



FRIENDS OF THE BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL

Groundbreaking Ceremony - Official Start of 2A Construction

In conjunction with MassDOT and the Towns of Acton, Carlisle, and Westford, the Friends are planning a groundbreaking ceremony for Phase 2A at NARA Park in North Acton on Thursday, June 25th, at 11 a.m. Local and state officials will join MassDOT and the Friends to kick off this two-year construction project. This section (see map on next page) is a 4.9-mile continuation of the BFRT, which starts at the southern terminus of Phase 1 at Rts. 225 and 27 in Westford and runs south through Carlisle into Acton ending in East Acton at Teamworks. Come help us celebrate this gala occasion that was years in the making!

Although the bidding process was somewhat delayed, the suspense is finally over! Bids were originally due in January. Then MassDOT moved the bid date to February to avoid having too many openings of similar type projects on one day, and to keep the contractor bids competitive. Then CIM (the Construction Industries of Massachusetts) asked MassDOT to delay the bid opening for two weeks so prospective bidders could "adequately prepare" their bids.

Finally, on March 3 the eight bids were opened. The apparent low bidder was SPS New England at \$9.9M for the project, which had an estimated bid price of \$9.5M. A notice to proceed, followed by the start of construction, is expected in early summer, with project completion expected in 2017.

The cost of the project construction will be borne by state (20%) and federal funds (80%) since the BFRT qualifies as a federal transportation project. While federal support means local taxes are not affected, it does come with more stringent requirements. These include higher bridge loading specifications to allow for heavy emergency vehicles, stringent environmental protection design requirements during construction and moderate grades for bridges to allow for handicap accessibility.

The Friends look forward to working with MassDOT, the towns, and SPS New England on outreach and communication during the construction phase. If you would like to volunteer to help, please contact Tom Michelman at tmichelman@gmail.com or 978-580-6190.

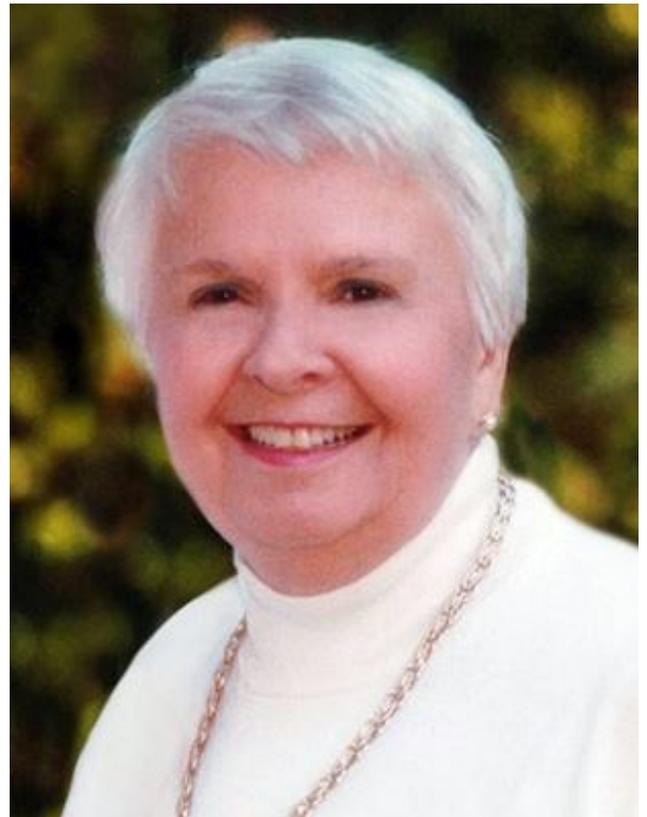
Weekend/Holiday Parking in Lowell

Rail Trail parking is now available in the Cross Point finger lot adjacent to the Route 3 tunnel on weekends and holidays only.

Loss of a Dear Friend

The Friends of the BFRT have lost a dear friend and ardent supporter. Former State Rep. Carol Clevon of Chelmsford died Thursday March 12th, 2015, at age 86.

In 1986, after State Rep. Bruce Freeman's death, Carol C. Clevon was elected to his vacated seat in the Legislature. Bruce Freeman had championed the cause of the Lowell-Sudbury Rail Trail in the State Legislature during 1985 and part of 1986. In her first speech to the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1987, Carol introduced a bill creating a bike path in his honor. The trail would be a lasting memorial to his service to Chelmsford and the State. In April 1989 Gov. Michael Dukakis signed into law an Act creating the Bruce N. Freeman Memorial Bike Path.



The Friends were honored when Carol attended the ribbon cutting for Phase 1 of the BFRT built in Lowell, Chelmsford and Westford in 2009. We are thankful for her long-time support of the trail that we enjoy today.

To make a donation to the BFRT in Carol's memory, please go to <http://bit.ly/19291kG>.

Trails Connecting Framingham

“Bike Friendly,” and “Bike Connectivity” are two terms heard with increasing frequency in Nobscot and Saxonville, two historic villages in Framingham. They are situated at opposite ends of Water Street about a mile apart as the crow flies. Residents of each village are actively engaged in a series of visionary sessions designed to give residents influence over the inevitable changes both villages face over the next decade. There are certainly many challenges and opportunities unique to each village, which must be considered as each explores its options for future development.

Both communities have one common feature - a rail trail. In Saxonville, the mile-and-a-half **Cochituate Rail Trail** is now complete and is enthusiastically enjoyed by residents for a number of different health, recreation, and social purposes. The BFRT will be a key feature of Nobscot as the trail brings people to the Hemenway School, the new Framingham Library, and the shopping center. Over the last decade construction and planning of the trail have been proceeding slowly from the Lowell-Chelmsford line south to Framingham. Sudbury, Nobscot's neighboring community to the north, is now planning the design of its portion of the trail.

The major stumbling block at this point for both Sudbury and Framingham is that the right of way of these last seven miles of the proposed trail is under the private control of the rail company CSX. The goal is now to place the control of the right of way in the hands of either local or state government. In other words - and this reality cannot be overemphasized - the land on which the trail will be constructed in these two communities must first be purchased.

Progress toward this transfer has been arduous over the last 14 years, but hope has been reignited. Town officials from community, state transportation officials and representatives of CSX met in late April to seek a mutually successful transfer of the property to a public agency. Once this transfer is complete, both Sudbury and Framingham can complete the BFRT in their respective communities.

In addition, discussion is also beginning to find ways to connect the BFRT to the Cochituate Rail Trail in Saxonville, the Upper Charles Rail Trail in Holliston and Milford and the Central Mass Rail Trail in Sudbury.

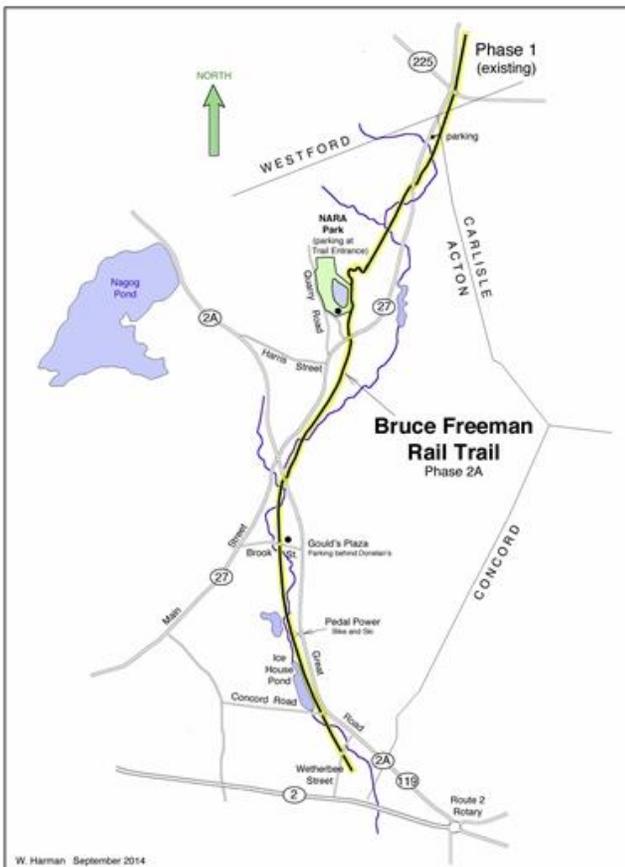
These possibilities for connections are extensive and exciting. Connecting the various rail trails in the region will offer residents a significant additional option for transportation. If you would like to find out more about the development of this inter-modal transportation system or would like to become more involved to help make it a reality in MetroWest, send an email to jhstasik@verizon.net with your thoughts

We couldn't do it without You!

Pedal Power Bike and Ski, Acton,
for hosting the annual meeting and the many other things you do to support the trail!

Jet Mail, Hudson,
for assisting in printing and mailing this newsletter

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



Ground will be broken soon on this Phase 2A portion of the trail (see article on front page).

Phase 2C in Concord Aims for Targeted Date of September 2016

Despite interminable delays, the 75% design of Phase 2C, from Commonwealth Ave. in Concord south to Sudbury, is progressing. Consulting firm Greenman Pedersen Inc. (GPI) expects to submit plans to MassDOT in June. The design has been delayed partly due to the usual governmental red tape. However, the delay is primarily due to the decision to pursue an alternative trail configuration between the new Woods Hill Table and West Concord Depot after the MBTA had accepted an alternative crossing over the Fitchburg Commuter Rail line.

While evaluating the new trail alignment through Junction Park, GPI and Town staff also examined existing crosswalks and signals at the intersection of Commonwealth Ave. at Main St. in front of the 99 Restaurant. Given the age of the existing traffic signals and the insufficient space in the traffic island to create a safe haven for trail users, GPI suggested a new alignment extending Junction Park northerly creating more of a 'T-shaped' intersection where Commonwealth meets Main. The intent is to increase safety for trail users as well as to facilitate traffic flow. The preliminary sketch was exhibited at the West Concord Advisory Committee open house, where attendees expressed interest in exploring the idea.

Concord's 2015 Annual Town Meeting authorized \$125K in Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for the BFRT Phase 2C & 2B. This brings the total allocated from CPA funds to \$375K for design and construction. The BFRT Advisory Committee and Town staff will be preparing another application this fall to the Community Preservation Committee for an additional \$125K to bring the total to \$500K.

Chelmsford BPAC Improves Trail Safety

The Chelmsford Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) has been working with the Chelmsford Police Department, Town Engineer and DPW Superintendent to address safety concerns at several locations where the trail crosses busy streets.

Several safety improvements are planned in 2015. One will be the installation of Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons at the trail crossing on Golden Cove Road, which will replace the current flashing yellow warning lights at this location. This trail crossing is on a very busy street and was the site of an incident in 2014 where a cyclist was injured after running the trail stop sign and striking a car. The beacon will be activated by the trail users to aid in warning approaching motorists to slow down or stop as pedestrians and cyclists may be attempting to cross the street.

BPAC has also worked with the Police Department and DPW to develop a warning sign that will be posted at the Golden Cove Road, Chelmsford Street/Fletcher Street and at the Central Square trail crossings. These signs will instruct cyclists to “Walk Bicycle Across Roadway” when crossing the streets at these locations. It was agreed that cyclists walking their bicycles in crosswalks or across a street is the safer approach and that as pedestrians, they are more protected as such.

In April a group of volunteers conducted a spring cleanup of the Cushing Place segment of the trail. The area from the Station Master Sculpture and behind Ginger Ale Plaza was raked out and mowed and litter was removed. In about three hours, an estimated 3 cubic yards of grass, leaves and brush were removed from this area. Thanks to the Chelmsford DPW for removing this material for proper disposal. In addition, the leaves were blown off of the section of trail from Cushing Place to High Street.

The Chelmsford DPW has also made some improvements to the access to the kiosk, bike racks, repair station, and bench at this location with removal of topsoil and placement of compacted gravel to level the surface and reduce grass and weed growth. Also top soil was added and grass areas were hydroseeded to make it easier to maintain this area.

Longer term the BPAC will be considering additional improvements to this section of the trail as well as the section from Central Square to the Chelmsford Street/Fletcher Street crossing. This latter section borders abutting businesses and tends to have more weed growth and litter, making it less attractive. BPAC will be investigating ways to gain cooperation of abutting businesses to contribute to the value of the trail in Chelmsford.



Chelmsford BPAC and the BFRT collaborated to replace the pump at the repair stand at Cushing Place.



Spring is here! Joanne & Dan from Lowell are on their way back from the southern terminus of Phase 1 in Westford.

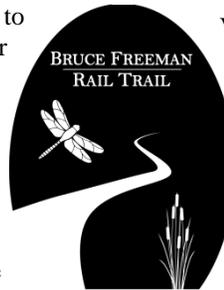
Sudbury: 2 Trails Run Through It

Sudbury residents found their heads spinning this spring as they tried to keep track of what is going on with the two future rail trails in town, the north-south Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) and the east-west Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT). These future rail trails cross in south Sudbury and that crossing provides a critical link in a network of future rail trails. Thus the BFRT and the MCRT are linked in the eyes of state planners.

VHB, the design contractor for Phase 2D of the BFRT in Sudbury, got a good start on surveying and wetlands flagging during the relatively snow-free fall and early winter. Outdoor progress stopped when snowmageddon arrived and resumed in the spring. The schedule aims for submission of the 25% design to MassDOT in February 2016. With that date in mind, it may be possible for the state and federal construction funding for the BFRT to be included in the 2019 Transportation Improvement Plan.

While the design progresses, a private organization, Sudbury Greenways, has pushed for a rolled stone dust path built to lower standards than the state and national standards for “shared-use paths.” The major attraction of this approach is that a usable rail trail on the BFRT could be built quickly. The standard paved rail trail could follow later. However, Sudbury would have to pay all of the estimated \$1M cost for this temporary trail. May Town Meeting voters were not enthused. The petition article submitted by Sudbury Greenways advocating for the temporary trail was defeated by a wide margin. When the same question went to the voters at the polls on May 19, it was again defeated by a wide margin.

The future of the Mass Central Rail Trail in Sudbury is clouded. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is charged with developing a 25-mile rail trail from Waltham to Berlin. However, DCR is chronically short of funds, and no construction money has been identified. Given this situation, DCR has given great latitude to local towns to do something with their own money. Sudbury Greenways’ proposal for a rolled stone dust path was soundly defeated both at Town Meeting and at the polls. With several different potential designs and related costs, the situation for the MCRT is fluid. Stay tuned.



Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
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Concord, MA 01742



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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.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Conductor \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineer \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> RR Tycoon \$500+ |

*Sponsor and above receive complimentary BFRT cap or T-shirt.

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. YES NO

Send my newsletter via email (include email address above). YES NO

Send via postal mail. YES NO

I would like to receive email updates from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. YES NO

I am willing to receive phone calls from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. YES NO

I am a trail abutter. YES NO

I would like to volunteer. YES NO

Gift: Cap T-Shirt (S / M / L / XL) 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 on-line at:

www.BruceFreemanRailTrail.org





The trail was not immune to the heavy snows of this past winter, making a beautiful sight and a great place to ski!

In Lowell, Another Section for the Concord River Greenway

Section IIIA of the Concord River Greenway in Lowell is now under construction. This section, which follows a gentle curve in the Concord River behind a residential area in the Back Central neighborhood, leads from Jollene Dubner Park at the corner of Rogers Street and Merrill Street. It then follows the riverbank south to the Centennial apartments. From there a bridge will cross over to Centennial Island, travel south and connect via a pedestrian bridge over the Concord River to the end of the already constructed Lawrence Street section. It is envisioned that the Concord River Greenway and the BFRT will eventually be connected. IIIA was funded by a grant from the Massachusetts EEA PARC Grant Program. More information is available at <http://bit.ly/1FnOLZF>.



John McBride was the winner of one of the helmets donated by Pedal Power at the Westford Health Fair on May 2. FBFRT Board member, Emily Teller, presented the helmet.

Friends Celebrate 5th Anniversary of Trail Opening

The Friends annual meeting in November was well attended by a range of trail enthusiasts and several dignitaries including Senator Jamie Eldridge, whose district includes Acton, Sudbury, Boxborough, and Maynard, as well as Brad Putnam, staff director for Representative Cory Atkins, who represents Acton, Carlisle, Chelmsford, and Concord, and Beverly Woods, executive director of the North Middlesex Council of Governments. Bruce Freeman's widow, Daphne, and their son, Bruce Jr, were also present.



The cake sported a picture of Rail Trail dignitaries cutting the ribbon marking the opening of the Trail in 2009.

The meeting launched with a celebration to mark the five-year anniversary of the ribbon cutting for Phase 1 in Westford and Chelmsford. Tom Michelman, president of FBFRT, spoke about how far the trail has come from its start. "The trail would not have been built and would not have been in the condition it's in without board members... and volunteers pushing for the trail. So, give yourself a pat on the back," he said to a group of about 30.

Daphne Freeman also commented: "I remember the rainy day five years ago that we were jammed into that town hall and there were so many of us. ... It was wall to wall, but it was the most wonderful celebration, and we all had a wonderful, wonderful day there. Although it does seem slow going sometimes, every mile will bring leisure and well-being..." she said.

She mentioned how grateful she and other trail supporters are for the Friends' fund-raising efforts to bring the trail to Sudbury. "I want to thank everyone who had a part in the Bring the Trail to Sudbury fundraising campaign. I've been stopped so many times at the supermarket, the mall and even at my church. People come up to me and say, 'We love the Freeman trail.' My heart is full of gratitude to all of you who have had a part in the continuing progress of the trail. And especially to Mr. Tom Michelman who has stayed on as president ... it goes beyond words to express how proud my Bruce would be," she said.

Upcoming Community Events & Volunteer Opportunities

June 19th: Summer Solstice Bike Ride,
6 p.m. Meet at the Bedford terminus of Minuteman Bikeway, South Rd. & Loomis St. Ice cream stop in Lexington Center

June 20th: Concord River Greenway walk in Lowell, 9 a.m. Park and meet at the Lawrence St. entrance to the Lowell Cemetery. Wear weather-appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes. RSVP to icalvin@lowelllandtrust.org or call 978-934-0030.

July 4th: Sudbury 4th of July Parade. Come to walk or ride your bicycle in the parade. The Friends will be joined by supporters of the Mass Central Rail Trail. Participants will meet at Chiswick Park off Union Ave. by 12:00 p.m. The parade will start at 1:00 p.m. Contact Dick Williamson for information at williamson@alum.mit.edu 978-618-5475.

We hope you will join us and/or help us out at one or more of these events.

See www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/volunteer for up-to-date volunteer opportunities. Or contact your town's representative listed below and to the right.



Henry Keutmann restoring a flanger in Concord Junction. Flangers are used to alert train engineers that the train is approaching a road crossing. This flanger was used to warn of crossing another set of tracks, a less common use.

Be safe; wear a helmet!

According to the *Insurance Institute for Highway Safety* each year about 2 percent of motor vehicle crash deaths are bicyclists. In a majority of bicyclist deaths, the most serious injuries are to the head, highlighting the importance of wearing a bicycle helmet. Helmet use has been estimated to reduce head injury risk by 85 percent. And if that isn't enough to convince you, Massachusetts state law requires children under 17 to wear a helmet while biking and skating.



A great example of how Phase 2A of the BFRT will provide a safe place to walk, bike and ski along a busy road where there is no other safe option, as seen here in north Acton. And, the trail is so much more beautiful than the road, don't you think? No offense, motorists.

Jane Poole

Jane Poole was an avid cyclist and early supporter of the BFRT. The hallway in her condo in Nagog was "wallpapered" with USGS



maps of the area, spliced together to make one huge map. She could create new bike routes by tracing the roads on the wall! According to Betsy Taylor-Kennedy, "If an activity had something to do with bikes, Jane was in on it!"



After Jane died of a heart attack while leading her annual Patriots' Day ride in April 1990, her friends donated a bench in her honor. It

was temporarily placed in the Acton Arboretum until the rail trail was built. Now, many years later, a site on the rail trail in Acton will be identified for its new location.

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:

Acton:	Tom Michelman	978-580-6190	tmichelman@gmail.com
Carlisle:	Alan Cameron	978-369-2223	alancameron@comcast.net
Chelmsford:	Tom Gazda	978-250-0012	tgazdap5tmr@comcast.net
Concord:	Barbara Pike	978-369-0437	bbpike@aol.com
Framingham:	John Stasik	508-877-6771	jhstasik@verizon.net
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Westford:	Emily Teller	978-692-6968	eteller@earthlink.net

Attend: Friends meetings

Send Email: info@brucefreemanrailtrail.org