

May 1, 2025

To: Cambridge Planning Board

From: Richard Freierman, Chair, on behalf of the Cambridge Bicycle Committee

Re: Comments on Jerry's Pond Improvements

We had the opportunity to view a presentation about the Jerry's Pond Project at a joint meeting of the Transportation Committees. This project will bring some great improvements to a long-neglected area, and we look forward to seeing it completed.

We would like to call your attention to a few issues with the proposed plans that we believe can positively impact the project. These notes are based on the document presented to the Joint Meeting of the Transportation Committees on 4/16/2025.

1. **Parking Lot Conflicts:** The bikeway between Jerry's Deck and the baseball diamond ends at the north end of the "lollipop" parking lot. This creates a situation where bikes will compete with cars entering and exiting parking spaces. Alternately, bicyclists will opt to shift onto the pedestrian pathway, creating pedestrian/bicycle conflicts. We suggest widening the paved walkway on the east side of the parking lot to create a true multi-use path.
2. **Rindge Avenue Sidewalk:** While the proposed 10' width is an improvement from original designs, it is still narrow for both bikes and pedestrians, particularly with the north edge constrained by fencing. Widening it would reduce conflicts, and would encourage bicycle through traffic to use the path rather than either staying on the street or using the boardwalk pathway. The City standard for shared use paths is specified on pages 4-9 of the 2020 Bicycle Plan: *"Cambridge's standard is 14 feet wide plus 2-3 foot buffers (narrower widths may be considered only where space constraints exist and may not be narrower than 10 feet plus buffers). Buffers must be level and safely traversable by people bicycling with no vertical obstructions."*
3. **Bike Rack Quantity and Design:** As an important family destination this area is likely to attract a variety of bikes. The bike parking areas should be designed to accommodate the increasingly common longer bikes—those with child carriers incorporated into extended frames or front cargo boxes. Also, we can anticipate significant bike volumes, and the proposed count of bike racks doesn't seem likely to meet those needs. More racks should be added.
4. **Pathways adjacent to Fresh Pond Parkway:** A 6' wide meandering pedestrian path is proposed adjacent to the existing 5' sidewalk. The addition of the pedestrian path is positive, but it will not do enough to mitigate conflicts between bikes and pedestrians making their way from Rindge Avenue to the MBTA head-house and beyond to the Minuteman Bikeway. In addition, the sidewalk is in poor condition, and according to the presenters, is not planned for repaving as part of this project. We also note that the flexible porous paving specified for the new 6' path could be problematic as it deteriorates over time.

We recommend further review with DCR and others to, at a minimum, repave the existing 5' sidewalk. In addition, widening either pathway and specifying packed gravel for the new path will improve options for all users.

5. Dead-end Pathway at Fresh Pond Parkway: The new 12' wide multi-use path in the southwest corner of the project ends at Fresh Pond Parkway across from Cambridgepark Drive. Although outside the scope of this project, the need for a signalized crosswalk at this intersection is important. We urge the Planning Board to draw attention to this and include it in further review with DCR, MassDOT, and the City of Cambridge.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rich Freierman".

Richard Freierman, Chair

On behalf of the Cambridge Bicycle Committee