



FRIENDS OF THE BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL

Design Progresses for Phase 2

Currently Phases 2A and 2C are being developed cooperatively among the four towns (Westford, Carlisle, Acton, and Concord) with Acton as the lead town working with MassDOT. In June 2010 the state provided an additional \$931,500 in capital funds to complete the design (post "25% design") of Phases 2A and 2C.

Phase 2A will extend the BFRT south by nearly five miles, from the current southern terminus of Phase 1 at Rt. 225 in Westford through Carlisle and Acton terminating in East Acton at Teamworks (formerly Acton Indoor Sports).

Phase 2B is the segment of the trail crossing Rt. 2 which will connect Phases 2A and 2C.

Phase 2C extends the trail from Commonwealth Ave. in West Concord south of Rt. 2 through West Concord to the Sudbury border.

Phase 2D in Sudbury starts at the Concord border and goes almost to Rt. 20.

One would think a contract would be in place and design work would be initiated by now; one would be wrong. As of early April, a contract had yet to be signed. A major reason for the long gestation period is that the June-2010 funding included the federal requirement for a new competitive request for qualifications (RFQ) instead of an extension of the contract to the firm that completed the 25% design for Phase 2A, Greenman-Pederson, Inc. (GPI). Here are some of the major milestones that have been completed since June 18, 2010:

- On October 13, 2010, after it was ascertained that the federal requirements could not be sidestepped, an RFQ was developed and then issued for the completion of the design of Phases 2A and 2C.
- On November 18, 2010, the four towns formally chose GPI to complete the design of Phases 2A and 2C, but only after additional scope was developed that would provide a clear determination on how the parking issues along the BFRT Phase 1 in Westford will be addressed. Also GPI needed to provide additional detailed documentation to satisfy state and federal contracting requirements.
- On January 25, 2011, GPI submitted a set of requested documentation for review to MassDOT.
- By March the contract documents were still being reviewed by the MassDOT audit group. Later in the month it became apparent that GPI needed to provide more documentation regarding the detail of subcontractor scope and labor.
- As of early April the MassDOT was currently working with GPI and their consultants as part of the audit process to satisfy requested Federal documentation requirements.

Meanwhile Phase 2B is currently progressing on a separate track.

- The Towns of Concord and Acton have recommended the Bridge Option over the Tunnel Option for crossing Rt. 2. The designers, AECOM/FST, provided MassDOT engineers with a technical memorandum summarizing the findings that were identified in the Concord Rotary Project regarding comparisons to tunnel and bridge options. MassDOT reviewed the material and identified the bridge option as the preferred option.
- MassDOT is working with AECOM/FST to identify design parameters for bridge concepts. These concepts will be discussed further with the Towns of Concord and Acton at a working session later this spring.

Progress in the design of Phases, 2A, 2B, and 2C, important in isolation, is also critical as we advocate for relatively early inclusion into the state's long-term transportation plan (e.g., construction scheduled for the 2016-2020 time slot). Completion of the design at the earliest time possible is important so that the BFRT is ready to fill a vacant construction slot even earlier as other transportation projects falter, as they invariably do.

As we go to press we have no official progress to report on Phase 2D, but we hope to have some later this year.



Students at Nashoba Valley Technical High School work on a kiosk to be installed on the trail in Chelmsford this spring. The Friends thank those who made a special donation to help fund the kiosk and the Chelmsford BPAC for initiating and coordinating this project

Phase 1 Towns Prepare for New Season on the Trail

Trail Cleanup

It's finally springtime on the trail. The receding winter snow left debris and trash in its wake. Volunteers have been out sprucing up the trail. Others are still needed to help out maintaining the trail on a regular basis, signing up for organized cleanups, or bringing a bag and picking up litter along the way. Many hands make light work and a more enjoyable trail for everyone. Thank you to all who have been helping out!

Trail Event Registration

Several organizations have expressed an interest in holding events on the rail trail. An online Event Registration Form has been developed by the Friends, working with the Towns of Chelmsford and Westford, for registering such events. The form is accessible via the FBFRT home page and the Towns' websites. Completed forms will be automatically e-mailed to the two towns and the Friends. The event will then be added to the calendar on the FBFRT website. Organizers will be contacted by the towns to discuss event logistics.

By early April four events had been registered for 2011: a 5K walk/run on May 22 by Greater Lowell Road Runners, the Friends' Summer Solstice Bike Ride on June 21, a repeat of the Kids' Pan-Mass Challenge on June 26, organized by Jessica Ryan and Claire Enos, and "Ride for Liv" on July 24 to honor the life of Olivia Marchand, a young woman who died tragically in Westford in 2010.

Trail Counts

Three trail usage counts (May, June/July, and September) are being planned on the BFRT this year. Past count information has been useful for planning trail enhancements and maintenance. These counts are being organized by the Chelmsford Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) with volunteers from the Friends. Volunteers sign up for a 1 or 2 hour session at one of the count locations. Instructions and materials are provided. Volunteers are essential; we thank all those who made the counts a success last year.

Chainsaw Sculpture for the Rail Trail

Jesse "The Machine" Green will be wielding his chainsaw to make a sculpture for the rail trail! A contest is being held in conjunction with the Chelmsford Center for the Arts to select a subject and a location for the sculpture. Watch Jesse sculpting at the Chelmsford Country Fair after 5 p.m. on July 3rd. Arrangements are being made for videotaping the event.

The Friends will have a booth at the Fair with updates on the trail. Please consider volunteering to help at the booth on either July 3 or 4 (see contact info at end of this article).

Parking Changes in Chelmsford

Several parking changes will be in process for 2011. First, the Chelmsford Center for the Arts at Old Town Hall will be undergoing renovations. As a result, parking will be restricted at that location throughout the season.

Second, construction is expected to begin this spring on a parking facility at Sunny Meadow Farm on Robin Hill Road in South Chelmsford. It will be connected to the trail by a short paved path.

Finally, a Stop&Shop supermarket will be constructed on Chelmsford Street (Rt. 110) near the Rt. 3 trail terminus. When

construction is completed next year, parking for the rail trail will be available at the new Stop&Shop.

Katrina Road Cleanup

The Town of Chelmsford has received an Environmental Protection Agency grant for cleanup of the Brownfields site at 27 Katrina Road, near the Chelmsford Mall, in the northern portion of the trail. The Friends partnered with the Town to assist with sharing information about the project. Work on the site commenced in February, with building demolition in this spring. For further information go to www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/bfs.

Entry Points to Businesses in Chelmsford

The stretch of trail in Chelmsford Center between Old Town Hall and Chelmsford Street (Rt. 110) currently has a quarter-mile of uninterrupted railing on both sides of the trail. The Town is working with trail abutters to design handicapped-accessible entry points to provide access to the businesses from the trail.

The proposal, still in the design phase, involves removing some of the railing, cutting the existing curbing, and adding ramps from the trail to the parking lots. Parking in this area will be restricted to customers of the businesses.

Chelmsford Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

The Chelmsford Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) is responsible for coordinating activities on the trail, including trail usage counts, resolution of rail trail issues, education, and review of event registrations. Notable ongoing efforts include coordinating acquisition of a kiosk for Chelmsford Center, distributing free bicycle helmets, working with the Town Engineering Department on trail design issues, and developing a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for Chelmsford that will include the BFRT and bike routes to access the trail. The Friends have been providing volunteer and monetary support for BPAC initiatives. More information on BPAC activities and contacts can be found at www.townofchelmsford.us/Bicycle.cfm.

Westford Bike Safety Day

Westford's second annual bicycle safety day will be held on May 21st at the Abbot Elementary School. More information will be available on both the Friends' and the Town's website later this spring.

Westford Co-ordination

The two BFRT board members from Westford, Emily Teller and Chris Barrett, are working with town staff and various departments to continue looking for parking solutions in Westford and discussing other aspects of the BFRT. Pat Savage, Director of Parks and Recreation, and Chip Barrett, Highway Superintendent, have been very helpful, directing their crews to clear the trail in the fall and spring and to do some tree work as necessary.

Amenities Donations

Several requests have been made for benches to be installed on the trail. To help fund a bench or other amenity, go to www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/help_bfrrt/fundraising.

Volunteering and Visiting the Trail

Our website has maps and more information about Phase 1 at www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/Phase1. Volunteer opportunities and events are listed at www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/volunteer. And you can contact us at info@brucefreemanrailtrail.org.

Letter from the President: The Elephant in the Room

Dear FBFRT Supporter,

From time to time, we are approached by supporters of the BFRT who wish to memorialize the passing of a loved one by contributing to the FBFRT. Most frequently, inquiries have been made with regard to whether a bench or mural, for example, may be donated in memoriam. The answer is yes: this can and is being done. We are more than willing to facilitate such requests; we love the trail and understand why others would want to donate a "concrete" item to remember a loved one.

While a bench or mural with a plaque is the most frequent request, we now have three different memorial funds dedicated to the trail.

Howard Krueger Memorial Fund: Howard was killed in June 2003 in a bicycling accident on a busy road in Arizona that had no bike path. His sister, Nan, organized two Spin-Yogathon fundraisers at Warrior's Way in Maynard to support the BFRT so that other people will have a safe place to ride.

Betsy Fowler Memorial Fund: This was established in January 2011 soon after her passing. Her daughter Liz Cook wrote about Betsy: "She LOVED to ride along rail trails with her life partner, Russell. I contemplated a few options for donations and felt that a rail trail was truly what she would have wanted." I was very touched. I went back to my e-mail archives, and found that Betsy had been a supporter since 2005, with the notation "enthusiastic supporter".

Mary Michelman Memorial Fund: This is the aforementioned elephant in the room of the headline. Mary Michelman is indeed my beloved deceased wife who passed in December 2010. My children and I chose to have this be one of two funds where those desiring to show condolences donate money in lieu of flowers. Amusingly, many of my rail trail friends (particularly those from outside Acton) had no idea that Mary was a leading protector of the environment. Mary took a figurative back seat in regards to rail trail issues, and those who only met her on the summer solstice bike rides or special BFRT events thought of her as my sweetheart of a wife. In actuality, when it came to environmental issues I could easily be described as Mr. Mary Michelman, and Mary was the power and force to be reckoned with.

For further information about any of these funds, please go to www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/donate.

As you might imagine, creating a memorial fund is not something any of us desires. Nonetheless, we will do what we can to work with those who wish to do so if an unfortunate loss occurs.

Sincerely,

Tom Michelman

President – Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

Trail To Personal Growth

When Hilary Taylor of Westford was looking for a challenge last spring, she aimed high and made a commitment to a sprint triathlon during the summer.



Although she had ridden an exercise bike indoors, she needed a safe place to ride outdoors, one that was in her comfort zone. Since the BFRT was only a quarter mile from her home, training on the trail was the natural solution. Her first goal was to ride to Chelmsford Center and back. She built up her mileage gradually and says, "I will never forget the day that I got there." She was totally "blown away" by the triathlon experience and is planning

for another one this summer. When you see Hilary training on the rail trail, be sure to give her some encouragement.

LOWELL: Greenway and White Water

The Concord River Greenway in downtown Lowell now has two completed sections, the northern and southern sections. Each section has public art, multi-lingual signage, an outdoor classroom curriculum and amenities such as seating. One of the long-range goals for the Greenway is to provide a connection to the northern terminus of the BFRT at the Lowell/Chelmsford line.

This construction season the Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust is hoping to partner with the City of Lowell on the installation of a bridge across to Centennial Island, enabling trail users to do a loop along the southern section. The movie *The Fighter* was filmed on Centennial Island, so visitors to the Greenway can see where history was made!

Also, white water rafting on the Concord River makes its annual return every weekend during April and May. Reserve your spot now to see the Greenway up close, support LPCT's efforts in developing further sections of the Greenway, and have the adventure of a lifetime! You can sign up on the web at www.lowelllandtrust.org/content/white-water-rafting.

Directions to each completed section are available at: www.lowelllandtrust.org/content/concord-river-greenway.

Virtual science and history tours of the Greenway are available at: www.lowelllandtrust.org/greenwayclassroom/index.htm.

Friends' Spring Meeting – May 5th

Assabet River Wildlife Refuge
680 Hudson Road, Sudbury

6 p.m. - Optional activities in the Refuge

- Bike ride (on gravel roads) to the Assabet River Rail Trail (ARRT)
- Walk to the Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT)

7 p.m. - Meeting in the Visitor Center

Come to hear plans for the ARRT and MCRT, both of which border the refuge. The BFRT crosses the MCRT a few miles to the east.

Light refreshments will be served.

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



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HUDSON, MA 01749

ADDRESS 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

☐ Conductor \$100

☐ Family Membership \$25

☐ Engineer \$250

☐ Sponsor \$50

☐ 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.

☐ ☐

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 authorize the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail to use my name for promotional efforts to support the trail.

☐ ☐

I would like to volunteer.

☐ ☐

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



FBFRT & BFRTAC Host MPO

Friends' President Tom Michelman opened the meeting attended by over 70 people, composed mostly of enthusiastic BFRT supporters. Co-hosted by the FBFRT and the Concord BFRTAC, Planners Anne McGahan and Mike Callahan of the Boston MPO (a regional agency in charge of the purse strings for transportation projects), discussed progress on its newest Long-Range Transportation Plan. The Friends learned about the process and constraints, while the MPO staff experienced firsthand the passion and magnitude of support for the BFRT.



Chelmsford Library Friends Donate Bench

(Article courtesy of Maureen Foley, Children's Librarian)

Encouraging children to read during the summer is an important role for children's librarians. Children who continue to read throughout the summer boost their reading fluency and perform better on standardized tests. The Friends of the Chelmsford Library encourage children to complete the summer reading program by promising to make a charitable donation to a specific organization.

The theme for the 2010 program was Go Green @ the library. All children were encouraged to fill a reading log with 15 hours of reading, and then report that total at the library. If the library received 300 completed logs, the Friends group promised to donate money to purchase a bench on the Rail Trail.

The children's librarians are very happy to report that more than 300 reading logs were returned to the library. Children from Chelmsford and surrounding towns reported the hours they spent reading. When a log was received, the child was given a picture of a bicycle to color. The bicycles then traveled around the room. The children could see the progress and understand how their reading added to the total needed to purchase a bench.

The rail trail was promoted all summer for pleasure, for exercise and as a terrific alternative to driving around town. Thanks to the efforts of all those summer readers, next summer there will be a bench if someone needs to rest when traveling between Chelmsford Center and the Byam School.

The bench has been delivered to the Chelmsford Department of Public Works and is expected to be installed this spring.

Many Thanks to...

Charles River Wheelmen and A-1 Portable Toilets, Chelmsford, for sponsoring toilets on the trail.

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

Landry's Bicycles, Natick, for sponsoring the Framingham brochure

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

Framingham

A Regional Library on a Regional Trail (& Parking too!)

The Friends in Framingham continue to familiarize residents with the proposed trail in Framingham. On a beautiful day in late fall several tours of the trail were conducted between Water Street at the Hemenway School north to the Sudbury line and south to the terminus on Rt. 9. Several of the leaders got in about 20 miles of walking that day - good exercise - and a couple dozen new supporters were recruited in the process.

If all goes as planned at Town Meeting this April, the town will secure the property necessary to construct a new Regional Library on the trail on Water Street immediately across from Hemenway School. This project is only in the planning phase right now, and part of the planning includes the design of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail to access the library - another reason why the BFRT would be a tremendous neighborhood and region-wide amenity.

The Framingham Friends Task Force has been working with the town to ensure public access to the trail at its southern terminus. Nearly a half acre of land fronting Rt. 9 and abutting the trail has come under the town's control due to a tax lien on the property. The Task Force is working to keep that property under town control to be used as a small parking area and public access to the trail directly from Rt. 9. How awesome is that?

Finally, the Task Force has worked out all the details of canvassing the abutters of the trail to secure further support of the trail. Due to sudden and severe winter conditions, canvassing was curtailed during the winter but will begin again this spring.

FBFRT is most grateful for the generous support of Landry's Bicycle on Rt. 9 in Natick for its sponsorship of the canvassing project and for providing funds for printing the new full color brochure. A printable version of the brochure is available on the Friends' website. Click on the "Framingham Brochure" link.

As negotiations with CSX and the state grind on regarding the acquisition of the trail right of way for public recreation, the Framingham Friends have been busy these past few months continuing to gather support for the trail and to work toward creation of the trail as an integrated part of a network of transportation and recreational facilities connecting the entire MetroWest region.

To get involved call John Stasik (508) 877-6771 or Dawn Harkness (508) 965-8182.



Snowshoers enjoying the trail in winter in Westford



Emily Simons, creator of the new BFRT logo, is presented with a silver replica of her design at the Friends' Annual Meeting last November



Upcoming Community Events & Volunteer Opportunities

April

23rd - Chelmsford Town-wide Cleanup

30th - Concord Earth Day Booth, Emerson Umbrella

May

7th - Concord Minute Man ARC MARCH - marshaling

June

21st - FBFRT Summer Solstice Bike Ride, 6 p.m.,
Byam School, 25 Maple Road, Chelmsford

July

2nd - Carlisle Old Home Day

3rd-4th - Chelmsford Country Fair and Tree Sculpting

4th - Concord Picnic in the Park (Emerson Playground)

4th - Sudbury Fourth of July Parade

Summer

Mondays - Sudbury Summer Concerts (7/11 to 8/15)

Fridays - Framingham Concerts on the Green

Phase 1 Trail Usage Counts:

May (tentatively 14 & 17)

June/July & September (dates TBD)

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

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



A young trail user makes sure her 10" Pink Wonder passes muster at Westford Bike Safety Day 2010

For Further Information:

Visit: www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org

Call or Email:

Acton:	Tom Michelman	978-580-6190	tmichelman@comcast.net
Carlisle:	Alan Cameron	978-369-2223	alancameron@comcast.net
Chelmsford:	Cynthia McLain	978-726-0864	cynthia.mclain@comcast.net
Concord:	Barbara Pike	978-369-0437	bbpike@aol.com
Framingham:	John Stasik	508-877-6771	jstasik@rcn.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

Attend: Monthly Friends meetings

Send Email: info@brucefreemanrailtrail.org