



Town of Sudbury

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Task Force

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MINUTES

APRIL 6, 2021 at 7:00 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

Task Force Attendees: John Drobinski, Charlie Karustis, Richard Morse, Glenn Pransky, Lana Szwarc, and Dick Williamson

Staff: Beth Suedmeyer, Environmental Planner

1. Call Meeting to Order

- Meeting was called to order and roll call was requested by Chair John Drobinski.
Meeting was recorded by Sudbury TV

2. Project Design Update

- Beth
 - On track for 75% Design
 - Conducted abutter meetings
 - Neighborhoods, direct abutters
 - North of Haynes
 - Haynes to Hudson
 - Hudson to southern end
 - Most meetings well attended (20-30 people)
 - Some yards close to right of way
 - Three residents requesting screening
 - Pantry Brook Farm screening
 - A lot of vegetative screening
 - Adding to 75% plans
 - Accounted for in budget
- Dick's questions and Beth's responses
 - Stockade fences with gates? No gates in stockade fences will be provided by the project.
They can create install these fences with gates on their property if they choose.
 - Access from private lots will be retained if the private land owner desires it.
- Richard's questions and Beth's responses
 - Will abutters be concerned with safety? Off path onto property?

- Beth
 - Have been expressions of safety, keeping people from entering private property, rules posted, emergency info posted
 - Maintenance questions have been posed
 - Concerns of Parking at side streets or at end of cul-de-sacs – will put up signs
 - Hopefully will be able to mitigate parking on side streets and police will monitor if necessary

- Richard
 - How accessible will trail be to police & emergency

- Beth
 - Police or ambulance can access
 - Calls about trees and branches coming down. Once underway, Department of Public Works will maintain corridor; call Department of Public Works and get assistance

Driveway Crossings

- Beth
 - One on one meetings
 - A lot of coordination with MassDOT
 - Public comments have been consistent
 - Safety is a concern; slow down vehicles

- Glenn
 - Other towns would be happy to talk with us about commercial properties that intersect
 - Commercial traffic was pretty good at slowing down
 - Consider putting in brick surface to warn people

- Richard
 - When would conversations be had with them?

- Beth
 - Conversations have been talking place
 - Not a lot of easements recorded for private ways
 - Asking rail division about existing easements
 - In good shape in terms of title
 - MassDOT did confirmatory taking of corridor about 10 years ago
 - Everything within corridor has been documented

Historic Artifacts

- Beth
 - Inventory captured most of what exists within corridor

- Things like mile markers, rail racks, whistle posts need to be documented
- Marking up plans and approx. station locations of additional artifacts
- Fuss & O'Neill does not need exact locations at this stage
- Anything within limits of work will be surveyed
- TiSales area turning out to be very rich in resources
 - Side rail track, whistle post, cattle crossing, stone walls near cattle crossings
 - Be able to traverse around cattle crossings
- Glen
 - A derail mechanism that extends several hundred feet
 - Make sure it is not destroyed when cleaned up
 - Look into acquiring paddles to restore look
 - Questions about utility poles
 - Do they present any danger or risk; get Fuss & O'Neill opinion
- Beth
 - Determine structural integrity
 - Preserve all or provide access to some, safety will come first
 - Ongoing conversation
- Glen
 - Signal south of old Lancaster might be of interest
 - Focus on what is worth saving
- Beth
 - We intend to save it. We are still collecting photographs of artifacts on the list

Intersecting Paths

- Beth
 - Not making any improvements to connector paths
 - Hoping to maintain public connections
 - Work with landowners for private connections, evaluate on case by case basis
- Dick
 - Path to lower Featherland gets a fair amount of traffic, want to maintain or improve this
 - How do we connect rail trail to two schools?
 - Only real direct path to Concord Road
- Beth
 - Not proposing improvements not on town owned properties
 - However, improvements to culvert
 - Path is sufficient enough
 - Could it become ADA compliant?

- Future paths from Broadacres would allow connectivity

MPO Update

- Beth
 - MPO Board approved draft 5 year TIP that maintains funding for Bruce Freeman Rail Trail in 2022
 - MassDOT was comfortable with 2022, questions answered by Design Team
 - MassDOT with many projects over budget, did not approve any new projects
 - Good position as not cost increases, may be able to decrease budget by removal of boardwalk
 - \$13M construction project for 2022

3. Interpretive Signage

- Beth
 - Locations and types of signage
 - Nice to have subcommittee to develop and reach out to additional partners
- Dick
 - Previous materials for signage
- Beth
 - We would need consultant to help format/edit materials we put together
 - We do not have a firm identified
 - Costs are included for signs and installation
 - Costs for graphic design are not yet known
- Chris Menge
 - Ask Fuss & O'Neill about their quals for creating content
- Beth
 - Historical Commission and Sudbury Historical Society for input
 - Env., Conservation Commission, watershed associations
 - Provide Beth recommendations for the sub committee
 - Art installation contacts that folks can offer
 - Beth will reach out to other towns for ideas on art

4. Public Comments

- Len Simon
 - Town historians might be resources for panels
 - Library might have resources for panels
 - Concerns about construction easements on private property

- Would it require town meeting?
- Beth
 - Handful of temp construction easements, and lease between town and DOT have to be approved at town meeting
 - Conversations with town manager's office to understand timing
 - Will need temp easements for private property
 - Will also need easements for town owned properties as well
 - Appraisals and negotiations
- Len Simon
 - Addressing earlier than later is better
 - Lease with MBTA will need town approval
- Beth
 - Same Fall town meeting for both approvals
- Len Simon
 - Chapter 91 permits?
 - Encroachments along right of way present problems?
- Beth
 - All encroachments are planned for in scope and schedule
 - Need to resolve encroachment issues--Remove vs. agreement put in place, evaluated on case-by-case basis
 - Chapter 91, if required, needs permitting in place before advertising
- Dick
 - Penn Central archives at Central Conn
- Richard
 - Will there be parking at southern terminus?
- Beth
 - Would involve conversations with DCR and MBTA
 - Limited in our ability to independently propose parking due to constraints
 - Nothing advanced at this time, when CSX moves forward

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Minutes of prior meeting on March 15, 2021 were approved.

6. Meeting was Adjourned