

NATICK COCHITUATE RAIL TRAIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
APPROVED MINUTES OF MEETING
June 20, 2023

Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
David Camacho	Member at Large (vice chair)	X	
Barbara Coco	Member at Large	X	
Robert Mueller	Member at Large	X	
Joshua Ostroff	Board of Selectmen (chair)	X	
Barbara Sanchez	Recreation and Parks Commission	X	
Michelle Languedoc	Member at Large (clerk)	X	
William Schoenig	Member at Large		X
Joel Barrera	Member at Large	X	
Michael Walz	Member at Large		X
Claire Rundelli	Open Space Planner	X	
Dennis Ravenelle	Member at Large	X	
Ron Chick	Friends of Framingham Trails	X	
George Eckert	Public	X	
Pia	Public	X	
John Brennen	Public	X	
Jen Dunn	Public	X	
Wendy Ware	Public	X	

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM, having been posted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law under the provisions allowing virtual public meetings.

1. Welcome, introductions, Announcements

2. Public comment

- No public comment

3. Natick Project Updates

- Mechanic Street lot: Paving is largely complete. Staff are meeting this week to finalize the work. There are about 50 total spaces with 6 accessible. There may be regulated parking limited to 4 hours, potentially using the Town’s parking app. Striping and landscaping to come. Joel asked about signage to direct people to this lot, and Barbara asked about signage to direct people to Mechanic St as opposed to using parking at Navy Yard. Staff will follow up. Dennis asked about whether there would be a charge to park using the app – Josh said that as envisioned, it would be just to cover the expense of the app but that is TBD.
- Natick Center Connection (MassDOT project 610691). The Town has fully funded design. We are hoping for comment resolution late June; a MassDOT Design Public Hearing likely early fall but this is all tentative. The project is now on the TIP for construction in 2028.
- Lake Cochituate Path (MassDOT project 610680). This path will connect the CRT to Hartford and Speen. A MassDOT Public Hearing is likely in the fall. Currently on the TIP for 2025. An abutter meeting is likely in the coming months.

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- 9/27 Interchange (MassDOT project 605313). Design will include a shared use path from the CRT to MathWorks on Route 9 on the south side of Route 9, and improved/safer access from Lakeshore Road to the CRT on the north side of Route 9. Design/Build contract will be advertised in March 2024; work not likely until 2025, then 3-4 years.
- Route 9 bridge repairs. Concrete grinding is likely needed to level out the bridge deck that is currently uneven. Waiting for an update on timing.
- Fisher Street crossing. Waiting for confirmation of the status of a pedestrian-activated signal.
- Amenities. Bike Repair stations are installed; benches and sun shelters are pending. Kiosks with information are coming. Funded by the CRT Revolving Fund which is supported by sponsorships, and a reimbursement grant is helping fund the bike repair stations.

4. Framingham updates

Ron Chick provided several updates.

- An announcement for acquisition of the CSX ROW for the Bruce Freeman is imminent. The City is exploring ideas to connect the CRT to the Bruce Freeman. There are 7 years left on the Stop and Shop agreement which could open up space for recreational use. This relates to the land between School Street and the Sudbury River that formerly included the Saxonville Branch ROW.
- Framingham CRT – they are working on wayfinding signing to connect to other venues in Framingham. A new ADA picnic table being installed. 4 bike racks have been installed and now 2 more will be installed at Danforth bridge for people to be able to hike the Carol Getchell Trail.
- Carol Getchell Trail – ADA accessibility projects being done including 2 platforms and widening the northern end of the trail.
- MetroWest GreenWay Coalition/Upper Charles Trail formed last year – several towns working together to bring Upper Charles Trail close to Framingham center. This is a high priority for MassTrails.
- Friends of Framingham Trails – new organization started in March to support trails.
- Chris Walsh trail design nearly complete which also brings people closer to the Bruce Freeman.

5. Committee discussion and recommendations

- Parking regulations at Chrysler Road and Mechanic Street lot. ConCom is agreeable to 4 hour parking at Mechanic Street. The Committee will be asked to vote a recommendation to regulate parking on Chrysler Road, as this parking is frequently used by Avalon residents and has often been unavailable to CRT users. The Town may consider an app to regulate parking.

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- A motion to recommend that the Town implement parking regulations on Chrysler Road at the CRT to limit parking to 4 hours during daylight hours was made by Joel and seconded by Barb and was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

- Fencing at Mechanic Street Lot. The Committee has previously voted to recommend fencing at the lot.
- Josh brought up opportunity to use space just before the beginning of the trail near Whitney Field that is currently used for material storage for the MBTA Station project. SOAR had identified this as a potential area to construct a contemplative garden or something else. Clair said she would like to survey the area prior to surfacing a concept. Barb brought up opportunity for natural space to balance the hardscaping surrounding it.

6. Updates

- Trail usage data – getting over 1,000 people on a nice day. Josh will present to the Select board the data.
- Events – Josh mentioned upcoming 9/8 Natick Days and 10/14 Golden Spike conference.
- Landscaping and invasives management. Claire has not heard back from Art yet and will share with Josh to send to committee when she has an update.
- 2023 public art exhibit/Studios Without Walls. Natick will host 13 artists in September-October. FONT is a major funder of the initiative. More details to come.
- Friends of Natick Trails.
 - Sponsorships - ongoing
 - Maintenance shed - donated to the town including watering tank. Barb thanked George Eckert for his help setting up the tank.
 - Roots and Blooms tree and shrub planting – Barb spoke to the initiative for beautification of the rail trail. Partnered with Russell's for people to sponsor plantings from a menu of choices. One order so far and hoping to get more.
- All Aboard accessibility initiative. Town is researching the sustainability of this program and learn from other communities who have done it. Looking to implement early 2024.

7. Meeting Minutes for 2/28/23

- On a motion by Robert and seconded by Dave the 2/28/23 minutes were unanimously approved by roll call vote

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM on a motion by Dennis seconded by Barb and voted unanimously by roll call.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Languedoc, Clerk