

# Minutes of the Bedford Bicycle Advisory Committee Meeting

## Wednesday, September 14, 2022

### **BBAC Members present:**

Mark Bailey                      Samantha Baron      Craig Jackson  
Peter Weichman

### **BBAC Members absent:**

Richard Baughman      Garth McCavana

This is an online/virtual meeting, recorded through Zoom. A quorum was present and the meeting came to order at 7:35 pm, Mark Bailey presiding. Also present were Shawn Hannegan (Select Board) and approximately seven public participants including Brian O'Donnell and Ralph Hammond (Previous BAC members).

A moment of silence was observed for Josephine Caporizzo, age 99, who was struck and killed by a vehicle on Shawsheen Road, September 12.

*Public Comments:* Public comments were invited. None were forthcoming. **A motion was made to close the public comment period. The motion was seconded and subsequently passed unanimously.**

*Minutes approval:* **A motion was made to accept the August 22 BAC meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and subsequently passed unanimously.**

*Minuteman extension next steps:* The Town website devoted to the Minuteman extension issue (<https://www.bedfordma.gov/minuteman-extension>) has been updated—it is essentially a living document. As a public exhibit, the trees to be taken out as part of the work (“grubbing line”) have been marked with ribbons along a 60 foot stretch of the route near Lavender Lane. There was a route abutters (those impacted by the proposed land takings) forum on September 13, including a long question and answer period. There are two public forums to come, on September 29 at 7 pm, and October 17 and 5 pm, both at Town Hall.

Shawn Hannegan provided a detailed update. The special Town Meeting, starting at 7 pm on November 14, will have seven articles to be voted on, of which only the Minuteman extension one is expected to offer significant debate. After extensive subsequent meetings with the public, Shawn’s impression is that the article’s failure at the spring Town Meeting was partially a response to people’s strong reactions to not being heard. The Town is now much better engaged. The 100% design cannot be changed at this point.

The Bedford Children’s Center lies adjacent to the intersection of the Minuteman extension and Route 62, and will be strongly impacted by the construction. Daisy Girifalco, President of the Center, is being actively engaged with by the Town and provided full details of the project and its possible impacts on her business, both temporary and longer term.

It is Shawn’s opinion that if the land taking warrant is voted down again, then that is the end of this project as far as State of Massachusetts funding is concerned. Among other things, we would lose the several \$M support for the Railroad Avenue upgrades. It would also leave in place significant issues related to water, sewer, etc., lines along the current railroad bed crossing private properties. Abutters will likely also see property tax changes now that an accurate survey has been performed.

The question of fairness of the revote was brought up. Shawn’s response was that this is something that Town governments do frequently for a variety of reasons. The previous time this occurred in Bedford, the revote turned very strongly in favor. For this particular issue, the funding for the land takings did pass, but the approval to spend the money failed by a small margin. The Select Board felt that the previous warrant

was poorly stated, not properly presented to the public, thereby leading to much confusion. For this and other reasons, the Board felt that a revote was appropriate. The agenda for the September 29 will include a 30 minute presentation followed by a moderated open question period.

*Bedford Day:* This year's Bedford Day will take place 10 am–2 pm on Saturday, September 18. It is proposed that BAC and TAC will share an (expanded) booth, neighboring the bike corral run by the Minuteman Friends group, featuring detailed information about the Minuteman extension project. The Friends of the Reformatory Branch group, opposing the extension project, will also have a booth, but not nearby.

**A motion was made** to approve the BAC–TAC shared booth. **The motion was seconded and subsequently passed unanimously.**

*Safe Routes to School:* Lucy Friedman–Hall and Judy Crocker joined the meeting for a SRTS discussion. There will be “walk, bike, roll” event up the narrow gauge trail to Lane School on October 12 (avoiding Yom Kippur, October 5) Last year there was funding for a “balloon arch” accompanying the ride. Judy displayed the Student Route Map with various reasonably safe routes colored in.

*BAC Annual Report:* Mark will prepare and send the report around for comments.

*New Business:* The Arbor Resource Committee (BARC) will be creating a new Tree Master Plan, strengthening the current policy. **A motion was made** for Mark to send a BAC-sponsored letter to the Select Board supporting the BARC effort. **The motion was seconded and subsequently passed unanimously.**

There was some discussion of BAC officially requesting that DPW place signs at the Narrow Gauge trail street crossings encouraging bikers to dismount and walk across the street. A motion will be needed, but it was decided to discuss the issue in more detail at the next meeting. Discussion of a motion to return to in-person BAC meetings will also be deferred to the next meeting.

Brian O'Donnell put up his hand in order to comment on some Minuteman Bikeway history. In 1987 there was a written agreement between Bedford and the State supporting development of the rail trail.

At 9:05 pm **a motion was made** to adjourn the meeting. **The motion was seconded and subsequently passed unanimously.** The next meeting will be October 12, also to avoid Yom Kippur.

—*Minutes submitted by Secretary/Clerk Peter Weichman*