



FRIENDS OF THE BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL

Construction Begins on Phase 2C in Concord

Come celebrate the many years of engineering, design and waiting in Concord at the groundbreaking ceremony this spring for Phase 2C. Information about the groundbreaking will be available at <http://bit.ly/Phase2c-gb>. Local and state officials will join MassDOT and the Friends to kick off this two-year construction project. Light refreshments (think cake!) will be served.



The contractor expects to replace this old culvert under Powder Mill Road with a new, larger, culvert this summer.

The contractor started at Commonwealth Ave. to clear the right of way and install erosion controls and will move southerly. The contractor also expects to replace the existing culvert at Powder Mill Road this summer during July and August (while school is not in session). The new culvert will be higher and wider, better for trail users. The road will be closed during construction and is expected to be re-opened before the start of school in September.

MassDOT District 4 Engineers will be providing construction oversight of this project and will coordinate with the Town as needed.

This 2.8-mile section of the trail runs from Commonwealth Avenue to Powder Mill Road.

MassDOT awarded the \$6.7 million contract for Phase 2C to D.W. White Construction earlier this year.



The trail is already being cleared on Phase 2C in Concord in preparation for upcoming rail trail construction.

Alan Cameron 1940-2017

The Friends have lost not only a dedicated member of the Friends' Board but also a good friend to all of us. Alan was member of the FBFRT Board representing Carlisle since the creation of the Friends group.



Alan with his grandson at Carlisle Old Home Day.

He represented Carlisle's "866 feet" of the BFRT with enthusiasm and was The Essential Person for this volunteer role based on his experience in many areas of Carlisle town government and knowing so many citizens in the Town. We, along with Alan, were so proud of his being named Carlisle's 2017 Most Honored Citizen Award in February of this year. As was said at that time, "Alan was a true icon of Carlisle." We will miss Alan very much.



Phase 2A Bridge being restored. Original riveted steel beams with native cut granite piers and new concrete top shade Nashoba Brook (see Phase 2A, next page).

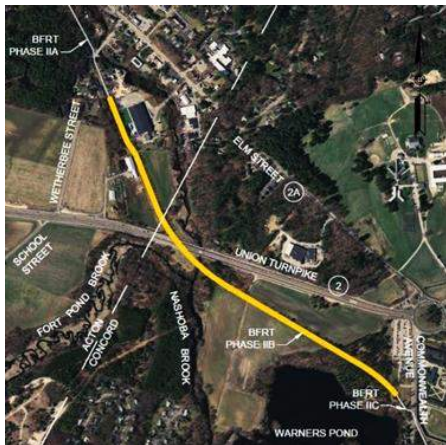
Phase 2B Design Progresses

Work on the next design phase of the BFRT Phase 2B is expected to begin this spring, once a contract has been awarded to the selected consultant. Phase 2B connects the trail between Acton (Phase 2A) and Concord (Phase 2C) over Rte. 2. This section of the trail begins at the intersection of Wetherbee Street and Great Road in Acton and continues across Rte. 2 to Commonwealth Avenue in Concord. The total project length is approximately 1.04 miles. The project includes replacing a bridge over Nashoba Brook, building a new bridge over Rte. 2, and creating a new culvert for a wildlife crossing under Rte. 2.



MassDOT rendering of proposed 300 foot bridge over Rte. 2

Phase 2B is scheduled for construction in federal fiscal year 2019, which means that the final design plans must be completed by June 30, 2018, for advertisement and bid in the fall of 2018. Concord's Director of Planning and Land Management Marcia Rasmussen worked tirelessly last winter to make sure the project design would be ready to move forward.



MassDOT map showing Phase 2B.

The towns of Concord and Acton had been seeking an additional \$350,000 from the State to pay for a potential shortfall in design funds (MassDOT paid for the 25% design rather than the towns). In late 2016, the Friends conducted a fund-raising campaign to raise \$50,000 to help "Bridge the Gap" in design funds. However, because the State is assisting with the design funding, the monies raised by the Friends will be redirected to help pay for the design of a ramp off of the rail trail in Concord. This ramp, located near Nashoba Brook, is expected to provide access to hiking trails and running paths in Concord and the School Street athletic/playing fields in Acton.

Phase 2A Construction Update

After two construction seasons and a winter's hibernation, construction resumed this spring on the 4.9-mile extension of the trail through Westford, Carlisle and Acton. SPS New England Construction Site Manager Brad Lubenau discussed recent progress and upcoming plans. Brad noted that he has already conducted several project walk-through site reviews with Acton Conservation personnel, resulting in some changes to erosion control barriers.



Re-bar in place on the curved bridge over Great Road (Rte. 2A).

Last fall SPS finished the installation of the curved girders on the Great Road (Rte. 2A) bridge over the trail, likely the largest curve to be seen in this region. These curves are designed to reduce the bridge span across the roadway, while working within the footprint of the Right of Way. The abutments and piers and the retaining walls for the lead-up ramps were also completed. In addition, a wildlife corridor was installed on the northeast side of Great Road.

New decks were installed on all six of the historic bridges crossing Nashoba Brook. First, the historic native-cut granite piers were extensively cleaned. Then the riveted iron beams were cleaned and repainted. Then a third beam was fabricated and installed on each bridge. Finally the deck forms were put in, and concrete was poured.



Pouring concrete for the new bridge over Great Road (Rte. 2A)

Work will resume this year with deck work on the Great Road bridge, along with railing installation on all the bridges. The retaining walls on the bridge ramps will be stained as well. Final grading will be done over the entire project and paving will be scheduled. After paving, railings and fencing will be installed.

Late this fall, after mechanical construction winds down, hundreds of plantings will be placed along the length of the project. In addition, some amenity installations are scheduled as part of the initial design plans. Construction will continue into late fall, with most planting done in October and November with the final elements to be completed at the start of spring 2018.

Possible Extension in Lowell

Currently the northern end of the BFRT is at the tunnel under Rte. 3 at the edge of the Cross Point parking lot in Lowell. For several years, the Friends have had an interest in extending the bike trail further into Lowell to eventually connect with the Concord River Greenway.

The railroad ROW beyond Cross Point extends beyond Industrial Avenue and goes under the Lowell Connector. A section of this corridor was purchased by the Gervais Volkswagen dealership on Industrial Avenue in order to meet Volkswagen stocking requirements. The Friends are monitoring the expansion plans of Gervais VW and hope to be able to secure an easement for future rail trail extension along the former rail bed. Gervais will be appearing before the Lowell Conservation Commission and the Lowell Planning Board in order to get their expansion plans approved. The engineering firm of Whitman & Bingham will be working with the bike trail supporters with the hope of incorporating into the plans an easement for a future BFRT link into Lowell. Gervais will appear before the Conservation Commission on May 24th to submit firm plans.

The supportive presence of bike trail enthusiasts will be important at these meetings and is greatly encouraged. It can make a huge difference in how various boards respond to proposals. For information on these meetings, contact Sharon Galpin: sgalpin99@gmail.com.

Carol Cleven Park Proposed for Cushing Place in Chelmsford

A park to honor Carol Cleven is being planned as part of the Winstanley Enterprises redevelopment of Cushing Place, which is adjacent to the BFRT in Chelmsford Center. As State Representative from Chelmsford, Carol introduced the legislation in 1987, which created the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail in honor of Bruce Freeman. (Freeman, as State Representative, initially proposed creating the trail on the unused railroad right of way but died before he could see his vision realized.) The Chelmsford Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) is working with Winstanley and the Town to create this park.



Friends Board member Dennis McNurland and BPAC member Steve Pustell, cleaning up at Cushing Place.

Cushing Place will see significant changes when the redevelopment of the property by Winstanley Enterprises to build apartments moves forward. The project received approvals from various boards in the Town of Chelmsford in 2016, and the final

plans were approved by the Planning Board this May. Construction is likely to begin during the summer of 2017.

In the current plan, Winstanley has agreed to provide landscaping, irrigation and ongoing maintenance of the grassy area along the Art Walk section of the BFRT at Cushing Place. The BPAC and Winstanley are coordinating new landscaping and the addition of amenities such as a memorial plaque with a tribute to Carol Cleven, interpretive signs about her contribution to the creation of the trail, and information about the history of the Lowell & Framingham Railroad. Some existing amenities may be relocated, and others such as a picnic table and additional benches, may be added so that the finished landscaping is coordinated and user friendly. Landscaping will be the final stage of the project and will be added next year. The plan would also improve parking and traffic flow in this area.

The BPAC is also considering an alternate location for the portable toilet at Cushing Place if the location near the kiosk becomes inaccessible for servicing. Everyone's patience and cooperation is imperative during the construction period.

Variable weather conditions last winter provided opportunities for a variety of activities on the trail. Walkers, runners and cyclists used it in the early part of the winter. Then after several snowfalls in February the snow-covered trail was used for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The late February thaw brought many people back out on the trail to enjoy the brief warm period before the unpredictable month of March arrived with more wintry conditions.

The Friends will supply sixteen new and replacement trail signs for the trail, including stop signs, direction signs and information signs.

The BPAC continues to work with the Chelmsford DPW, the Assistant DPW Director and the Chelmsford Police Department to address safety and maintenance issues along the trail in Chelmsford. The BPAC and the Town wish to express their thanks to the Friends for their funding the placement of portable toilets along the trail at Cushing Place and at Pond Street/Heart Pond again this season.

The Chelmsford BPAC conducted a cleanup along the sections of the trail from Fletcher Street to the Center for the Arts and at Cushing Place from Central Square to the woods. While the weather was less than ideal, the area along Cushing Place was raked out and the grass mowed, generating a significant amount of leaves, branches and other debris. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped with trash and debris removal. And thanks also to the Chelmsford DPW for picking up the pile and sweeping the area.

New Friends' Bling



A new membership gift option: For new or renewing memberships of \$50 or more, the Friends are now offering these high quality FBFRT socks from Sock Guy.

Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
 PO Box 1192
 Concord, MA 01742



NON PROFIT ORG
 US POSTAGE
 PAID
 PERMIT NO.6
 HUDSON, MA 01749

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Show your support by joining today!

Members will receive newsletters, notices of upcoming trail-related events and opportunities to actively promote the rail trail through a variety of volunteer activities.

The Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Membership fees and donations are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Yes! Sign me up as a supporter of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

- Individual Membership \$10
- Family Membership \$25
- Sponsor \$50
- Conductor \$100
- Engineer \$250
- RR Tycoon \$500+

*Sponsor and above receive complimentary gift.

 First Name Last Name

 Contact Name

 Address 1 (Street Address, P.O. Box, company name, c/o)

 Address 2 (Apartment, suite, unit, building, floor)

 City State Zip

 Daytime Phone Evening Phone

 Email address

- | | YES | NO |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I would like to receive the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail newsletter. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Send my newsletter via email (include email address above). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Send via postal mail. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I would like to receive email updates from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am willing to receive phone calls from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am a trail abutter. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I would like to volunteer. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gift: <input type="checkbox"/> Cap <input type="checkbox"/> BFRT Socks (S/M or L/XL) <input type="checkbox"/> No Thanks | | |

Please enclose a check payable to Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and mail this form to:

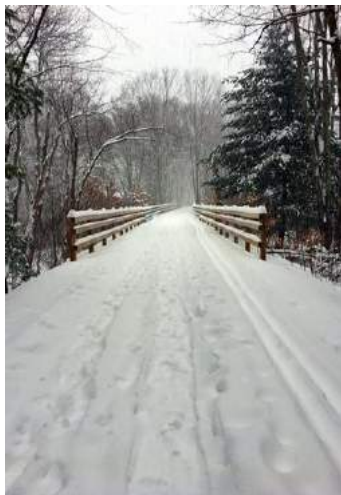
Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
 PO Box 1192
 Concord, MA 01742

You may also join online at:
www.BruceFreemanRailTrail.org



Goodbye Winter...

...Hello Spring!



Signs of winter fun on the BFRT in Chelmsford.



Nashoba Brook at spring flood, from new Great Road bridge.

Parking Changes in Chelmsford Center

Once the Winstanley redevelopment project starts at Cushing Place, currently anticipated for early summer, important changes will be made for accessing the trail in Chelmsford Center. **Since the current parking area adjacent to the trail is within the construction zone, NO trail parking will be allowed in this area until construction is complete.** Parking in the area of Brickhouse Sports Grill, The Traveling Rhino and the "hotel" apartment building will be exclusively for the customers and residents of these properties. People wishing to access the trail from Central Square may use the public lots behind the Chelmsford Center for the Arts, behind Santander Bank on Billerica Road or the lot behind Town Hall accessible from Chelmsford Street near the small softball field at the corner of Wilson and Chelmsford Street. Trail users can also access other parts of the trail by using parking lots at Sunny Meadow Farm on Robin Hill Road and at Pond Street.

Sudbury Receives Construction Funding

Guest Commentary, by Len Simon

The pace of work and the accomplishments on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail in Sudbury have picked up in the past year.

VHB, the design engineering firm, is nearing completion of the 25% design and expects to submit it to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) in May or June. This will trigger a three- to six-month review by MassDOT during which time its comments and modifications will be incorporated into the design. As part of their evaluation and review, MassDOT will hold a public meeting in Sudbury to hear directly from residents.

Additional design work, outside the scope of the RFP, included a detailed traffic study for certain road crossings and further engineering work on a damaged bridge abutment at the Pantry Brook crossing.

VHB has held several public meetings since last fall to familiarize the town with the design process, gather input from residents and update the town on design progress to date. Two of the meetings featured PowerPoint

presentations, which provided an overview of what has been accomplished to date and a timeline of future tasks.

VHB submitted an Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation (ANRAD) to the Conservation Commission last July. The Commission, with the assistance of an outside consultant, approved an Order of Resource Area Delineation (ORAD), with conditions, in November. This was a major step forward.

In March the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to approve a request for \$330,000 for additional design funds for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, including funding for the 75% design. This request was approved at 2017 Town Meeting in May.

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Design Task Force, appointed by the Board of Selectmen, worked diligently from January through March, meeting with residents, abutters, town committees, key town officials and businesses to formulate the Task Force's design recommendations. Those recommendations were presented to the Board of Selectmen on March 21.

The Town Manager, Melissa Murphy-Rodrigues, working with Environmental Planner, Beth Suedmeyer, prepared and submitted documents to the Metropolitan Planning Organization, (MPO) to get the BFRT onto the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a critical step in obtaining federal and state funding for construction. The MPO Board voted on April 20 to fund the BFRT in Sudbury from the Concord Town line to the Mass. Central crossing near Chiswick Road.

Len is a member of the Board of Selectmen in Sudbury.

Westford Gets New Kiosk



Westford's new kiosk near the intersection of Rte. 225 and Rte. 27 was funded by Lowell General Hospital.

Celebrating the installation of the kiosk and four granite benches last fall were (left to right): Connor Mendes, Derek McNiff, Brian Auger and Bobby Upperman, *Westford Park and Rec*; Pat Savage, *Director, Westford Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Department*; Amy Hoey, *Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Lowell General Hospital/Circle Health*; Kelly Ross, *BFRT Liaison from the Westford Board of Selectmen*; Jodi Ross, *Westford Town Manager*; Chris Barrett and Emily Teller, *FBFRT Westford Board Members*. Missing from the picture were Heidi Tierney, *Westford consultant*, and Michelle Davis, Eileen Berube and Pam Huntley, *staff of Lowell General Hospital*.

Photo Credits

Larry Bruns, Tom Gazda, Paul Malchodi, Dianne McAulay, Barbara Pike, Emily Teller

Lifelong Rail Trail Riders

For over 40 years, May and Bert Shepard of Acton loaded their tandem bicycle on their camper and headed out to ride and explore rail trails all over the US. May says that Bert would read the Rails to Trails Conservancy magazine and select trails that looked interesting. They rode a variety of trails: along scenic rivers, up to a mountain top coal mine, along the Grand Canyon, trails in California, Texas, Florida and Nantucket.



May, Bert and their tandem on a rail trail in Pennsylvania.

They bought their first tandem bike, a single-gear pink bike with balloon tires, in 1963. After other cyclists with multiple gears went speeding past, they realized the advantages of gears and upgraded. May says, "We bought a tandem so Bert wouldn't have to wait for me. I liked being in back. I was the backseat driver." Later they traded their tandem for 3-wheelers but continued to travel with their bikes.

Although Bert recently passed away, May has wonderful memories of their many bicycle adventures.



A display of some of the patches and pins May and Bert collected to commemorate their many trips.

Thank You!

Pedal Power Bike and Ski, Acton,
for hosting the annual meeting and their on-going support

Jet Mail, Hudson,
for their assistance in printing and mailing this newsletter

United Site Service, Chelmsford,
for helping sponsor toilets on the trail

Panoramic Tour of the Trail

Concord resident John Wood has taken panoramic images of sites on the BFRT, which provide a "virtual" 360-degree tour of locations along the trail. See <http://bit.ly/2orjsGk> for views which include the Phase 2A bridge over Rte. 2A, the site of the bridge over the Assabet River near West Concord center on Phase 2C, the Reformatory Prison Cemetery adjacent to Phase 2B, and an abandoned bridge over Nashoba Brook on Phase 2B near Rte. 2. More information about these photos is available here: www.360cities.net/profile/johnwood.

Join Us at a Friends' Event this Summer

Summer Solstice Bike Ride, June 21st at 6 p.m.

Come enjoy a leisurely ride to the current terminus at Rte. 225 and Rte. 27. Meet at Chelmsford Center for the Arts (Old Town Hall), 1A North Rd. Chelmsford. Contact Tom Michelman for information at tmichelman@gmail.com, 978-580-6190.

Carlisle Old Home Day, June 24th 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Come join the festivities! There will be food, entertainment, and more right in Carlisle Center.

Sudbury 4th of July Parade, July 4th 12 p.m.

Come walk or bike in the parade. Gather at 12 p.m. Parade starts at 1 p.m. Contact Dick Williamson for information at williamson01773@yahoo.com.

See www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/volunteer for up-to-date event and volunteer opportunities.



For Further Information:

Visit us at: www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org

[Facebook.com/BruceFreemanRailTrail](https://www.facebook.com/BruceFreemanRailTrail)

[Twitter.com/FriendsofBFRT](https://twitter.com/FriendsofBFRT)

Call or Email local representatives:

President: Tom Michelman	978-580-6190	tmichelman@gmail.com
Acton: Paul Malchodi	978-406-7264	paulmalchodi@gmail.com
Carlisle: Glenn Reed	978-807-2785	greed@energyfuturesgroup.com
Chelmsford: Dennis McNurland	978-251-0777	djmcn192@gmail.com
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Framingham: John Stasik	508-877-6771	jhstasik@verizon.net
Lowell: Sharon Galpin	978-446-8906	sgalpin99@gmail.com
Sudbury: Dick Williamson	978-618-5475	williamson@alum.mit.edu
Westford: Emily Teller	978-692-6968	eteller@earthlink.net

Attend: Friends meetings

Send Email: info@brucefreemanrailtrail.org