

BFRT Coordinating Committee Meeting No. 3 – Notes/Action Items

Meeting Date: **May 7, 2008**
Location: MassHighway District 4 Office
Chair: Lawrence Cash

Attendance: Sign-In-Sheet attached

- The meeting began with L. Cash providing introductions and a summary of the previous meeting. He also explained the makeup of the committee members and that meeting observers are welcome. A comment was made on the 25% design of the Acton Section, the Concord Rotary Section, and Concord's section ready for submittal to the Project Review Committee.

Each Town was given the opportunity to provide updates/status:

- **Chelmsford – Phase 1 – In Construction** - A Chelmsford Board of Selectmen member reported that they are please with the on-going construction for Phase 1 of the BFRT. Construction has begun and some of the rail road ties have been removed. At Chelmsford town meeting the town approved the layout of the trail which allows the State to still own the property, but to have the towns provide local enforcement. There was also concern mentioned about project uniformity, particularly with grade crossings. They would like to see further progress with project uniformity involving the other phases.
- **Acton/Westford/Carlisle (Phase 2A)** – The Acton Planning Director, Roland Bartl, provided updates for Phase 2A. He said the 25% design submission was made to MassHighway by GPI and the plans have already been distributed for review. A Public Hearing will be scheduled by MassHighway after all the 25% review comments have been received. He also stated the grant application has been submitted to EOT seeking design funds for the final design. He also stated an inter-town agreement is being arranged between Acton, Carlisle, and Westford, in which the Town of Acton would take the lead role.

Larry mentioned to Roland that a 40 day lead time is needed for the arrangement of the 25% Design Public Hearing. A stenographer will be in attendance at the Hearing to take notes.

A discussion was held regarding the lease of the rail property from EOT to Acton. It was mentioned that the lease also needs to go through DCAM (Division of Capital Asset Management) for approval. Tim Doherty is Director of Rails at EOT.

- **Concord Rotary (Phase 2B)** - A summary was read regarding some updates on the Rotary. The EA/EIR and 25% design is anticipated to be complete by mid 2010. A 100% design 2012. A rough estimate for construction is in 2013 -2014. Earth Tech, the MHD designer, will be providing periodic updates on their progress and on the connection of the rail trail.

- **Concord (Phase 2C)** – Marcia Rasmussen provided updates on the Concord Town Meetings that were held. She summarized four BFRT warrant articles. The trail was voted to be asphalt trail for the entire length and also to replace the Powdermill Road culvert. A \$50,000 amount for additional study, research and design was mentioned. She asked for clarification on the PNF and PIF submissions to the MassHighway Project Review Committee (PRC). The town is looking to have their phase reviewed by the PRC for the upcoming meeting in June.

The town was also encouraged by MHD and MAPC to submit a grant application with the Town of Acton's phase for the final design using the Statewide Enhancement Program Funds. The towns should coordinate and review their applications before submitting.

- **Sudbury** – William Place of Sudbury DPW provided an update from the Sudbury Phase. A Purchase of the CSX land was made. A four season environmental study is anticipated to be complete in November 2008. A baseline survey is anticipated to be complete this summer. He estimated that Sudbury could have a 25% design complete near November of 2009.

There was also discussion that MBTA had agreed to transfer land over to DCR at a different location. The MBTA is working on an agreement with DCR that would allow creation of a trail from Berlin to Waltham. This is all separate from the BFRT project.

- **Framingham – Phase 3:** John Stasick from Framingham gave a brief summary. The Board of Selectmen now appears to be willing to support the project and that abutters no longer appear to be opposed. However, they do continue to voice their reservations and concerns about the project. They want to conduct an appraisal of the CSX rail property. Once the appraisal is complete, Framingham could then enter into negotiations with CSX, possibly in the fall, 2008. He tried to express some benefits of negotiating the CSX property with EOT. Also he said Framingham has taken a ½ acre parcel of land for tax title near the CSX/Route 9 intersection which could possibly be used for parking and access to the trail.

Attachments:

Sign-In-Sheet
Phase 2B – Rotary Design Briefing (May 2008)



BFRT Committee Attendance Sheet

DATE: May 7, 2008 **TIME:** 10:00 AM **LOCATION:** Arlington, MA (D4)

SUBJECT: Chelmsford, Acton, Carlisle, Westford, Concord, Sudbury, Framingham -
Bruce Freeman Rail Trail - Phase 1 - Construction
Phases - 2A, 2B, 2C & 3 - Design

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Issue/Project Briefing

Concord – Concord Rotary/Routes 2/2A/119
May 2008

Budget	Construction Cost - \$15- \$20 Million (2003 Dollars)
Status	An Environmental Notification Form (ENF) has been filed for this project. The preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be required. MassHighway has awarded a consultant contract for the preparation of a Draft and Final EA/EIR and 25% Design.
Schedule	EIR/EA & 25% preliminary design by mid 2010 100% design by end 2012 Construction could start 2012 and completed 2014 Scheduled AD Date -----

Issue

- The transfer of the Corrections land to the Town needs to be understood and the limits defined for the consultant as soon as possible.
- The Design parameters for the wildlife crossings at the Assabet River and the Nashoba Brook need to be defined with meetings, and may create challenges for the design efforts.

DESCRIPTION

The proposed project would replace the existing Concord Rotary with a highway interchange and add an auxiliary westbound lane on Route 2 for one-half mile approaching the proposed interchange. A bridge over Route 2 will connect relocated Commonwealth Avenue (west of the MCI Concord employee parking lot) to the intersection of Route 2A/119. The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is a public bike/hike trail that will pass west of the Route 2 Concord Rotary and will be addressed in the environmental study and the preliminary design. **The purpose of the project is to reduce congestion and improve safety.**

BACKGROUND

This rotary is one of the highest accident locations in the state and experiences poor levels of service due to high traffic volumes. The rotary operates inefficiently for several reasons. An unbalanced flow often exists within the rotary because a disproportionate number of vehicles enter from Route 2 (50,000 of the 90,000 vehicles daily) than from the other three legs and the small radius of the rotary results in short weaving distances between legs that cause constant driver conflicts and confusion. The community through the Route 2 Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC) had requested that MassHighway undertake a study to evaluate alternatives for improving operations and safety. The study, completed in 2002, narrowed the alternatives down to three for further consideration.

STATUS

Accomplishments – Last Three Months

- A Notice of Project Change was filed with MEPA on 3/18/2008. NPC comment period extended to 5/13/08 at the request of Concord Board of Selectmen.

- Met with CTPS on 3/28/08 to discuss traffic analysis. CTPS will do the modeling
- Traffic counts and data collection began week of March 31st 2008.
- Met with Regina Villa on 4/3/08 on public participation – stakeholder meeting scheduled
- Opened up dialogue/meetings with key abutters – Prison, State Police
- Data collection and protocols for air and noise issues underway
- Earth Tech and MHD met to discuss scheduling, location and strategy for meetings
- Data collection on soil conditions to develop a boring program started

Accomplishments – Expected in the Next Three Months

- Review the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) plans that abut our project
- Begin to look at options for crossing Route 2 with the BFRT
- Interagency Early Environmental Coordination meeting schedule 5/14/2008
- Interdepartmental kick off meeting scheduled 5/21/08
- 1st public open house meeting scheduled week of June 1st 2008

Contacts

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