

Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: 1/8/2019

Recreation Center, 50 Audubon Drive, Acton MA, 7:00pm

Attendees: Ed Holcomb, Commissioner, Stephen Trimble, Commissioner; Joe Will, Commissioner; Barbara Willson, Commissioner; Katie Green, Board of Selectmen Chair and Recreation Liaison; Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director; Melissa Rier, Recreation Coordinator; Mary Lou Repucci, Recreation Office Manager. Also attending: Joanne Bisetta, resident; Kenneth Coleman, resident; Deb Klatte, resident; and Paul Malchodi, resident.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chair Stephen Trimble at 7:00 pm.
2. Citizen's Concerns: Nothing to report.
3. Consent Agenda: December 4, 2018 Minutes accepted, 4:0.
4. Action Item Review from December 4, 2018 Minutes: Nothing to report.
5. Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail ("FBFRT") Proposals (presented by Paul Malchodi)
 - a. NARA has ten parking spaces dedicated to rail trail users; accessible parking at other sites is now available and FBFRT would like to sponsor signage at NARA showing these other options. (Planning Department permission is not required.) Possible locations for the signs and preferred colors were discussed, probably outside the main lot and with blue lettering on white background. Parking lot attendants could help inform the public. Melissa Rier will work with FBFRT on placement.
 - b. Paul had keys cut for the kiosks and lubricated the locks; however, the locks are of an indoor type unsuited to weather exposure. FBFRT will work on getting locks with durable hasps. Cathy Fochtman gave ten new padlocks with keys to Paul.
 - c. Supervision and maintenance was discussed. Katie Green said the Town Manager will decide who is responsible. (Melissa handles permits for group use.)
ACTION ITEM: Katie will talk to John Mangiaratti about delegation of responsibility.
 - d. Literature holders will be placed at the kiosks.
 - e. Acton's rules and signage differ from other towns in three respects: excessive wordiness; inconsistency with other towns, and; an error in the closing time.
ACTION ITEM: Cathy will investigate how Acton's signage originated, why Acton chose its particular wording, and if rules specific to Acton need to be included.
 - f. Rail Trail closing times were discussed and how various towns differ. Chelmsford closes a half-hour after sunset while Acton closes a half-hour before. NARA closes at dusk. Safety for bicycle commuters to the trains is a concern. Paul proposed allowing BFRT to stay open until 9:00pm to facilitate commuters. Lighting was discussed and possible liability due to staying open later.
 - g. Katie clarified that Acton does not have resources to plow the Trail in winter.

- h. While Trail maintenance is not perceived as a Recreation Department responsibility, Paul reviewed an erosion issue to keep the Commissioners informed. He will contact Corey York about placing hay bales in areas where stone dust has become washed out.

6. NARA Park Map Signage

Cathy proposed signage at NARA to link current park amenities with the ten-year NARA Master Plan. She previously had produced an enhanced aerial map of NARA indicating existing major features and structures; she would now like to expand that idea by connecting the present day with future vision in the form of a large display to be erected near the Bathhouse. The signage would help garner support for the Sports Pavilion project by inspiring public participation in the form of "legacy" donations. Cathy plans to meet with marketing professional, Karen Herther, about launching this idea.

7. Reports:

a. Rail Trails: (See 5. above.)

b. NARA Sports Pavilion: The Land Use Department presented the status of Sports Pavilion project funding to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee at "Budget Saturday" on January 5. Phase I (accessible restroom facility) is \$100K short. Phase II (offices and NARA Summer Camp headquarters) is \$150K short.

c. T.J. O'Grady Skate Park: The project is on target with engineered plans to be put out to bid in June. A proposed rain garden in the grassy unpaved area was discussed as probably impractical due to too much foot traffic.

d. Playgrounds: Melissa recently inspected all of the playgrounds; many areas need new surfacing. Manpower for spreading mulch was discussed. Katie reported a two-family house to be built on Pearl Street that might require the Acton-Boxborough Farmer's Market to move to an alternate location this season or even long-term -- a time-sensitive question because farmers need to plan their crops now. If Pearl Street is unavailable, BOS wants to have a backup location. Several possible places were discussed but preference is for keeping the Market in West Acton. It was decided that the back field at Gardner Playground would provide the best solution, at least for one year. Accessibility was discussed along with concerns over wet conditions – sloppy for pedestrians and damaging to the field through soil compaction. Police presence on Market days was recommended for traffic control.

e. Community Preservation Committee: Steve reported on the status of requests. Melissa and Karen Sonner will present Recreation's request to CPC for the Jones Playground renovation project on Thursday, January 17.

8. New Business: An open house celebrating Cathy's career with Town of Acton is planned for Friday, January 25, 4-6pm, at the 50 Audubon Drive Recreation Center. Please join us in wishing Cathy well in her retirement!

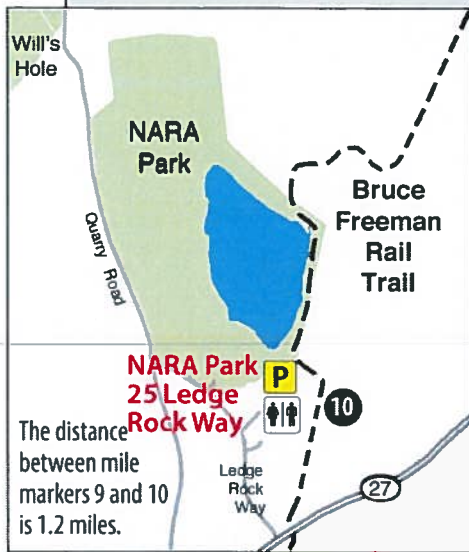
Documents Used: Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Map, Phases 1 and 2A, Dec 2018

Meeting adjourned 8:50pm

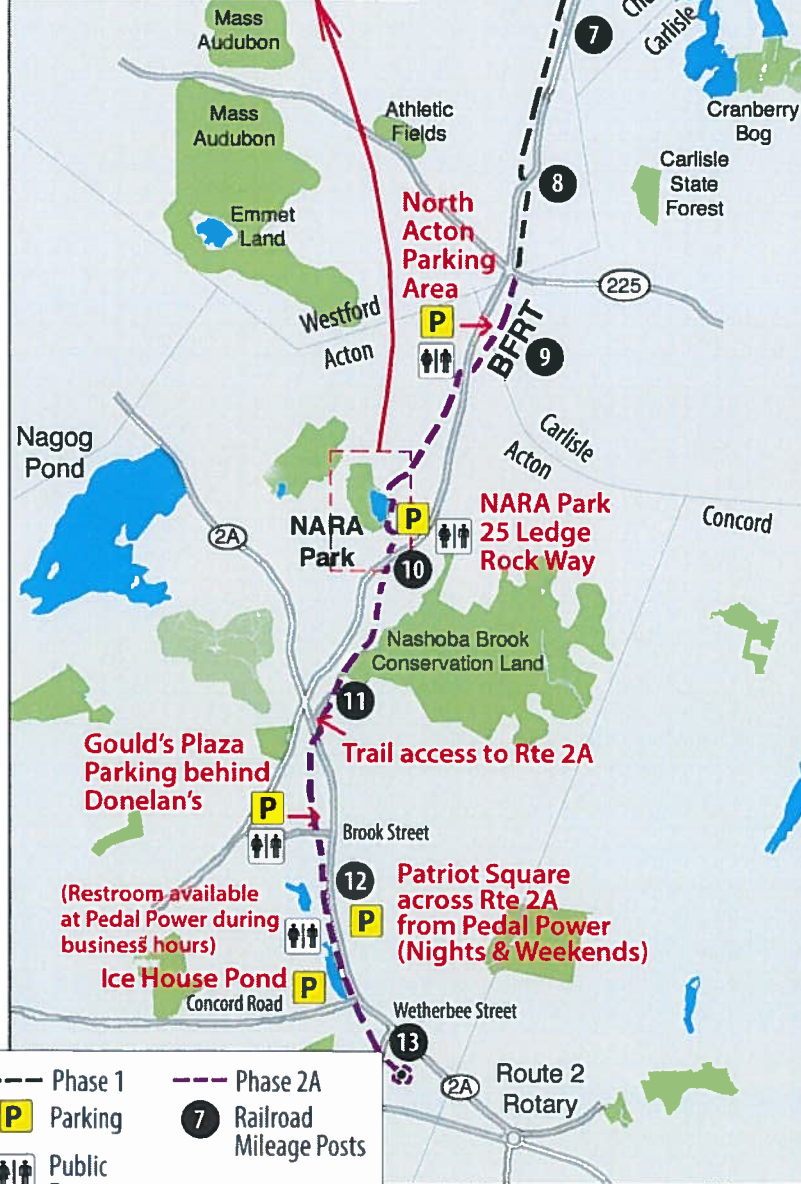
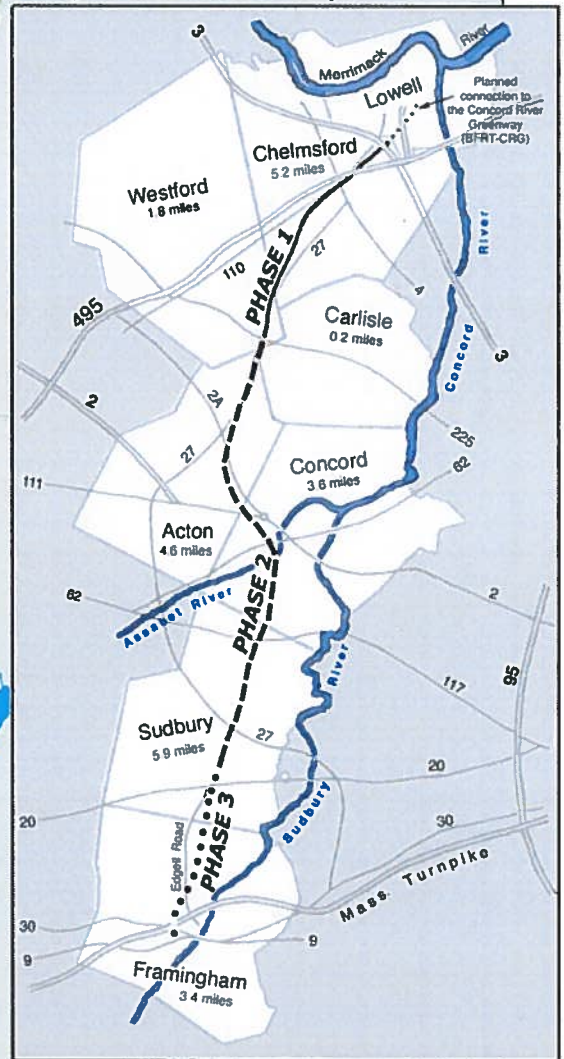
Minutes submitted by Mary Lou Repucci

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

Phases 1 and 2A



Map of Trail when completed



- Phase 1
- Phase 2A
- Parking
- Railroad Mileage Posts
- Public Restrooms

Restrooms at Chelmsford Center, Heart Pond, North Acton Parking Area, and Gould's Plaza are seasonal (Available April to November).