

## **BFRTAC Public Forum on Junction Park**

Wednesday, February 16, 2022, 4:00PM – 6:00PM

Held via Zoom Conference

### NOTE:

- While this meeting was organized by the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee, it was a public forum. It was not formally convened as a BFRTAC meeting nor did any deliberations by members occur on any of the topics.
- Facilitation was provided by Nathaniel Welch.
- At one point up to 53 people were counted as attending.

### **Meeting Notes**

Peter Lowitt (5 Westvale Drive): Agrees with short term; is against taking landscape areas due to disruption to storm water management and sustainable concepts being jeopardized

Ellen Quackenbush (206 Prairie Street): Engage with community members who are no longer using park due to safety concerns (ex: Concord Park); consider those who are not able-bodied and on bikes

Cosette Dunn (131 Ministerial Drive): Only way to be safe is to have clearly marked separation physically (railings or planters) for wheels vs people who are walking and using the park; signs are not working - need alternative path for bikers

Cynthia Katz (20 Conant Street): Concord should take lead from Arlington; BFRT should not go through Junction Park (no win for bikers and pedestrians); BFRT should go down Commonwealth Ave and reconnect beyond parking lot for MBTA; multi-modal trail, but hard to be a pedestrian on the trail; Dan Stapleton (20 Conant Street) echoed comments

Bill Herring (214 Peter Springs Road): Markings on the pavement are an economical way to test to see if the concept works, and then can upgrade to more permanent solutions (bricks); adding any obstruction should be done carefully to avoid any accidents; thinks it's almost impossible to separate wheeled users completely

Bill Satterthwaite (297 Laws Brook Road): Survey results may not truly convey real usage - the Park is indeed used quite often; ideal place to put BFRT would be on the east side, down by 7-Eleven; the approach to have the BFRT go down Commonwealth Ave had been considered in the past and was problematic; Sallie Satterthwaite: cultural problem with cyclists not registering what signs and ballards are instructing them to do

Isabel Bailey (121 Everett Street): Agrees with the comments around adding painted markings

Nika Engberg (62 Church Street): A solution should not make the park inconvenient for cyclists

Julie Hirshler (1381 Main Street): Bicycles can be dangerous and weren't the intended purpose/users of the Park; need to revisit how the Park can be restored to the intended use and find a different path for the BFRT

Jeanne Griffith (396 Thoreau Street): Supports the idea of painted markers and would recommend making the signs larger; not safe to route cyclists down Commonwealth Ave

Jean Goldsberry (1832 Main Street): Chair of the Concord Commission on Disability; feels that safety is a big concern and that the current signs are ignored and are not effective; physical barriers may help; as the head of Minuteman Arc we need to be mindful of neighbors who have mobility limitations and need to ensure safety when on the trail

Nancy Crowley (5 Concord Greene): member of Green Thumbs and opened Concord Park in 2001 - Park is focal point of West Concord; would hate for paving to be broken up or marked up; suggests making the area on the west (by Club Car Cafe) and make it the BFRT path without disrupting the rest of the park

Tanya Hellman (240 Border Road): Speaking as President of Green Thumbs; proud to keep the park looking beautiful; support BFRTAC efforts

Tracy Hansen (77 Hill Street): Ideal solution would be to have BFRT not go through Junction Park; however after reading the history has accepted that BFRT needs to remain close to where it is; key is to separate BFRT users from park users and pedestrians; need to think about subconscious signifiers to assist with making sure people know where pedestrian areas are (tables, planters, etc) to make sure that it's visually clear where cyclists should/shouldn't go; also need to think about the BFRT path from the other side of the tracks (across from the park by the Nashoba Bakery direction) as navigation is unclear and confusing

Julie Rohwein (1404 Main Street): need to be mindful about how we are talking about separating pedestrians as they are also on the trail (not just cyclists use the trail); trail cannot be too hard to use

Cosette Dunn (131 Ministerial Drive): We don't want to discourage people from riding bikes in the area

Dorrie Kehoe (51 McArthur Road): If pavers are painted they become pervious; discussions about using part of MBTA land and would recommend that this further be investigated (or into parking area)

Jeff Collins (address not stated): Need to ensure the BFRT is kept as a smooth connection; rather than thinking about getting the BFRT out of the Park, should we remove the Park from the BFRT .. and investigate other areas in town where the purposes of Junction Park are met (between Twin Seafood and Teacakes, etc); acknowledges trade offs with all approaches and decisions, but urges examining the problem from all perspectives

Sallie Satterthwaite (297 Lawsbrook): A cyclist who is waiting for the traffic light isn't going to lose much more time or momentum by walking through the Park either

Ellen Quackenbush (206 Prairie Street): Clarifying the earlier recommendation about using the Club Car Cafe parking; making it simple and intuitive

Marilyn Lowitt (5 Westvale Drive): Echoed the possibility to look into use of parking spaces to the west of the garden; they present their own safety concerns

Jeanne Griffith (396 Thoreau Street): Agrees that signage is difficult and that markings on the ground are often easier for cyclists to follow; human nature might lead people to continue using Junction Park even if BFRT is rerouted

Pamela Dritt (13 Concord Greene): Using the park quite a bit and has never seen an accident or near accident in the park; fears are ahead of the reality; would be against the possibility to removing the ability for cyclists or skateboarders to go through the park; should only restrict when there's good reason to restrict