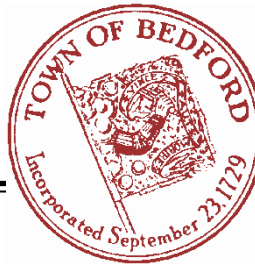


TOWN OF BEDFORD DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



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Date: October 14, 2022

To: Heidi Porter, Director Health & Human Services

From: David Manugian PE, DPW Director

Re: Minuteman Bikeway Extension Project

The Minuteman Bikeway Extension Project includes numerous safety, accessibility, and infrastructure improvements along the Project corridor, and intersects in many ways with the Health & Human Services Department's active transportation initiatives such as Safe Routes to School and Healthy Bedford. The Town of Bedford has spent many years and local funds leading this initiative to final design, and now looks to acquire the necessary property rights for construction at Special Town Meeting. Indeed, sections of the Reformatory Branch Trail long believed to be Town-owned are in fact privately held as discovered during the extensive title review process required to use the \$11 million in state/federal Transportation Improvement Program construction funds. Additional project information can be found on the Town website: <https://www.bedfordma.gov/minuteman-extension>.

Recently, there have been questions raised regarding the construction impacts to the Bedford Children's Center (BCC) daycare located at 402 Concord Road. The attached map provides an aerial overview of the proposed work in relation to the property. Specifically, at this location the Project will reestablish the Route 62 underpass to facilitate a safe trail crossings of a high speed, high volume roadway; reconstruct the adjoining trailhead parking lot with new amenities and landscaping; and relocate underground utilities. While overall work is expected to take two construction seasons, project engineers anticipate two to four months of active effort to install the new underpass and related work. Among other things, this work requires purchasing a temporary easement along the Route 62 frontage from the owner of 402 Concord Road (note the BCC owner leases the property), to shift traffic to one side and then the other to facilitate construction. This will result in the temporary loss of 4 parking spaces (two on the property and two in the public right of way), and periodic closure of the second driveway opening closest to the underpass.

As with any construction project, there will be disruption to the surrounding area. Town staff and Select Board members have met with the BCC owner to hear concerns and discuss the impacts. Additionally, the Town held a virtual meeting with BCC families to answer questions. As stated at these meetings, the Town is committed to minimizing the disruption as much as possible given the

unique needs of the property and the community it serves. For reference, over the past 10 years, all four Bedford public schools have seen renovations and /or additions. During these construction projects, no students were relocated out of the school, and not a single trailer was used for classrooms or for any education purpose. All students stayed in the same school as the addition/renovation took place, and the project management staff worked with each school to minimize impacts.

Noise: Temporary noise abatement panels will be installed around the construction limits in the vicinity of the BCC to reduce noise decibels during construction. A noise meter can be placed near the site that would alert MassDOT and/or the Town if noise levels are above a certain threshold.

Outdoor Space: The project work area will not directly impact BCC's outdoor play spaces, including the parking lot areas used for recreation. The construction contract will require noise abatement measures and dusts control treatments to be provided while working in the vicinity of the BCC. Existing trees will remain in a 15-20ft buffer around the playground to provide shade, and additional plantings are proposed.

Privacy: The trees that are directly adjacent to the playground areas will not be impacted by the project. As shown on the plans, there is approximately 15ft – 20ft of existing trees/woodland that will remain as a buffer between the proposed limits of vegetative clearing and the fenced in playground areas. Additionally, new trees are shown on the plans to be planted along the slope limits that are impacted by the project. Upon completion of the project, the DPW will work with abutters to provide additional plantings within the cleared areas as requested. It is common to provide amenities such as picnic tables at major trail heads and recreational areas. It is worth noting that the topography of the area elevates the BCC property well above the trail and picnic table located 40' away from the playground fencing.

Dust: Construction standards dictate that the contractor will be required to apply dust suppressant treatments to minimize dust levels. For paved surfaces, dry power brooming will not be permitted. Instead, the contractor will be required to use vacuuming, wet sweeping, regenerative air sweeping, or wet power broom sweeping. Only wet cutting of concrete block, concrete and asphalt will be permitted. The contract can also include provisions for dust control that states the work may be shut down when dust levels are not controlled properly.

Parking: As mentioned above, it is estimated that four existing parking spaces, half of which are currently located within the Town right of way, will be temporarily unavailable during construction. The Town can work with the BCC owner to reconfigure the parking lot layout and/or drop-off circulation to help maintain normal business operations. During construction, police details will be on site at all times to direct traffic.

In conclusion, the Town has proposed the Minuteman Bikeway Extension Project due to the overall public benefit it anticipates, including promoting the Health and Human Services Department's active transportation initiatives. As it has with other transportation projects as well as its four school projects, it will work closely with affected parties such as BCC during the construction phase to minimize any temporary impacts.