



TOWN OF CONCORD

Department of Planning and Land Management

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MEMORANDUM

To: Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee
From: Marcia Rasmussen, Director DPLM
Re: **Update of Phases 2A, 2B, 2C, the last ½ mile of 2C, and 2D**
Date: March 31, 2021

- 1. Phase 2A Update:** This phase of the trail has been completed and is open for all to enjoy!
- 2. Phase 2B Update:** After final edits of the historic interpretive panel administrative staff in the Planning Division is converting the panel into InDesign, a software program that is used by the fabricator, and work is now expected to be completed by April 8th. I've also learned that regular construction update meetings will be resuming in April and Concord staff has been invited to attend.
- 3. Phase 2C Updates:** Concerns raised regarding use of Junction Park in West Concord were discussed at the March 10th Transportation Advisory Committee meeting. Concord Public Works staff are planning to order stencils to add pavement markings on the sidewalks on each side of Junction Park and will be coordinating with others on ordering upright signage and relocating signs to alert cyclists and others on wheels to dismount and walk their 'wheels' through this designated pedestrian zone.

Co-chair Nat Welch has followed up with MassDOT staff at the Central Transportation Planning Staff to discuss trail counts scheduled in May 2021.

A proposed planting plan was prepared and sent to the owner of 38 Williams Road along with a response to a recent email regarding fencing (both to be removed and to be installed) and signs.

- 4. The last ½ mile of Phase 2C:** Five site visits were conducted the week of March 15th – one with MassDOT and four with neighbors/abutters to the last ½ mile of the trail in Concord.

The site visit with MassDOT on March 16th was initiated because I had learned that the 75% design plans dated 2016 for the last ½ mile in Concord had not been fully reviewed in 2015/2016 by the State agencies responsible due to this portion of the trail being removed from the project at that time because of concerns raised about constructing a turn-around in the woods. MassDOT staff raised concerns about the extent of fencing requested that did not appear to address specific safety concerns for those using the trail. During the site visit with MassDOT we reviewed the existing topography at various locations along the trail, observed the locations of existing houses setback from the trail, the width of the right-of-way (100 feet) and discussed various encroachments of structures and fences within the right-of-way that will need to be addressed. I was also informed that in most locations

MassDOT staff did not feel the requested wood fencing is warranted because there are no safety hazards for the majority of the trail in this location and they raised questions about the safety of the proposed metal fencing near overlooking White Pond, indicating that the requested length and type of fencing was unlikely to be approved. I have requested that these observations/determination be in writing, but have not yet received such documentation. The Project Manager for MassDOT intends to attend the BFRT Advisory Committee meeting on Thursday, April 1st via Zoom.

The neighborhood site visits were well attended with ten people at the first meeting; five at the second; five at the third and three at the fourth (as I recall). I shared a memo with attendees providing an update on the MassDOT comments raised on March 16th and we walked portions of the trail to understand the width of the right-of-way and to observe the locations that fencing was recommended: near the vernal pool, the large swale, and at White Pond. Members of the Old Pickard Farm Trust II (OPFTII) were very concerned about their potential liability with regard to the White Pond location and I shared the observations made by MassDOT regarding posting the land with no trespassing signs. One person provided the deed information that allowed me to research the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds for the original sale of land in 1882 that reserved access across the right-of-way, which I provided to the State and to the Design consultant.

The revised 75% design plans are still expected to be submitted to Sudbury/MassDOT in mid-April 2021, but may be delayed due to a final decision on fencing and filing the NOI, which the Design Consultant is working on for submittal to the Concord Natural Resources Commission.

5. **Phase 2D Sudbury:** From Sudbury Planner Beth Suedmeyer – inquiry/request made for updated information.
6. **Community Connections Grant follow up:** I am still waiting to receive the final contract documents from MassDOT for this grant and I've provided the required documentation to MAPC for the collective purchasing program so we will be able to order the equipment as soon as the contract for the CC grant is finalized. I will be coordinating with Concord Public Works as to whether Town staff can install the equipment or if an outside contractor is needed.