



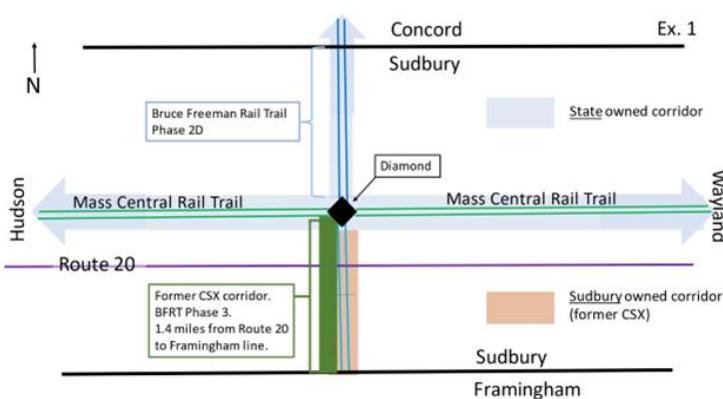
FRIENDS OF THE BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL

The BFRT Continues to Advance on Two Fronts in Sudbury

The first important step was the successful completion and approval of all design components for Phase 2D this summer, making the project eligible for construction bidding. The contract has been awarded to A.A. Will Corporation of Stoughton. Construction will start this fall with clearing and grubbing. A ground-breaking ceremony will be scheduled for late fall or early spring.

The construction project includes the remaining 1/2 mile of Phase 2C from Powder Mill Road in Concord to the Sudbury line and the 4.4 miles of Phase 2D from the Concord line to the diamond intersection with the Mass Central Rail Trail in Sudbury. It is anticipated that construction will take about two years. With the selection of the construction contractor, responsibility for installation of the BFRT passes from Sudbury to MassDOT.

Construction of the north-south BFRT may overlap with construction of the east-west Mass Central Rail Trail, providing Sudbury residents with direct access to two of the longest rail trails in Massachusetts. See diagram.



In addition, planning has begun for the Sudbury section of Phase 3 of the BFRT, extending the rail trail along the 1.4 miles of inactive railroad corridor which Sudbury purchased from CSX in 2020. The north end of this corridor starts at the intersection of the BFRT with the Mass Central Rail Trail (the diamond) in central Sudbury and runs south to the Framingham city line.

Studies to begin the process of transforming the entire corridor into a rail trail began in September when the town awarded a contract to Fuss & O'Neil, the engineering firm that did most of the design work for Phase 2D of the BFRT. The contract includes three components: 1) data collection (now underway), 2) alternate analysis and concept plans and 3) project meetings and final recommendations. This work is expected to be completed by mid-March 2023.

The town plans to prioritize design and construction of the 0.25-mile stretch of Phase 3 between the diamond and Route 20. This will be followed by design and construction of the rest of the CSX corridor at a later date.

Progress Continues on Phase 2B with Asphalt Installation

The final course of asphalt was installed on Phase 2B in October from the Rte. 2 bridge to Commonwealth Avenue in Concord. In addition the first course of asphalt was installed on a section north of the bridge in Acton.

Completion of the project has been delayed because of an issue with the installation of the chain-link fence next to the State Police Horse Barn. The fence footings were undersized to handle the wind load once fabric was added to the chain link, potentially creating a "sail" in high winds. To rectify this problem, cedar fencing will be added along the path the length of the state-owned land adjacent to the horse barn property. Installation of the fence, laying the final course of asphalt on the Acton side of the bridge and finishing the landscaping will be weather dependent this fall. The much-anticipated ribbon-cutting ceremony likely will be held next spring or early summer.



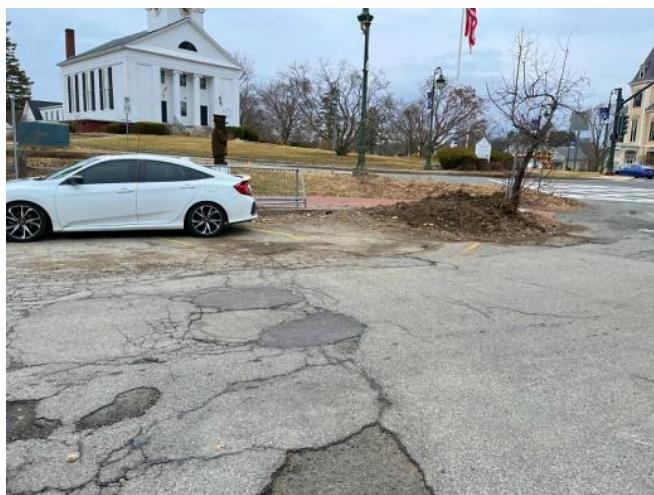
Plantings have been installed along Phase 2B of the trail this fall.



The chain-link fence at the State Police Horse Barn adjacent to Phase 2B in Acton will be augmented with additional cedar fencing.

Chelmsford to Create Pocket Park at Central Square

The Chelmsford Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) is working with the Town and the DPW to improve the area of the trail entrance from Central Square toward Brickhouse Sports Grill. The plan will create a "Pocket Park," including a kiosk that is part of the Central Square Wayfinding as well as bike racks, a bench and a BFRT dragonfly logo sign. The Friends will provide the dragonfly logo sign which will be similar in design to other wayfinding signs in the Center Historical District. All other improvements will be funded by the Town. Improvements may also be made to the area near Station Master sculpture. The Town hopes to finalize plans in time for some improvements to be finished before winter.



This trail entrance from Central Square will be transformed into a "pocket park."

BPAC continued its work with the Chelmsford DPW and the Chelmsford Police Department to address maintenance and safety issues along the trail in Chelmsford. The DPW mowed during the summer to control grass, weeds and brush growth along the trail and made some minor repairs to eroded places on the edge of the pavement.

The trail was active this summer with many people using it for recreation as the pandemic precautions eased. One group event was held in Chelmsford this summer. In August the Steps Against Melanoma/AIM at Melanoma Foundation sponsored a walk on the trail. BPAC conducted a trail count on Saturday, Sept. 10. Total count was 1,477 with bicycles being the large majority on the trail at 57%, walkers at 27% and runners at 13%. Bicyclists riding without helmets totaled 22%, an increase from the recent two years. Thanks to Dave Antonelli, Mike Carignan, John Edward, Sharon Galpin, Mike Garvin, Tom Gazda, Melinda Goodick, Jim Kelsey and Cindy McLain for volunteering to conduct the count.

Finally, BPAC and the Town wish to express their thanks to the Friends for their funding the portable toilets along the trail at Cushing Place and at Pond Street/Heart Pond again in 2022. The funding allowed the units to be serviced twice weekly for the entire April to November season. BPAC appreciates the additional funding to provide this service.

BFRT Happenings in Westford

Westford Briefly Welcomes Visitor to the Trail

In mid-September, the Police Department received a call reporting some kind of "Sasquatch" next to the BFRT. (Other names for Sasquatch include Bigfoot, Bushman, Treeman and Wildman.) When they went to investigate, they found a carved character alongside the trail. They called one of the FBFRT Westford board members to see if this was a new art installation like last year's very successful "Go OutDoors" art exhibit. The board member was unaware of any such proposals and hoped that the sculptor who had made this might ask the Parks and Recreation Commission for permission to keep Sasquatch up along the trail - at least through Halloween. Perhaps another character (in orange?) could be made.



The police located the sculptor and requested that Sasquatch be removed, since town permission had not been granted. What a fun and serendipitous "sighting"! Perhaps in the future, if others want to be so creative, they can either go to the Parks and Recreation Commission directly for permission or come to the Friends of the BFRT and ask for their help with the project.

Puddle Be Gone

This past summer, the Department of Public Works successfully ended the "permanent puddle" on the BFRT at Greenwood Road. They created new drainage structures, removed at least one huge boulder and repaved the BFRT to ensure many years of "smooth skating" and other trail user experiences in Westford in this area. The improvements were funded through a \$35,000 Mass Trails Grant.

The DPW also addressed root incursions on the BFRT in Westford between Griffin and Acton roads this fall.



(left) The Greenwood Road drainage project used state funds as well as Westford highway staff time to improve the trail crossing. (right) Paul Starratt, Westford town engineer, talks with Jeremy Downs, assistant town engineer, and Matt Salem, conservation resource planner, at the completion of the drainage project.

Fall Events on the Trail

Organizations continue to use the BFRT for different kinds of events. In October the "Chapel Challenge Duathlon" commemorated the 100-year anniversary of Concord Academy. Students, alumni and faculty created several teams that ran and biked their way from Barnstead, N.H., to the school's current location in Concord. The route used the BFRT from Chelmsford through Westford, Carlisle and Acton.

Elizabeth Hall, a former headmistress of Concord Academy, found a church for sale in New Hampshire in the 1950s, disassembled it and transported it to the Concord campus to serve as the current chapel.

On My Mind

FBFRT Newsletter Opinion Column

Clearing the Trail in Winter

by Paul Malchodi, Acton FBFRT Board Member

As autumn rolls around each year, we are asked why the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is not kept clear of snow and ice in the winter. There are good reasons both for and against clearing. For each town every year is a new opportunity to address this. In Acton, the Select Board would need to make a decision to actively remove snow. Any individual who wanted this done would need to seek a Select Board decision to spend highway or recreation funds on this. Expenditures such as this would need to be discussed during the budget development cycle in the December/January timeframe before the town's April Town Meeting, so that funds are allocated for the following fiscal year from July 1 to June 30.

The major reason for clearing and de-icing the trail would be to allow the same type of trail usage in the winter as users have during the spring, summer and fall. On the other side of that coin, reasons for not clearing winter conditions on the trail include:

- Many users enjoy having a snowy/icy trail through the woods. While our winters typically have this condition for only a handful of days after each snow storm, they do provide a pleasant varied trail experience for some users.
- The trail is more difficult to clear and keep cleared than are Acton's roads and sidewalks. This is because it has a substantial tree canopy which extends the snow fall/ice fall period for several days after each storm. It then continues to drop water during the day, which forms ice overnight throughout the season.
- The trail runs deeply across wetlands areas and any de-icing chemical used (salt mostly) would end up affecting the wetlands biome.

The trail is, to be certain, very slick in many spots on many winter days. Most users would require traction aids, (micro spikes or snowshoes, or something similar) to use it safely. In either case, it is up to you as users and residents to advocate in each town for the conditions that you prefer.

Acton's Adaptive Bike Program Has Successful Kick-off

Acton's new adaptive tricycle rental program at NARA Park was very popular during the summer. The three trikes were purchased with a state grant through the town transportation director. A recently donated side-by-side trike has been added to the fleet.

During the summer, the bikes were borrowed at the snack bar window. Since the snack bar has closed for the season, arrangements for renting the bikes can be made by calling the Recreation Department at 978-929-6640.

Cost for the 3-hour rental is free to Acton residents and \$5 to non-residents.

Around the Trail in Concord

Safety at Junction Park

Last year Concord's Select Board asked the town BFRTAC to make recommendations for improving safety in Junction Park at the West Concord train station. Director of Planning and Land Management Marcia Rasmussen presented the AC's short-term implementation plan to the Select Board in October. The plan includes adding planters to the central paved path and at the two park entrances. Two large signs and pavement markings will be added at the park periphery to welcome park users. If MBTA approval is granted, three additional planters with tall screens will be installed to create a visual barrier between the park and the commuter rail platform.

Marcia will continue to meet with interested stakeholder groups to confirm the final implementation and seek additional input from the BFRTAC, the Commission on Disability, the West Concord Green Thumbs and Concord Public Works staff. A similar installation will be considered next summer at the north portion of the West Concord commuter parking lot at the Nashoba Brook Bridge.

MCI Prisoners' Cemetery

The MCI-Concord prisoners' cemetery lies on state land between the BFRT and Rte. 2 near the prison. Concord Prison Outreach, a group interested in the history of the cemetery, is working to connect the cemetery to the BFRT with a paved access path. Plans also include erecting an informational kiosk close to the trail to explain the site and the many granite headstones.



The white cross in the MCI-Concord prisoners' cemetery is visible from Rte. 2 eastbound. Graves are marked with small granite blocks.

Concord Students' Day of Service

Fifth graders from Concord's Willard School volunteered on the BFRT as part of the school's Day of Service last June. About 20 students, accompanied by faculty and parents, walked from the school to the Powder Mill Road BFRT access ramp.

They were met there by Concord's Director of Planning and Land Management Marcia Rasmussen and Natural Resources Director Delia Kaye, who talked to the students about the importance of using a natural landscape, removing invasives and planting with native species.

The students removed invasive Japanese knotweed and prepared beds for planting pollinator plants. Delia praised the students as "amazing, hard working power houses."

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

Join us for the Friends Annual Meeting & 20th Anniversary Celebration



Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022, 2 p.m.



See last page for more details.

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+* |

*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.

Send my newsletter via email (include email address above).

Send via postal mail.

I would like to receive email updates from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

I am willing to receive phone calls from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

I am a trail abutter.

I would like to volunteer.

Gift: 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:

<http://www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org>



Community Summit Discusses Uniform Trail Rules

The Friends organized a Community Summit in September to discuss revising the current trail rules and adopting rules that are used in all towns on the trail. About 35 staff and residents from all seven BFRT municipalities attended the meeting in Concord.



Friends Board Member Carlene Hempel facilitated the Community Summit to discuss uniform rules on the trail.

Facilitated by Friends Board member Carlene Hempel, the group agreed that the rules should be uniform, clear, concise and essential. Once every town has accepted the revised rules, the Friends will donate new signs to replace the old ones and add new signs in more places along the trail, especially at entry points.

The group, to be known as "The BFRT Community Group," agreed to meet periodically to discuss matters of mutual interest. The next meeting is expected to take place in the spring.



Proper helmet use...in case you were not sure.

Photo & Diagram Credits
Tom Gazda, John McQueen, Barbara Pike, Len Simon, Emily Teller

Summer Solstice Bike Ride is again Popular with Cyclists

Pedal Power Bike and Ski in Acton hosted the Friends' Summer Solstice Bike Ride on June 21. Over two dozen cyclists gathered to ride on the BFRT, socializing and enjoying pizza afterward.



Friends' President Tom Michelman welcomes participants to the annual Summer Solstice Bike Ride.



Cyclists gathered at Pedal Power near the trail prior to the ride.

See something? Say something!

In case of emergency, dial 911

Non-emergency safety issues:

Chelmsford:	978-250-5228 (weekdays) 978-256-2521 (nights & weekends)
Westford:	978-692-5520
Carlisle:	978-369-6156
Acton:	highway@actonma.gov
Concord:	978-318-3220

Autumn on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail



In Acton, looking north from just south of Rte. 27 & Main Street crossing.



Chelmsford's Heart Pond from the public beach looking toward the trail.

Friends Celebrate 20th Anniversary

Interest in creating a rail trail in Chelmsford and Westford, what was to become known as Phase 1 of the BFRT, started in the 1980s and 1990s. Bruce Freeman, the state representative from Chelmsford, had introduced legislation creating the 20-mile corridor, and Sharon Galpin, a current FBFRT Board member, was one of the initiators. However it wasn't until 2002 that representatives from Acton, Concord and Sudbury formed the Friends of the BFRT. The group quickly expanded to include members from Chelmsford and Westford, and then from Carlisle, Framingham and Lowell.

In October 2002 an informational meeting sponsored by the national Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) was hosted by Bob and Sue Armstrong in Concord. The presentation featured several rails to trails projects across the country. Then the conversation turned local when attendees realized that the unused rail right of way in their towns could also become a multi-use trail.

With interest running high, Joyce and John Reischutz offered to open their bike shop, Pedal Power Bike and Ski in Acton, to an organizational meeting later that month. And so the first meeting of the group that became the Friends of the BFRT was held on Oct. 22, 2002. The 14 in attendance were primarily from Acton (1), Concord (7) and Sudbury (4). Two others, Bryce Nesbitt and John Brennan, were guests from Cambridge who were experienced in creating rail trails. The inaugural discussion focused on what conversations had already been held with town officials, mostly in Concord. The responses were favorable. Marcia Rasmussen, now director of Planning and Land Management in Concord, reported that she had already included a \$100,000 line item in the town's 2005 capital budget for construction of a rail trail in Concord.

Plans were made to include state legislators, select boards, town departments, local organizations and abutters in the discussions. RTC offered its resources, such as data showing that property values can increase when a rail trail is built. Bob Armstrong was selected as chairman of the General Committee, with Barbara Pike as co-chairman and Charles Martin as clerk. The group agreed to meet regularly, and the Reischutz' offered to host the meetings at Pedal Power.

Many thanks to Tom Michelman, current FBFRT president, who unearthed the minutes of the first meeting of the group.

Friends Annual Meeting & 20th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, Nov. 20, 2 p.m.

Pedal Power Bike and Ski
176 Great Road (Rte. 2A), Acton

Come celebrate the progress of the BFRT and the 20th anniversary of the Friends.

Parking is available at Patriot Square, across Great Road from Pedal Power.

Light refreshments will be served.

Thanks to...

Pedal Power Bike and Ski, 176 Great Road, Acton, for 20 years of hosting the Friends Annual Meetings and their everlasting support over years.

For Further Information:

Visit us at:

www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org

Facebook.com/BruceFreemanRailTrail

Twitter.com/FriendsofBFRT

BRUCE FREEMAN
RAIL TRAIL



Call or Email local representatives:

President: Tom Michelman	978-580-6190	tichelman@gmail.com
Acton: Paul Malchodi	978-406-7264	paulmalchodi@gmail.com
Carlisle: Glenn Reed	978-807-2785	gred@energyfuturesgroup.com
Chelmsford: Dennis McNurland	978-251-0777	djmcn192@gmail.com
Concord: Barbara Pike	978-369-0437	bppike@aol.com
Framingham: Ed Kross	508-380-6925	ekross1976@gmail.com
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

Send Email: info@brucefreemanrailtrail.org