



Town of Sudbury

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Task Force

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MINUTES

DECEMBER 14, 2021 AT 7:00 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

Members Present: John Drobinski (Chair), Lana Szwarc, Richard Morse, Glenn Pransky, Frank Vitale, and Richard Williamson

Others Present: Beth Suedmeyer, Environmental Planner, and Matt Taylor, Representative of Fuss & O'Neill.

PROJECT DESIGN UPDATE

Beth Suedmeyer gave an overview of the project's schedule as follows:

Project remains on schedule with June/July submittal of final plans with advertisement end of September 2022

Project team remains on schedule for submittal of 100% design plans by middle of January. MEPA Environmental Notification Form (ENF) submitted November 15 and was published in Environmental Monitor November 22.

Public comment period ended December 13 with few comments received thus far – only from two Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) Task Force members, Natural Heritage and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MA DEP). Looking forward to Secretary's issuance of a MEPA Certificate by December 22.

Notice of Intent Status

Currently the project team is making minor revisions to the plans to further reduce impacts in preparation for submittal of the Notice of Intent (NOI) to the Conservation Commission and MA DEP. These revisions will be included in the NOI submittal. Isolated vegetated wetlands impacted by the project are not regulated under the state's Wetlands Protection Act, but are regulated under federal Clean Water Act requirements. The project does not require a Water Quality Certificate (WQC) since project impacts will be below the threshold where a WQC application would be required and therefore only a preconstruction notification (PCN) is necessary for the US Army COE. The Order of Conditions to be issued by the Conservation Commission will also serve to meet the requirements of WQC.

With the early coordination that has transpired, it is expected the Order of Conditions is expected by the project team the process will go smoothly.

ROW Plans Approval

The ROW plans have been approved and the lease agreement has been reviewed by Town Counsel and was discussed at the Select Board meeting on December 7. Comments received at the December 7 Board of Select Meeting weren't deemed to be significant or concerning with more comments expected at the January 2022 meeting with comments also expected from Town's insurance agent.

MBTA

We have not gotten an update on the MBTA agreement which is currently in review by higher-level MBTA officials.

Property Title Research and Appraisals

We are awaiting title research which is going on together with property appraisals for such properties as temporary easements. Appraiser proposals and contracts to be finalized this month. Driveway crossings and encroachments are being reviewed. Next step will be discussions with property owners. Property appraisals are to be delivered to the town sometime in March 2022. Expect a meeting with Mass DOT in January to review title research.

Town Meeting

Expect to have draft warrant articles completed by the end of January and available for Town Meeting to be held in May. Select Board may consider warrants during the May meeting or if placeholders (appraisal and agreements) are proposed, the Select Board may want to consider them at a Special Town Meeting. Town Counsel will be asked for their recommendation. Beth Suedmeyer was asked about the process of approvals for the appraisal process. Ultimate approval would be accomplished by a Town Meeting vote in 2022.

A lot of flexibility is anticipated regarding whether a Special Town meeting will be needed. We would need to see when Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) will propose an advertising date and then determine if there are advantages to call for a Special Town Meeting. A town meeting vote could occur with a May 2022 deadline.

Application for CPA Funds

There are 2 proposals for funds for the BFRT for design and construction of rail trail in two phases. For phase 2D, the proposal is for \$400,000 for trail accessories and construction oversight. The costs in part are for some of these items MassDOT may not cover. Also, we would like to include the professional services for design of graphic boards for signage. There is a desire to hire a professional graphic designer to assist with the development of signage along the trail.

In addition, we could include the installation of a conduit for proposed electric vehicle charging stations, which the Town would pay for. Also, non-participating elements requiring funding include proposed hydration stations, bathrooms, pavilion at Broad Acres farm, etc.

The other proposal focuses on funds to extend the design of the BFRT to connect with the CSX corridor. We will request \$300K to cover feasibility and 25% design of the 1/4 mile of the trail that connects at Route 20.

CPA approval of \$240K was requested and we will complete another application for a grant from MassTrails for these services (previous application in 2021 was not successful). If the grant is not awarded, then we may consider proposing funding at Town meeting for this effort. February 1 is the deadline for submitting MassTrails proposals.

If Town funding were made available, we could consider two design approaches – one would meet all the design criteria for the 4.4-mile Sudbury portion of the BFRT. Or, for the short section of 1/4 mile, a design and build approach in accordance with local Town design criteria could be accomplished in a more accelerated fashion. As a result, the \$300K funding might cover all design and construction of this ¼ mile section versus just 25% design if MassDOT design requirements need to be adhered to.

MHC and Historic Districts Commission Meeting (Meeting included MCRT, BFRT, and DCR) Items discussed at the December 13 meeting included compatibility with MCRT and the BFRT at their juncture. Also discussed at the meeting included post and mast arm signalization at Peakham and Hudson Roads. This was approved. The HDC requested a review of the shop drawings when available for this intersection. Their request will be incorporated into the Special Provisions. The goal here will be compatibility of DCR signage and BFRT compatibility so that signage in both corridors will blend together. The MHC will review these proposals.

A question was raised regarding the availability of previous CPA funding of \$420K, but, according to Beth Suedmeyer, this funding was reverted to the acquisition of the CSX corridor property.

Design Review Considerations

On Nov 16 DCR presented its alternatives for the diamond intersection concerns south of Route 20 at a Historical Commission meeting

Rest Area Concepts and Strategy

The four (4) types of rest areas were presented by F&O and included the following four types:

Type 1

Utilizes pieces of the rail bed for pathways. Issues here include ADA maintenance, longevity.

Type 1 works best at Broad Acres.

The MHC has expressed a desire to retain the diamond trackage long the MCRT at its original location.

Types 2, 3 and 4

These types portray an angling approach to the rail trail.

The Summary Accessories Table developed for the BFRT was reviewed and showed the number of benches, bike racks, repair stations, hydration stations, National Park Service signage, direction signage proposed.

A question was raised that if you stain the wood of fences and the like – how many additional years of added life will you get. Maybe some organizations might sponsor with some proposed funding? Maybe even issue grants by some as Friends of BFRT?

Paving of the rail trail would qualify for a TIP project

Road sign names at intersections should be considered to identify trail connections with the following:

- MCRT
- Cochituate Rail Trail
- BFRT

There seems to be little or no coordination on Trail Rules signage with other BFRT towns.

Comments were solicited from the Public but none were offered.

We expect a vote at Town Meeting to support the request for design money for the ¼ mile stretch south of Route 20 (CSX) to complete the 25% design.

No comments were received regarding items 5 and 6 on the night's agenda

There may be a BFRT Task Force in January if the schedule allows, but expect the design team will be working on meeting the schedule to complete all required plan submittals.

At the next meeting we should be prepared to provide information for a signage contract.

Plans are to be submitted on 5/10/2012 to MassDOT with comments from MassDOT expected within 40-60 days.

Main comments from Town staff were design changes and signage issues.

Beth Suedmeyer mentioned that the Task Force has 3-4 days to provide any additional comments.

Questions were solicited from the public, but none were offered.

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 PM.