

**Bedford Depot Park Advisory Committee**  
**FY 2009 Annual Report**

Depot Park is a complex of historic buildings, public amenities and a vintage railroad car at the Minuteman Bikeway terminus on South Road. The project that began in 1995 was largely funded by the Federal and state governments' Transportation Enhancement Program. Approximately \$2.5 million in Federal and state funding was allocated towards property acquisition, site improvements, building renovations, and reconstruction of the intersection.

The Selectmen established the Depot Park Advisory Committee to seek funding for the project, oversee its completion, provide general oversight of the site, develop financial reports, and recommend policies for use of the Revolving Fund and the rental and usage of the buildings. Current appointed members of the committee are Donald Corey, Joseph Piantedosi (chair) and James Shea (clerk). Ex-officio members are Selectman liaison Angelo Colao, Facilities Director Richard Jones, Town Manager Richard Reed, and DPW Director Richard Warrington. Twelve meetings were held during the past year.

**Revolving Account**

Depot Park's revenues and operating expenses are transacted through a revolving account that is managed by the Facilities Director with oversight by the Committee. The account's balance as of June 30, 2009, was \$43,862. For FY 2009, operating expenses totaled \$17,282 and revenues were \$3,875. The expenses included a one-time charge of \$4,722 for appliances for the renovated Freight House.

**Primary Objectives**

The Committee focussed on five main activities during the past year:

1. Completion of the Freight House renovation project;
2. Completion of the railroad car renovation project;
3. Replacement of the Depot building's roof;
4. Organization of a "ribbon cutting" ceremony at Depot Park;
5. Draft an RFP to solicit tenants for office units in the Depot building.

## **Freight House Renovations**

The Freight House at 120 South Road was built in 1877. Originally, it was the Engine House for the two-foot-gauge Billerica & Bedford Railroad. The building was acquired by the Town in 1999 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In June, the state's contractor, K & S Builders, completed an extensive renovation of the Freight House. This work included installation of new siding, a cedar roof, and electrical and HVAC systems, and construction of public restrooms and a platform between the building and adjacent railroad car. The \$389,409 project was funded by the Federal and state governments' Transportation Enhancement Program.

Special Town Meeting voted to transfer \$10,000 from the railroad car renovation project to help pay for interior fit-out of the Freight House. In February, the Selectmen supplemented this project's funding with a transfer of up to \$16,240 from the Historic Properties Stabilization Fund. The work was performed by the Facilities Department in May and June, and encompassed installation of plumbing and electrical services, flooring, cabinets and countertops.

A microwave oven, dishwasher, coffee brewer and refrigerator were purchased using money from the Depot Park Revolving Fund. This equipment is used to support the sale of snacks to bikeway users and for railroad car rentals.

In early June, the Selectmen let stand an existing nonexclusive license with Friends of Bedford Depot Park, Inc, to utilize the Freight House to sell snacks and dispense information to bikeway users. Proceeds from the sale of food items are conveyed to the Depot Park Revolving Fund to support the complex.

## **Railroad Car Renovations**

Budd Rail Diesel Car 6211 was built in 1955 and operated in passenger service throughout the Boston & Maine Railroad, including on the Bedford Branch. The Friends of Bedford Depot Park acquired the vintage railway car from the MBTA in 1998 and donated it to the Town to be an historical display at Depot Park.

A Community Preservation Program appropriation of \$125,000 paid for renovation of the car. Work was performed by contractors, volunteers and Town staff under the direction of the

Department of Public Works and consultant Daniel O'Brien. Local railroad history documents and artifacts were provided by the Friends for exhibit inside the car.

Number 6211 is normally open for public visitations on occasions when the Freight House is open, usually on weekends. Also, the car is available for rentals through Town Center (781-275-4880).

### **Depot Roof Replacement**

Twelve proposals were received in response to an RFP for replacement of the dilapidated roof on the Depot building. In January, WPI Contracting, Inc., was selected to perform the work at a price of \$111,000. The project was substantially finished by late June.

### **Depot Park Ribbon Cutting**

On June 15, the Committee hosted a "ribbon cutting" ceremony at Depot Park to mark the completion of the Freight House and railroad car renovations. Remarks were made by chairman Joseph Piantedosi, clerk Jim Shea, selectmen Angelo Coloa, Senator Susan Fargo, Massachusetts Highway Department commissioner Luisa Paiewonsky, and Town Manager Richard Reed. Afterward, the public toured the building and Number 6211.

### **Depot Rental RFP**

Currently, Babe Ruth Baseball is a tenant of one unit at the Depot building; and three rooms are unoccupied. In June, the Committee began work on an RFP to solicit proposals for rental of Depot units. This RFP is to be advertised in early fall 2009. Rental of the building is a high priority of the Committee in its effort to bolster Depot Park revenues.

Looking ahead, the Committee intends to place further emphasis on monitoring Depot Park's expenses, identifying ways to enhance revenues, and making the complex an attractive place for Bedford.

Respectfully submitted by,

Joseph R. Piantedosi  
Chairman