



FRIENDS OF THE BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL

Trail in Sudbury Open - with Caveat

The trail from Powder Mill Road in Concord south to the intersection with the Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT) in Sudbury is open to users “at their own risk” because maintenance responsibility has not been accepted by the Town of Sudbury due to two unresolved issues. First, the ramp from the parking area at Broadacres Farm/Morse Road to the trail must be redesigned and constructed to conform to accessibility standards. Second, control and removal of invasive species introduced during construction along the trail remains a concern. Once these items have been resolved, the Town anticipates that MassDOT will schedule a formal ribbon cutting later this year.

Police and residents have been raising concerns about cyclists and pedestrians crossing busy streets without activating the crossing signals. In response, the Rail Trails Advisory Committee worked with the Sudbury Police to design signs to alert people to be safe and be seen by pressing the button that activates the flashing beacons at each street crossing. These lawn signs are expected to be installed in April.



State Helps with Trail Maintenance

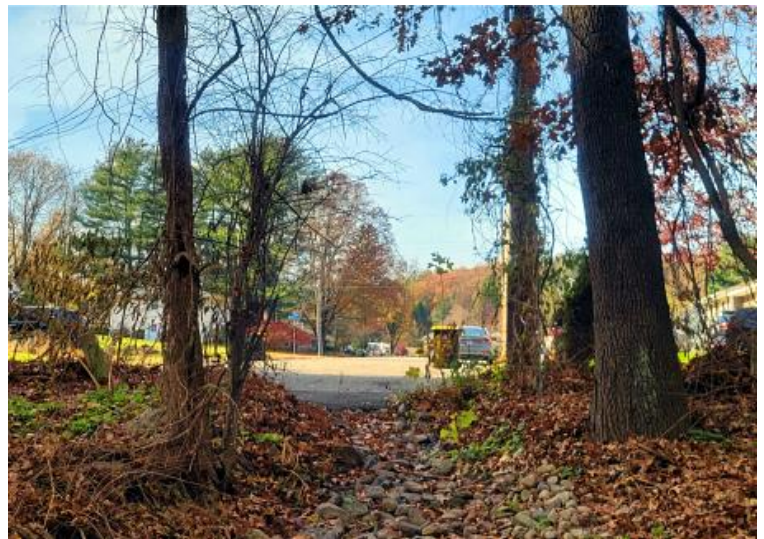


State Sen. Jamie Eldridge presented to the Friends a \$50,000 Commonwealth of Massachusetts earmark to be used to purchase capital equipment to help maintain the rail trails in the towns of Acton and Sudbury. (Left to right: Board member Chris Menge, President Tom Michelman, State Sen. Jamie Eldridge, Legislative Aide Ravi Simon and board member Jeff Bergart).



Last fall family and friends of Daphne Freeman gathered at Cushing Place in Chelmsford Center for the unveiling of a memorial to her legacy. The widow of State Rep. Bruce Freeman, Daphne was BFRT's biggest fan.

Design Progress for Trail Through Sudbury into Framingham



Path along the future BFRT to Eaton Road in Framingham.

A Memo of Understanding was finalized by Sudbury and Framingham last summer to allow for the next 1.4 miles of the trail in Sudbury into Framingham (from the MCRT intersection south to Eaton Road West). Concurrently, Framingham initiated engineering design for an additional 1.4 miles to Frost Street in Framingham.

The 75% design for the Sudbury section was submitted to MassDOT in February and has been posted to the town's website (see the file here: bit.ly/75-Sud-Fram). Framingham has submitted a preliminary 25% design for its section and expects to complete the final 25% design plans later this year. Construction funding for both projects is currently included in the Transportation Improvement Plan for federal fiscal year 2029.

Chelmsford High School Wellness Fair

The Friends' table at the Chelmsford High School Wellness Fair held in March featured bicycle helmets available for sizing/fitting demonstrations, trail maps, trail use guidelines and trail history.

The Friends also held a raffle and distributed 60 rechargeable red flashing safety lights with clips, suitable for cycling or walking. Students were required to answer a couple of simple questions about the trail map and history in order to enter. Joyce Reischutz of Pedal Power Bike & Ski in Acton procured the safety lights, with funds provided by the Friends.

The aim of the fair was to expose students to the diverse opportunities and resources available in the wellness community, providing a welcoming environment where students can explore health topics they may not otherwise encounter.

Approximately 150 students visited the booth to learn about the rail trail. Most of the students were already familiar with the trail, but many did not realize it had been completed to Sudbury. However several students had already ridden on the new section.



The Friends' booth was staffed by Board Members Brian Judd (left, Chelmsford), Ed Kross (Framingham) and Sharon Galpin (not pictured, Lowell/Chelmsford, emeritus). Ed's 1880s era penny-farthing bicycle also attracted many curious students.

Join Us in Carlisle in May and June

The Friends will host a table at two outdoor events in bucolic Carlisle this spring and summer.

The first event is the Route to Sustainability Day to be held May 3 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Carlisle Public School. Now in its fourth year, this Earth Day event will be full of environmental information, live wildlife, tasty treats, native plants, raffles, games and crafts.

Also the Friends will have a table at two events as part of Carlisle's beloved Old Home Day weekend. The first will be at the Country Fair on Saturday, June 20. The Friends have been a presence at the Country Fair for well over a decade. The second will be at the Carlisle Music Festival on Sunday, June 21. For further information about these events go to www.carlisleohd.org.

Trails at Brewster's Meadow Open in Acton



The Isaac Davis Trail connects the BFRT to the newly opened Trails at Brewster's Meadow in Acton. The trailhead on the BFRT is approximately 150 yards south of the parking area on Brook Street. Trails on this land, now owned by the Acton Water District, may be used for passive recreation; e-bikes are not allowed.



Friends' Board member Ed Kross presented updates on the progress of the BFRT in Framingham at a community outreach meeting last fall. Following Ed's presentation local historian Steven Greene discussed the history of the railway. Friends Mike Yeomans, Ralph Hebb and Liz Conant assisted with the program.

Letter from the President

Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail,

As the FBFRT coffers are very strong (thank you to dues-paying members and other generous donors), we are looking to support BFRT-related projects. If you have a project or activity that furthers our mission to increase the use and enjoyment of the BFRT or provide connections to the BFRT, we are encouraging grant applications.

When the FBFRT was founded more than 20 years ago, we had the problem that virtually all small nonprofits face: lack of funds to get the BFRT studied, designed and built. The problem was solved in a multitude of ways. First we incorporated as a 501(c)(3) so donations were (and are) tax deductible, and we were early adopters of investing in infrastructure to take credit card payments online and adopted a third-party online customer relationship management system to administer membership and donations. We also leaned into leveraging and advocating for the use of OPM (other people's money – e.g., state transportation funds) for the millions of dollars needed to construct rail trails (and beyond the ability of a local non-profit like the FBFRT to reasonably raise).

As a result, the FBFRT carved out its lane of supporting activities and projects requiring up to tens of thousands of dollars, including projects that:

- build trail support (e.g., community events and outreach activities, newsletters, website);
- accelerate trail construction (donating seed funding for feasibility studies and early design);
- increase access to the trail (help fund trail connections, signage);
- improve trail safety (e.g., donations for improved crossing signals, maintenance equipment), and;
- increase trail enjoyment (e.g., art along the trail, beautification such as plantings and clean up, benches, memorials, porta potties).

So, if you have a project or activity that will further the FBFRT's mission that needs funds, don't be shy in asking us for some support. You can submit a grant application by filling out and submitting the online form at: brucefreemanrailtrail.org/grant-request. If after review you have questions, you can contact us at info@brucefreemanrailtrail.org.

Sincerely,

Tom Michelman – President of the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

Friends Support Connector Path to Concord Middle School

The BFRT is adjacent to the campus of the new Ellen Garrison Building at the Concord Middle School (CMS). The Friends recently approved a \$40,000 grant to help fund the design, survey and permitting for a new quarter-mile Connector Path between the trail and the main campus. This new path will provide universal accessibility between the school and the BFRT.

Construction of the project, spearheaded by a group of community volunteers in partnership with the CMS Parent Teacher Group, is expected to be completed by the fall of 2027. When complete, the trail will provide a safe route to the school for cyclists and pedestrians.



Map showing the proposed Connector Path from the BFRT to the Concord Middle School.



Friends board member Chris Menge presented a program about the two rail trails in Sudbury to an enthusiastic group from the Retired Men's Association of MetroWest last March. He shared the history of both the BFRT and Mass Central Rail Trail, followed by photos from the construction process of both trails and a description of the next steps for the trails.

Longtime Friends Board Member Retires



Retiring board member Sharon Galpin is presented a BFRT shirt from president Tom Michelman at the Friends annual meeting. Sharon's involvement with the creation of the BFRT in Chelmsford and Lowell, starting in the 1980s, predates the formation of the Friends.

As the board representative for Lowell and Chelmsford, she has been an integral part of the Friends for over 20 years. Most recently she spearheaded the project to install a remembrance to Daphne Freeman at Cushing Place. In her "emeritus" status, we hope Sharon will still be available for special assignments.

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



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HUDSON, MA 01749

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Ride/Walk the Trail with Friends on the Summer Solstice
Friday, June 19, 5:30 p.m. (Rain date, June 20)
Pedal Power Bike & Ski, 176 Great Road, Acton

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 | ☐ Conductor \$100* |
| ☐ Family Membership \$25 | ☐ Engineer \$250* |
| ☐ Sponsor \$50 | ☐ RR Tycoon \$500+* |

*Conductor (\$100) 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. ☐ 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 would like to volunteer. ☐ YES ☐ NO

If you are donating \$100 or more, please choose a complimentary gift:

- ☐ BFRT Cap
☐ BFRT Socks (S/M or 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 online at:

brucefreemanrailtrail.org

Concord to Add Wayfindings Signs



The Friends' Board recently approved a grant request from the Town of Concord for \$10,675 to help fund the purchase and installation of wayfinding signs along the trail in Concord. These signs will be similar to this sign placed on the trail in Acton.

The signs will provide clear, consistent directional signage and information about nearby amenities such as restrooms, dining, shopping, parks and transit connections.

Sudbury Adaptive Cycling Program on the BFRT

Last fall an adaptive cycling program was held out of the Broadacres Farm/Morse Road parking lot in Sudbury adjacent to the BFRT. The Sudbury Commission on Disability sponsored the event, which was run by All Out Adventures, a non-profit that provides outdoor recreation opportunities for people of all abilities.



The event was attended by about 50 participants and several volunteers. The participants were paired with adaptive single or tandem tricycles, so that children and adults of all ages could enjoy a ride on the trail. The event was a big success, with many participants riding a tricycle for the first time and expressing great joy at having had the opportunity.

Sculpture Ready for Installation...



Here are my friends from
the deep forest floor,
Not many live there, so much anymore,
When the railroad came through,
they crawled and they flew.

Now there's some left,
but we're down to a few.
Look closely at our figures,
they're carved out of steel,
You'll see that we're there,
and just about real.



We're here to remind
you that nature and man
Can live with each other,
in peace on the land.



The streams and the woods are at our command,
A home and a trail in the trees, Boy is it grand!

Funded by the Friends of the BFRT, the sculpture project has been overseen by Sudbury's Len Simon, who collected railroad artifacts along the right of way during trail construction. Installation of the sculpture near the trail at Morse Road has been placed on hold pending approvals and construction of a new accessible ramp from the parking area to the trail. Photos & poem by Len Simon.

Register Your Event on the Trail

Organizations planning to use the BFRT for an event should register it on the BFRT website with at least 90 days advance notice. A form is provided on the website that is used by the towns to ensure organizers have adequately planned for the event, to reduce the possibility of a conflict between multiple large events and to provide consistent information and guidance for all municipalities impacted by the event.

Register your event at: brucefreemanrailtrail.org/



Monette and Guliana are enjoying the newly installed bench, dedicated to Bob Hall, on the trail in West Concord. Bob was a longtime leader of the Concord Runners and a Sudbury board member of the Friends of BFRT. The bench was donated by the Concord Runners and the Friends of BFRT.

Join Us at a Friends' Event

Framingham Earth Day Festival

Saturday, April 25, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Framingham Centre Common (at Edgell Road/Vernon Street)
Contact Ed Kross: ekross1976@gmail.com

Carlisle Route to Sustainability Day

Sunday, May 3, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Carlisle Public School
Contact Glenn Reed: greed@gdrconsulting.net

Carlisle Old Home Day

Saturday, June 20, Country Fair, Carlisle Public School
Sunday, June 21, Carlisle Music Festival, Spaulding Field
Contact Glenn Reed: greed@gdrconsulting.net

Summer Solstice Bike Ride

Friday, June 19, 5:30 p.m. (Rain date, June 20)
Pedal Power Bike & Ski, 176 Great Road (Rte. 2A), Acton
Parking available at 179 Great Road
Come walk or ride on the BFRT
Then join the Friends for post-ride/walk pizza
Contact Tom Michelman: tmichelman@gmail.com

Go to brucefreemanrailtrail.org/calendar-events for the most up-to-date event information on all events.

Thanks to:

Bob McNamara, president of Sudbury Lumber Company, for arranging the transport of the sculpture from Jamaica Plain to storage in Sudbury and **Len Simon** for shepherding the project to completion.

Friends who help distribute newsletters: **Mike Carignan** (Chelmsford), **Tim Farrow** (Concord) and **Ellen Harvey** (Sudbury)

Joyce and John Reischutz of **Pedal Power Bike & Ski** in Acton, for their endless support for the BFRT.

Minuteman Bike Share



The Minuteman Bike Share will return this year with seven stations in Acton (three), Concord (two), and Lincoln and Maynard with one each. Most of the stations are located along either the Bruce Freeman or Assabet River rail trails. BFRT stations include Brook

Street and Concord Road in Acton and Beharrell Street in West Concord. Each station offers at least four pedal bikes and one adaptive bike.

Data from last year's successful season showed that the bikes were rented over 1500 times, with the most popular station being in West Concord. Not surprisingly weekends and summer months were the most popular time to rent the bikes.

Photo Credits

Sharon Galpin
Mimi Graney
Ralph Hebb
Shelly Karlin
Ed Kross
Chris Menge
Barbara Pike
Len Simon
Emily Teller



For Further Information:

Visit us at: brucefreemanrailtrail.org
Facebook.com/BruceFreemanRailTrail
Twitter.com/FriendsofBFRT

To register an event on the trail:

brucefreemanrailtrail.org/bruce-freeman-rail-trail-event-registration

Call or email local representatives:

President: Tom Michelman	978-580-6190 tmichelman@gmail.com
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