

IV. REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF OTHER TRAILS – Minuteman Trail

February, 2008

- **Committees¹**

Cambridge Bicycle Committee

Community Development Dept.

City Hall Annex, 57 Inman St., Cambridge MA 02139

617-349-4604

www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/et/bike/bike_com.html

Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee

Planning & Community Development Dept.

Arlington Town Hall, Arlington, MA 02476

781-316-3090

www.abac.arlington.ma.us

Lexington Bicycle Advisory Committee

Town Manager's Office

Lexington Town Offices, Lexington, MA 02420

781-862-0500 x276

users.rcn.com/hwbingham/lexbike

Bedford Bicycle Advisory Committee

Town Administrator's Office

Bedford Town Hall, Bedford, MA 01730

781-275-1111

www.bikebedford.org

Clear the Trail Initiative

www.clearthetrail.org

- **Timeline²**

1974 Concept first proposed to convert the rail corridor to a commuter bicycle path

1977 Regular passenger rail service ended

1981 Rail service discontinued

1991 Final plan for rail trail conversion approved
Construction started on Minuteman Bikeway

1992 Minuteman Bikeway officially dedicated

1993 Bikeway construction completed

1998 Bikeway extended from East Cambridge to Alewife Station in Cambridge

2002 Bikeway repaved entirely in Arlington

2004 Bedford Depot enhancement project completed at the west terminus of the bikeway

- **Funding**

The Minuteman Bikeway, built from 1992 to 1993, cost approximately \$190,000 per mile. This included bridge work and intersection treatments.³

The Minuteman Commuter Bikeway was scheduled for completion in Fall 1993 at a cost of \$2.2 million. This eleven-mile path begins near Alewife Station on the Red Line and continues through Arlington, Lexington, and Bedford on the former Lexington Branch railroad.⁴

The path's design and construction were overseen by the Department of Environmental Management and financed by MHD (Mass Highway Department), and the path is operated by the towns of Arlington, Lexington, and Bedford. The MBTA owns the right-of-way and leases it to the communities, which are responsible for policing and maintaining the path.⁵

The Town of Arlington repaved the three miles of the Minuteman Bikeway within its borders in 2002. This project cost \$200,000 and was approved by Arlington Town Meeting in 2001.⁶

On October 31, 2007, the Selectmen of the Town of Arlington authorized the expenditure of up to \$2,500 for the 2007-2008 winter season to sand and plow the entire extent of the Minuteman Bikeway with the town borders.⁷

The Town of Lexington approved \$175,000 to repave the five miles of Minuteman Bikeway with its borders in 2007.⁸ The 2007 warrant mentioned that another \$175,000 would be requested in 2008, but there is no such request in the warrant for the 2008 Annual Town Meeting for the Town of Lexington.

- **Trail design and surface**

The Minuteman Bikeway is a paved asphalt surface eleven miles long and twelve feet wide with a centerline stripe.⁹

- **Trail Usage**

The Boston Globe counted 385 users on the Minuteman Bikeway between 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm on Saturday, June 23, 2007 at approximately the midpoint of the trail. These users consisted of 207 casual bikers, 66 hardcore bikers, 40 kid bikers, 1 skateboarder, 13 joggers, 25 roller-bladers, 12 strollers, 19 walkers, and 2 dogs.¹⁰

CTPS counted Minuteman users from 7:00 AM to 8:30 PM on Tuesday, June 17, 1997. The total number of users, 2,524, included bicyclists (1,376), pedestrians (422), and skaters (726). User modes, but not user counts, were available for 2005.¹¹

The Federal Highway Administration collected user data on the Minuteman between July 2001 and March 2002, in Arlington near mile marker 7.5. The reported user counts were averaged over 60 measurements taken. The average number of users per hour was 442. These users were, on average, 229 cyclists, 28 pedestrians, 80 skaters, 69 runners, and 36 child cyclists.¹²

¹ <http://www.minutemanbikeway.org/Pages/contacts.html>

² July 1, 2007, Boston Globe, page 1,
http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2007/07/01/minuteman_timeline/

³ Footnote 13, page 15, Reconnaissance Study of the Saxonville Branch Right-of-Way, January 2000, Cathy Buckley-Lewis, CTPS, <http://www.crtrail.org/Feasibility-CRT.pdf>

⁴ The Transportation Plan for the Boston Region – November 15, 1993, section “Bike Paths”, page 6-34, <http://ntl.bts.gov/DOCS/MASS.html>

⁵ Same reference as #4.

⁶ Article 83, approved at 2001 Town Meeting, session 9 (5/21/01), Town of Arlington, Massachusetts

⁷ <http://www.clearthetrail.org/news.htm> (see October 31, 2007).

⁸ Article 31, item i, 2007 Warrant, Town of Lexington, Massachusetts
<http://ci.lexington.ma.us/Selectmen/Reports/2007Warrant.pdf>
Results, 2007 Annual Town Meeting, Town of Lexington, Massachusetts
<http://ci.lexington.ma.us/TownClerk/townmeetingresults.htm>

⁹ <http://www.minutemanbikeway.org/Pages/basics.html>

¹⁰ Boston Globe, July 1, 2007, page 1.
http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2007/07/01/minuteman_hour/

¹¹ <http://www.town.sudbury.ma.us/documents/download.asp?id=3015>

See footnotes 23 and 25 in the main document, and footnote 64 in Appendix C.

¹² <http://www.tfhr.gov/safety/pedbike/pubs/05137/index.htm>

See Table 13 “Volumes and mode splits by trail” in Chapter 5, Operational Data Analysis.