



FRIENDS OF THE BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL



Three BFRT Articles on Sudbury Town Meeting Warrant

Sudbury's Annual Town Meeting will have three articles on the warrant relating to the BFRT. Scheduled to start on May 4, Town Meeting has been postponed until further notice because of the virus. Two of the articles (Articles 17 & 51) will address purchase of all or part of the 1.25-mile CSX corridor which runs southerly from Station Road in Sudbury, crosses Route 20 near Nobscot Road, and continues south for 1 mile to the Sudbury/Framingham line. This corridor is part of Phase 3 of the BFRT.

The last appraisal value of this section, done in 2016, was \$770,000. If Town Meeting approves either of the CSX corridor purchase articles, it is expected that the Town will be able to use a \$100,000 Recreational Trails Grant it has received from the Department of Conservation and Recreation toward the purchase price.

The third Town Meeting article (Article 52), which does not need funding, encourages the Sudbury Town Manager, Town staff, as well as boards and committees, to expedite each step in the design and construction process of Phase 2D in Sudbury. Residents have widely supported funding for the BFRT at Town Meeting for the past 8 years, showing their desire to improve the town with this unique amenity. Sudbury voters are urged to support these three BFRT articles at Town Meeting in May.

Late last fall the Town submitted its 25% Design Plan to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) for Phase 2D review and comment. Such reviews typically take about 90 days. When the review is complete, and after comments raised by MassDOT have been addressed, the Design Public Hearing will be held in Sudbury. MassDOT officials, the design consulting professionals, and Town staff will be in attendance. This review will provide residents an opportunity to ask questions and offer comments.

After the 25% design has been approved by MassDOT, the Town will solicit bids for the 75/100% final design, which has been fully funded. Moving quickly on this design component will allow the BFRT in Sudbury, Phase 2D, to go out to bid on schedule in FY 2022. The cost of construction, estimated to be \$10,000,000, will be paid entirely with state and federal funds.

Many Sudbury residents have used the Concord portion of the BFRT, which opened last fall, and have remarked on its beauty, ease of use, and proximity to nature. Now that the trail is on their doorstep, residents are excited to see it become a reality in Sudbury and to have a rail trail of their own. Most towns adjacent to Sudbury have opened new or additional rail trails within the past few years, and the BFRT will intersect with existing or planned trails. The much-sought vision of an eastern Massachusetts network of recreational and transportation trails is becoming more of a reality every year.



Proposed "Door" image by artist Howie Green



Construction of the BFRT in Sudbury will transform this undeveloped section of the right of way in Sudbury (top) into a paved trail similar to this section of the BFRT in Concord (bottom)

"Go Out Doors" Art Project to be Installed on Trail in Concord

A "Go Out Doors" art exhibit, sponsored by The Umbrella Arts Center in Concord, will feature 12 professionally painted doors placed along the BFRT in Concord. The exhibit is expected to be installed the last week of June, with the opening scheduled for July 1. A grant from the Friends and the Foundation for Metrowest provided the major funding for this project.

The Umbrella will schedule several community "Go Out Doors" door-painting events, which will be open to all. An Artist Reception will be held in July, on the trail in West Concord. Visit The Umbrella website for updates and details: theumbrellaarts.org.

Curious about the status of the **bridge over Route 2**? See article on **next page**.

Construction of BFRT Bridge Over Rte. 2 Set to Begin



MassDOT rendering of the 300-foot bridge to be constructed over Rte. 2

The contract for BFRT Phase 2B construction, including the 300-foot bridge over Rte. 2, has been awarded to MIG Corporation in Acton. This long-awaited link between Acton (Phase 2A) and Concord (Phase 2C) will soon become a reality. This section of the trail will run from near Wetherbee Street in Acton to the small parking area near Commonwealth Avenue in Concord. It will also provide access to the Gerow Park recreation area on Warner's Pond.

According to MIG CEO Don Voghel, construction is expected to start around the end of May with clearing and erosion control. This will be followed by sub-grade work, such as the wildlife corridor, and then the bridge abutments.

Work on the bridge will be scheduled for nights and weekends. No daytime impact on Rte. 2 traffic is expected from construction, according to Voghel. The steel bridge, itself, will be erected in summer of 2021.

Plans for Phase 2B are available here: bit.ly/2B-info.



The undeveloped section of Phase 2B, looking north from the terminus of Phase 2C in Concord. The old rails are visible in the lower right.



Mass DOT map of Phase 2B

Eagle Scout Project: Bike Repair Stand

A bike repair station has been installed on the BFRT in West Concord near Rte. 62, including a tire pump and tools for basic bike maintenance. The project was an Eagle Scout service project by Life Scout Nolan Roberts of Concord's Boy Scout Troop 132.



Nolan Roberts (center) with members of Boy Scout Troop 132 working on a new bike repair stand in West Concord



Nolan (right) & fellow Scout Simon Cadavid at the newly installed bike repair stand

The Phases Explained



Phase 1 (6.8 miles in Lowell, Chelmsford and Westford) opened 2009.

Phase 2A (4.9 miles in Westford, Carlisle and Acton) opened 2018.

Phase 2B (Approx. 0.8 miles: Bridge over Rte. 2) Construction is expected to start this May.

Phase 2C (3.0 miles in Concord) opened 2019.

Phase 2D (4.5 miles in Sudbury) in design stage.

Phase 3 (4.8 miles in Sudbury and Framingham) right of way still owned by railroad company CSX.

East Acton Village Green to Open 2020

The proposed East Acton Village Green (EAVG), a small park located at the corner of Town-owned land between Ice House Pond, Concord Road, and Great Road (Route 2A) and bisected by the BFRT, is on track for construction this year. Spring Town Meeting is being asked to approve construction of EAVG and appropriate \$49,802 from CPA funds to do so. A favorable vote is the last major remaining hurdle to overcome.



Map showing the area to be developed as the East Acton Village Green

This small parcel of land is situated at the heart of historic East Acton Village and was once the hub of a vibrant community with a railroad depot, telegraph poles (standing to this day), and Ice House Pond, where Yankee entrepreneurs cut and shipped giant blocks of ice by wagon and railroad to insulated clipper ships in Boston.



East Acton Village shown sometime prior to the widening of Great Road with Bursaw Gas and Oil in the background
Photo from "Acton, Images of America"

In 2003 the East Acton Village Planning Committee (EAVPC) hired the Cecil Group to design the green; however, the project was tabled due to imminent construction of the BFRT. The Friends continued to discuss the project with the Town of Acton, and after completion of the BFRT through this area, the project got back on track last fall. The FBFRT worked closely with the Town Land Use Department, most often with project lead Bettina Abe, Natural Resources Assistant, who has been instrumental through the entire project development process.

The EAVG will include:

- preparation and planting of loam/grass; native wetland shrubs, and a native plant pollinator garden
- installation of
 - amenities including a walkway, benches, and a patio for an accessible picnic table;
 - historic panels and kiosk; environmental educational panel;
 - memorial plaques for Carol Holley, Mikki Williams, and Mary Michelman, all deceased members of the original 2003 EAVPC.

(more EAVG details at: <https://bit.ly/east-acton-village-green>)

The late Mary Michelman was the wife of current FBFRT President Tom Michelman. When Mary passed away in 2010, the Friends set up a memorial fund to "*honor her creation, leadership and stewardship of Acton Stream Teams and the protection of all local waterways*" (see <http://bit.ly/MaryM-Fund>). The confluence of the EAVG, Nashoba Brook, and the BFRT made this a natural project to honor Mary.

The Friends have supported this project by providing consultation to the Town, writing support letters requesting Community Preservation Act funds for this \$64,000 project, and attending the Community Preservation Committee meeting in January. The Friends have also pledged \$12,000 for the EAVG from the Mary Michelman Memorial fund.

Ribbon cutting for this great new amenity for the Town of Acton and users of the BFRT is expected this fall.

Plans to Extend the BFRT in Lowell

Progress is being made on plans to extend the BFRT into Lowell by way of the Connector Trail. This trail will start at the northern end of the BFRT, cross the parking lot of Cross Point Tower, and go along the Gervais car dealership on the railroad ROW, up to the Target parking area. From there it will follow city streets to connect to the Concord River Greenway.



Pathway along the Gervais property, which goes from Cross Point Tower to the Target parking area, would become part of the Connector Trail

Design and construction of this trail will be partially funded through private grants and state funds. The City of Lowell is currently seeking quotes from designers to develop a complete plan for the route, amenities, easement plans, and construction drawings of the initial 1,200-foot asphalt trail. The City expects survey and design to be underway in early this spring. Also it will continue to pursue easements with the privately owned portions of the proposed trail. For more information on the Concord River Greenway, see their website at:

lowelllandtrust.org/concord-river-greenway

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



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HUDSON, MA 01749

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 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. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Send my newsletter via email (include email address above). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Send via postal mail. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I would like to receive email updates from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am willing to receive phone calls from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am a trail abutter. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I would like to volunteer. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gift: <input type="checkbox"/> Cap <input type="checkbox"/> BFRT Socks (S/M or L/XL) <input type="checkbox"/> 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>



Carol Clevon Park Nears Completion



View from High Street showing the newly installed Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons

Chelmsford continues to work on the transformation of the Art Walk area at Cushing Place into the Carol Clevon Park. The Town Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee (BPAC) is working with the Chelmsford DPW to coordinate landscaping and the installation of several new amenities, including interpretive signs and an additional bench. The new bench was donated by Cindy McLain in memory of her late father, Charles. Final paving of the area along the railing between the new condominium building and the trail, expected to be completed this spring, will create approximately 30 new public parking spaces.

The new murals for the Art Walk are complete and will be installed this spring. This project was funded with grants from the Friends and Chelmsford Cultural Council. Cindy McLain, formerly a member of both the Friends Board and the BPAC, led this project with assistance from Friends Board members Sharon Galpin and Dennis McNurland.



Site for the new kiosk adjacent to the BFRT at Pond Street

The Town DPW has completed the site work for the Pond Street kiosk site adjacent to the BFRT. The kiosk, being built by the Nashoba Valley Technical High School Carpentry Shop, is scheduled to be installed early next fall. Additional amenities at the site will include bicycle racks and a bench. Once the kiosk is in place, a large map, brochure boxes, a display, and bulletin board will be installed in the kiosk.

To further enhance safety on the trail at road crossings, motion activated Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons have been installed at the Maple Road and High Street crossings. The Chelmsford DPW coordinated the installations and used existing and 2019 Fall Town Meeting funds for these devices.

The BPAC and the Town of Chelmsford express their appreciation to the Friends for their funding the placement of portable toilets along the trail at Cushing Place and at Pond Street/Heart Pond again in 2020.

Why Cyclists Should Wear a Helmet Robert C. Cantu, MA, MD

It was nearly 40 years ago that I was acutely made aware of why bicycle helmets should be worn when cycling. I was the neurosurgeon on call at Emerson Hospital when I was paged to the Emergency Department to see a mid-20s elite cyclist who had sustained a depressed skull fracture in downtown Concord. After cycling many miles on rural roads at high speeds he had ridden into Concord and was forced to stop at a light at Main and Thoreau streets.

When his bike came to a stop he could not lift his shoes quickly enough out of the pedal peg, and he fell sideways striking his head on the curb and suffering a compound depressed skull fracture because he was not wearing a bicycle helmet. A freak accident to be sure but one totally preventable. While he made a good recovery after surgery to elevate the depressed bone fragments, his surgery and hospital stay could have been avoided if he had been wearing a helmet.

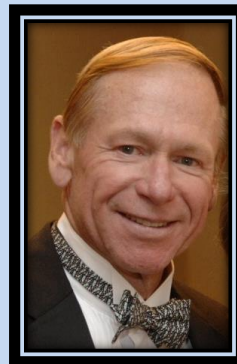
The most comprehensive study on bicycle helmets was published by Alena Hoyer in 2018, and involved a meta-analysis of 55 studies published between 1989 and 2017. Hoyer found using a bicycle helmet reduced the risk of any head injury by 48%, a serious head injury by 60%, and a fatal head injury by 71%.

Statistics from the Snell Foundation

- Every year the estimated number of bicycling head injuries requiring hospitalization exceeds the total of all the head injury cases related to baseball, football, skateboards, kick scooters, horseback riding, snowboarding, ice hockey, in-line skating, and lacrosse.
- Estimated indirect costs for injuries to un-helmeted cyclists are \$2.3 billion yearly.
- In bicycle crashes, 2/3 of the dead and 1/8 of the injured suffered brain injuries.
- 95% of bicyclists killed in 2006 reportedly were not wearing helmets.

As one might expect it has been found that wearing a helmet is most protective in a single bike accident as compared to a cycle-car crash, and wearing a helmet is not protective of a neck injury.

Thus it is clear that bicycle helmets dramatically reduce the chance of head injury, especially serious and fatal head injury and they are most protective on bike trails like the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail where a collision with a car is not possible.



Dr. Cantu is the medical director and director of clinical research at the [Cantu Concussion Center](#) at Emerson Hospital in Concord. He is also a clinical professor of neurology and neurosurgery and co-founder of the CTE Center at Boston University School of Medicine. He has had extensive experience with head injuries and has authored more than 400 publications.

Photo Credits

Sharon Galpin, Tom Gazda, Barbara Pike,
Nolan Roberts, Bob Schneider, Len Simon

Phase 2C in Concord Nominated for National Award

Concord's newly opened section of the trail, Phase 2C, has been nominated for the American Public Works Association Small Cities/Rural Communities Project of the Year Award. The award promotes excellence in the management and administration of public works projects. GPI Project Manager Matt Kearney, with input from Concord's Director of Planning and Land Management Marcia Rasmussen, prepared the application, which can be seen here: <http://bit.ly/concordpw-award>.



View of the BFRT rest area near the Assabet River in Concord

Acton (Phase 2A) FAQ's

Q: Where can I park in Acton to use the trail?

A: There are several places in Acton where you can park to use the trail: (<http://bit.ly/BFRT-Map-201908>)

- Across from 1000 Main Street (Rte. 27);
- NARA Park off Rte. 27. Please use only the 11 spots designated for trail users;
- At Gould's Plaza behind Donelan's in the designated parking spots;
- Patriot Square, 179 Great Road across from Pedal Power Bike and Ski (Weekends and holidays only);
- Ice House Pond, 20 Concord Road.

Q: Is bike riding allowed at NARA Park?

A: Bike riding is not allowed on the Pond Trail in NARA Park, except where it is concurrent with the BFRT.

Q: What is being done to improve safety at intersections?

A: The Town of Acton is studying ways to improve safety at road/trail intersections. Trail users are reminded to fully stop at each intersection and use the button to activate warning flashers.

Q: Will the trail in Acton be plowed in the winter?

A: Currently there are no plans to plow the trail. This decision lies with the Acton Board of Selectmen.

Thanks...again!

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

Please Join Us at a Friends' Event!

"Go Out Doors" Artist Reception

Early July, date & time TBA
On the BFRT West Concord, exact location TBA
Contact: The Umbrella 978-371-0820 x213
Visit theumbrellaarts.org for up-to-date details.

Summer Solstice Bike Ride

Sunday, June 21, 4 p.m.
(Rain date: Sunday, June 28)
Pedal Power Bike and Ski, 176 Great Road (Rte. 2A), Acton
Come ride or walk on the BFRT.
The Friends will provide pizza for a post-ride party!
Contact: Tom Michelman, tmichelman@gmail.com

Carlisle Old Home Day

Saturday, June 20, 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Food, entertainment and more right in Carlisle Center.
Contact: Glenn Reed, greed@energyfuturesgroup.com

See www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/calendar-events
for up-to-date event information.



For Further Information:

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

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