of the first area until after November due to ticks. Mr. Wellemeyer then suggested an unleased building next to gas station and offered to contact the landlord about the parking lot. Chair Drobinski had had a casual conversation with the landlord and noted that future exploration would likely require some engineering.
- Regarding concerns about the lack of maintenance along the trail, Ms. Rasmussen advised that the community could possibly get involved with cleanup efforts and cited previous “Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail” efforts. Mr. Wellemeyer raised concern for cleaning up without proper authority and suggested organizing community work parties to help with trail maintenance, particularly at intersections with poor visibility. M. Rasmussen emphasized the need to submit a work order to DPW if people have concerns. Mr. Holtz emphasized the need for proper guidance to avoid violating conservation areas, and the committee noted the importance of coordinating with both DPW and Conservation.
- Mr. Pransky shared updates on growing cross-state trail tourism and recent trail dedications in Ware and New Braintree.

Public Comment / Minutes Approval:

- Public comments: None raised
- The committee reviewed the minutes from August 5th, 2026. Chair Drobinski moved approval of the minutes as written; Mr. Pransky seconded. All voted in favor.
- Future meeting dates: October 7, November 4, and December 2

Meeting Adjourned 8:40 PM