



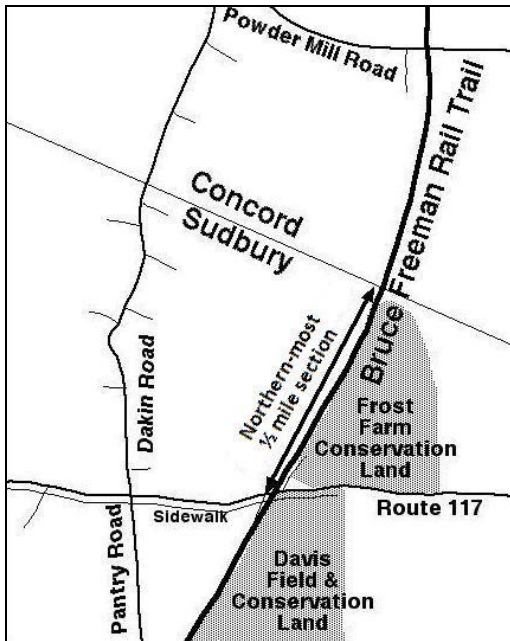
FRIENDS OF THE BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL

Sudbury to Reaffirm Support

At Sudbury's Town Meeting, which starts on May 7, residents will be asked to reaffirm the support for the rail trail which they expressed at the election in March. The two non-binding public opinion advisory questions will be identical to those which were on the March ballot. The first asks if the Town supports the development of the trail in Sudbury. The second asks if the town supports moving forward with the design of Sudbury's northern-most section of the trail. Both questions passed the March election vote overwhelmingly by more than a 2 to 1 margin.

With this solid support of the rail trail, it is important that the town also endorse this vote by passing the two non-binding BFRT articles at Town Meeting. These articles are at the end of the warrant and are expected to come up on either the second or third evening. **It is critical for trail supporters to attend Town Meeting when these articles are being considered.**

The Board of Selectmen's request for the ballot and Town Meeting referendum is in response to the Friends' offer to pay for the preliminary design of the half-mile section of the trail north of Route 117 to the Concord border.



In June 2011, after several years during which there was little discussion or progress on the BFRT in Sudbury, the Friends proposed to raise \$50,000 and gift it to the Town to pay for 100% of the preliminary design of this half mile of the rail trail in Town. Construction of this section of the trail would provide Sudbury residents with a convenient access to the 17 miles of the BFRT to the north. Previous studies have indicated that there are few environmental issues in this section.

After a long delay, the Sudbury Board of Selectmen (BOS) began to address the offer. Finally, in February 2012 the BOS decided that they would neither accept nor reject the offer. Instead they decided to put the issue to the voters by placing non-binding questions on the March election ballot and the Town Meeting Warrant. Results of the Town Meeting votes will be available on the BFRT website.

Sudbury residents have also shown their support through the "Bring the Trail to Sudbury" effort introduced at the 2011 summer concerts. To date over 300 signatures have been gathered for a petition supporting the initiative.

Concord's Town Meeting to Vote on Right of Way Acquisition

Concord's Town Meeting, which starts on April 23, will include consideration of an article relating to the rail trail. Passage of Article 39 would authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire the BFRT Phase 2C Right-of-Way (ROW) from the state, along with any abutting properties as necessary or desirable for providing access to the rail trail area for construction, maintenance and repair. Although routine, MassDOT requires Town Meeting authorization prior to initiating negotiations for the long-term use of the ROW to allow design and construction of the rail trail. There are several options for acquisition outlined in the article including: a long-term lease or purchase from the state for a nominal sum. **It is important for trail supporters who are Concord residents to be in attendance at Town Meeting and to vote on this article.**

Trail Enhances Chelmsford Center

The Town of Chelmsford has truly embraced the BFRT. The trail has injected new life into the town center and provided health benefits to those who use it as part of their regular exercise routine (see *Mission Accomplished* story). Residents regularly use it to run errands and visit businesses. Non-residents and residents alike enjoy the beauty of the adjacent conservation lands, the restaurants, and the shade on a hot sunny day.

Parking

Ample parking for trail users is available in the municipal parking lot in Chelmsford Center behind Sovereign Bank. Entrances, marked with blue municipal parking signs, are off Rt. 4 (Boston Rd.) and Rt. 129 (Billerica Rd.). Parking for the BFRT will once again be available in early July at Old Town Hall once renovations are completed. Trail users are reminded to park only in designated parking areas. The trail map (available along the trail and on the FBFRT website) shows additional parking locations.

Art in Chelmsford Center

Trail users have several opportunities to enjoy the arts. When completed this year, Chelmsford Center for the Arts at Old Town Hall will have art galleries and function rooms open to the public. The Train Station Master sculpture, carved with a chainsaw during last year's July Fourth celebration, has been installed across the street (see photos on next page). A new mural, painted by Markus Lewis, has been added to the Art Walk next to the kiosk at Cushing Place. The Chelmsford Garden Club planted more daffodils along the trail near the ball fields. The church steeple and clock have been newly renovated, and utility lines are being moved underground.

Accessing Local Businesses from the Trail



Handicapped-accessible openings will be inserted this spring/summer in the railings along the trail near Zesty's Pizza and Subway sandwich shop in Chelmsford Center. The Town is seeking donations to fund the cost of construction. FBFRT has offered to match these donations.

The Northern Bank and Trust Company owner has erected a fence blocking access to Ginger Ale Plaza (Java Room, EmbroidMe, Bertucci's, Northern Bank and Trust Company) from the trail. The fence was requested by Bertucci's due to concerns about parking. Comments should be directed to the manager of Bertucci's.

See the *Chelmsford Independent* for recent articles about accessing businesses from the trail.

Mission Accomplished

Carmen Christiano determined to set a personal record of cycling 2000 miles in 2011.



He reached his goal by early December, despite suffering a heart attack in July. As soon as he got the OK from his doctors two weeks later, he started cycling again. The doctors told him that all of his biking and exercising helped him to recover quickly. He did most

of his riding on the BFRT. He said, "I usually biked about ten miles a day. It was much easier to bike on the BFRT path during the summer months because it's shaded and so much cooler than when I used to bike on the streets." Congratulations to Carmen!

Phases 2A, 2B, & 2C: Design Underway

Tangible design progress has been made on Phases 2A and 2C by GPI (the engineering consulting firm). Most significantly, GPI has finished ten Type Selection Worksheets (550 pages) for the nine bridges and one tunnel (Powder Mill Rd. in Concord) and expects to submit them by early spring to MassDOT. A Type Selection Worksheet is an organized compilation of the project location, existing site characteristics, project parameter and constraints, appropriate and proposed viable structures, costs estimates and, finally, recommendations. MassDOT will review the documents and provide comments.

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 short segment of the trail crossing Rt. 2 which will connect Acton and Concord.

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 ends just short of Rt. 20.

GPI also has submitted a supplemental 25% design for Phase 2C in Concord. Although the 25% design has been submitted using the pedestrian crossing and sidewalk on Commonwealth Avenue, the Town is continuing to explore the option of using the existing commuter crossing near the depot. After comments are received from MassDOT, a public hearing will be scheduled.

After considerable bureaucratic delay, the right-of-entry agreement between MassDOT and the Towns is on track for approval. Once it has been signed, GPI will commence with supplemental surveying of Phase 2A and 2C, addressing comments from MassDOT, on the ground changes, and possible minor trail and road crossing alignment adjustments.

Major Design Milestones to Look For

- 75% Design
- 100% Design
- PS&E (Plans Specifications and Estimates)
- Production of mylars (kept on record by MassDOT)
- Public Meetings at various stages

While work on Phases 2A and 2C is under the auspices of the Towns, Phase 2B work is being managed and paid for by MassDOT. The major issue: One of the factors affecting the alignment of the bridge over Rt. 2 is the impact of the construction on wetland and river front areas. Concord's Natural Resources Commission (NRC) met with representatives from AECOM (the Phase 2B consultants), MassDOT, and Concord officials to discuss the different options. The skew design, following the original right of way, would have less impact on wetland resource areas, including the Riverfront Area, as well as the 25-foot No Disturb Zone. The NRC consensus was that they would prefer this alignment, because it would better meet the performance standards of the Wetlands Protection Act and Rivers Protection Act. However, the bridge for the skewed alignment is much longer and is expected to cost more. Also Acton officials are concerned that such a bridge would cause a greater disruption of the open field vistas in the area. Once consensus has been reached about the alignment, MassDOT will prepare information on bridge design alternatives.

Westford's "Hot Topics"

Parking and amenities for trail users have been "hot topics" in Westford in recent months. The Town currently has no designated parking for rail trail users. However, funds to survey and design up to 2 parking areas have been provided by the state through the scope of work in the BFRT Phase 2 design contract.

In late March, Westford's annual Town Meeting warrant included three articles related to parking and amenities. After deliberating for well over two hours, Town Meeting voted favorably on a citizen's petition article asking the Town to make use of the state money to design up to two parking areas adjacent to the trail in Westford and to accept a donation from the FBFRT of up to \$5000 to cover any extra costs associated with the development of the parking design(s). Another citizen's petition article which directed the Town to immediately cease any further planning or development of rail trail parking within 1 mile of the BFRT failed for lack of a majority.

The 3rd article, to transfer a small parcel of land located along Acton Rd. from the Tax Possession Sale Committee to the Park and Recreation Commission, failed to garner the 2/3 vote required. The hope had been to support an Eagle Scout project on this parcel: to build a kiosk, install benches and minor landscaping to create an informative and pleasant resting area for trail users.

Progress on the "North Acton Parking Project" has been moving forward. With the help of Emily Teller, Westford's Director of Land Use Management Angus Jennings received substantial documentation from other Mass. towns to support Westford's request to MassDOT for release of the rails and ties along the 1770 foot Right of Way. At the southern end of the corridor, Acton has received an easement over a small parcel of land that it will designate for trail parking. Once again, a multi-town partnership has been forged to move this work forward.

Selectmen and other boards in Westford, Carlisle and Acton will be coordinating and reviewing work of the design firm Greenman-Pederson, Inc. and other contractors to enable safe crossing at the Rt. 225 intersection and create an extension of the BFRT into North Acton to this parking area. There is still much work to be done, including finding funding sources for the intersection work. However, Westford as the lead town on this small extension project is very hopeful of success

Events Day and Night on the Trail

A Moon Walk in Westford? Yes –on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail! "Light the Night" Winter Hike for Families was held last February as part of Westford's Winter FunFest. Twenty adults and 18 children met at Heart Pond in Chelmsford and set off together to enjoy the BFRT in the dark (the moonrise was at 8:20 pm). The youngest participant was 3, and he walked almost as far as the adults! Many of the teenagers were members of a church youth group whose snowboarding evening had been cancelled due to lack of snow. Westford resident Heidi Tierney was the organizer who oversaw the registration of this event in both Westford and Chelmsford in partnership with Lowell General Hospital. Along with the other walkers, Heidi enjoyed the one-hour walk and seeing how much enjoyment the donated glow sticks brought to everyone's nighttime experience.

"Forever Green Hike," celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Girl Scouting, was held in early April by troops from Westford and Chelmsford. This walk from Pond St. to Sleigh Rd. was under the joint sponsorship of Lowell General Hospital and the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts. The Girl Scouts helped the BFRT by picking up trash as they walked.

Organized by two young women in Westford, the 3rd annual PanMass Challenge for Kids will be held on June 17 at the Byam School in Chelmsford. Also the 2nd annual "Live for Liv Ride" in memory of Olivia Marchand, who was a Westford Academy student, will be held on July 22 at the 4-H fairgrounds in Westford. Please see the FBFRT website for more details and to register for either of these worthy and fun family events!

Outreach in Framingham

The Framingham Friends continue their outreach efforts, participating in community events and connecting with residential abutters. The Friends will have a table at the Sierra Club Earth Day event on the Framingham Common on April 28th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will continue to attend the summer "Concerts on the Green" at the Framingham Common on Fridays throughout the summer. Watch for information about a Friends' gathering at the trail site near the Hemenway School for coffee, pastries and an informational walk along the trail.

Station Master Gets Permanent Home In Chelmsford Center



The Train Station Master sculpture, created with a chainsaw by Jesse "The Machine" Green, now presides over his new venue in Chelmsford Center.

Thank you to the following for their invaluable assistance in making the chainsaw sculpture a reality: Michael Bailey, Mike Carignan, the Celebrations Committee, Chelmsford Center for the Arts, Chelmsford Historical Society, Paul Cohen, Ken Dews, Susan Julian Gates, Tom Gazda, Jesse 'The Machine' Green, Kit Harbison, Kathy-Cryan Hicks, Mike Koziel, the McNurlands, Bill Schmidt, Bob Schneider, Andy Sheehan, Deb Taverna, and the sales guy at Lowe's who re-designed the sculpture base on the fly. Also, thank you to all those who submitted ideas for the sculpture. They provided fuel for a creative (and fun) discussion.



Tom Gazda, Ken Dews, and Mike Koziel pouring concrete for the Station Master base

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



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Concord Residents
 Please vote on **Article 39**
 Town Meeting starts on April 23rd

Sudbury Residents
 Please vote on the **Referendum Questions**
 Town Meeting starts on May 7th

(See town related articles inside for more details on these Town Meeting votes)

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



A Special Thank You to...

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

Warrior's Way, Maynard,

for sponsoring a Yoga-Spinathon to benefit the rail trail

A-1 Portable Toilets, Chelmsford,

for helping sponsor toilets on the trail

The Concord River Greenway

The Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust continues to develop the Concord River Greenway, which one day will connect to the northern terminus of the BFRT. Work on the River Meadow Brook this summer will include an eco-inventory, land-use history, recreational opportunities assessment, and water quality analysis. The brook flows north through Cross Point and parallels the Lowell Connector before flowing into the Concord River just above Rogers St. in Lowell.

The City of Lowell has received a \$500,000 Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) grant to work on an additional section of the Greenway. The city's match to the grant includes construction of a bridge from the Greenway to Centennial Island so that trail users can make a loop on the southern section.

For directions to the completed sections, go to www.lowelllandtrust.org/content/concord-river-greenway.

White water rafting is planned for weekends in April and May. Information and registration is available at www.lowelllandtrust.org/content/white-water-rafting. Proceeds support LP&CT and the Concord River Greenway.

Trail Event Registration

Several organizations have discovered that the BFRT is an ideal site for walks, rides, nature walks, and fund-raisers. To register to use the trail for your event, go to the FBFRT homepage and click on the "Event Registration" button. Completed forms will be sent automatically to the Friends and the Towns of Westford and Chelmsford. Organizers will be contacted by the towns to discuss event logistics.

By early April, five events had been registered for the spring and summer: Girl Scouts 100th Anniversary Forever Green Hike on April 5, Steps for the Steeple Fun Run/Walk on May 5, a PanMass Challenge for Kids on June 17, the Friends' Summer Solstice Bike Ride on June 21, and Ride for Liv on July 22. See "Scheduled Events" on the FBFRT website for further information.



On the trail at dinner time: trail users stop at Brickhouse Center Sports Grill for some much needed refreshment

Kudos from Around the World

Dear Friends,

I'm staying at the Chelmsford Radisson for a week on business at the Cross Point Towers in Lowell.

I also just started - literally days ago - walking for reasons of health, with a five-year goal of running a half-marathon. As an overweight 50-year-old diabetic, I figure I'm at my last chance to avoid insulin, but in the past, I have been easily discouraged from exercise.

Yesterday I discovered the trail. Last night, I walked the 3-mile round trip to the end of the line at Cross Point. Then kept on walking for the sheer joy of it.

This morning, I walked the trail to breakfast. Tomorrow, I'm leaving the rental at the hotel and walking to work. And in 5 or 10 years, I will dance at my daughter's wedding.

Though by chance, the long-term vision of the Friends of the Rail Trail has provided me much-needed encouragement at a critical point in my life, and for that you have earned my sincere gratitude. If any of you should ever tire from your efforts supporting the trail, I ask that you remember the many unknown lives you have touched, for you have made a difference.

*Thank you, for helping me improve my life.
J&R Algonquin, Illinois*

Hi there,

I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed the cycle trail you have created. I am visiting from the UK on business and borrowed a couple of bikes in Westford and hit the trail. Not quite sure where I ended up but there was a pub at the end after about 7 miles which was welcome. What a fantastic trail. You just don't get to see the beauty of this place unless these sorts of trails are opened.

Then I read on the net how much work had gone into this project so I thought I would send you a note to say thank you. It is impossible to see how great this place is in a car so thanks making this the highlight of my visit to Mass.

*Best Regards,
RB, United Kingdom*

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail has been instrumental in my battle against obesity, helping me with a 92 pound loss in weight.

KM

Warrior's Way Benefits the Trail

Warrior's Way recently held a yoga-spinathon at their Maynard studio to benefit the BFRT. They sponsored the event in memory of Howard Krueger (the brother of one of their members), who was killed while cycling on the road. Rail trails help avoid such casualties. Warrior's Way is so passionate about the rail trail because "having a safe place to enjoy outdoor activities benefits everyone from both a safety standpoint and a health standpoint. The more accessible fitness is, the more healthy everyone becomes."



Volunteer Mike Carignan isn't just relaxing by the BFRT in Chelmsford - he is counting trail users for last fall's official Trail Usage Counts. Want to help count? Contact the friends at info@brucefreemanrailtrail.org

Upcoming Community Events & Volunteer Opportunities

April

- 28th - Framingham Earth Day
- 28th - Chelmsford Earth Day and Town-wide Cleanup

May

- 5th - Concord Minute Man ARC MARCH - marshaling
- 5th & 8th - Phase 1 Trail Usage Counts

June

- 21st - FBFRT Summer Solstice Bike Ride, 6 p.m., Byam School, 25 Maple Rd., Chelmsford
- 30th - Carlisle Old Home Day

July

- 3rd-4th - Chelmsford July 4th Celebration & Bike Parade
- 4th - Concord Picnic in the Park (Emerson Playground)
- 4th - Sudbury Fourth of July Parade

Summer

- Mondays - Sudbury Summer Concerts
- Fridays - Framingham Concerts on the Green

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

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



Railroad Accident Emergency Box, possibly dating to the early 1900's, donated to the Friends by Peter Flynn of Concord

Give Back to the Trail!

Trail usage counters are needed for 1 or 2 hour time periods on Saturday, May 5, and Tuesday, May 8. Trail counts are used to justify amenities and expenditures for maintenance. Instructions and equipment will be provided.

Trail crew volunteers are needed to help with trash pickup and/or weeding on a quarter-mile section of the trail or to beautify an intersection. Volunteers may also come to Cushing Place in Chelmsford on April 28 to help with the spring cleanup. Thank you to all those who helped with maintenance last year.

Organized groups (scout troops, businesses, social organizations) are needed to help with weed removal from the more visible sections of the trail for 2 to 3 hours on an evening or weekend.

For more information on volunteering as an individual or a group, please contact: info@brucefreemanrailtrail.org.



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: Friends meetings

Send Email: info@brucefreemanrailtrail.org