

## **IV. REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL**

January 24, 2008

### **• Committees**

- 1988 February. The Sudbury Board of Selectmen BOS appointed a Bike Trail Committee to keep the Town informed about a proposed rail trail along the north-south rail bed.<sup>1</sup>
- 1990's to the present. The Town of Framingham formed the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee. This Committee was involved in rail trail discussions up until the formation of a Rail Trail Task Force. The Committee continues to address non-rail-trail bicycle and pedestrian issues.<sup>2</sup>
- 2002 June. The Framingham Board of Selectmen appointed a Rail Trail Task Force chaired by John Stasik to study the Town's section of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and recommend future actions. In August 2004, the Task Force was dissolved following the presentation of the final recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. The recommendation was to pursue the development of the rail trail.<sup>3</sup>
- 2003 October. The Sudbury BOS dissolved the Bike Trail Committee.<sup>4</sup>
- 2004 September. The Sudbury BOS created the RTCAC (Rail Trail Conversion Advisory Committee) to assist the town in examining the possibility of converting the old north-south railroad line north of Route 20 to the Concord border into a multiuse recreational path.<sup>5,6</sup> Members of the Committee were appointed in November.
- 2004 December. Cathy Lewis of CTPS assembled the Framingham-Sudbury Task Force to assist CTPS in the feasibility study for Phase 3. Task Force members included appointees from CTPS, EOT, MAPC, DCR and the Towns of Framingham and Sudbury. In October 2006, the Task Force was dissolved following release of the feasibility study.<sup>7</sup>
- 2005 September. The Concord BOS voted to form a Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee to advise the Selectmen and Town Manager on matters concerning design, development and maintenance of the rail trail<sup>8</sup>

- **Timeline for events affecting the ENTIRE Framingham-to-Lowell Rail Trail**

- 1969 Penn Central took over the Framingham-Lowell line.<sup>9</sup>
- 1976 Conrail took over the section of the Framingham-Lowell line from south Sudbury to Framingham.<sup>10</sup> This section was eventually acquired by CSX.
- 1982 Mass. Executive Office of Transportation purchased the Lowell-to-Sudbury right of way from South Sudbury to Lowell. This is the section that includes Phase 1 and Phase 2.<sup>11</sup>
- 1985 January-April. Following guidance from Rep. Bruce Freeman, Mary Tevlin and Sharon Galpin (citizens from Chelmsford) researched the ownership of the railroad right-of-way from Lowell to Sudbury as a first step in converting it to a bike path like the Cape Cod Rail Trail. They found the entire length is owned by the state and meet with Bernie Lynch (Community Development Coordinator and Acting Administrative Assistant, Chelmsford) to discuss the steps needed for converting the property into a bike path.<sup>12</sup>
- June. Meeting held at Chelmsford Town Offices with Rep. Bruce Freeman (Chelmsford), Rep. John Loring (Acton), Northern Middlesex Area Commission (NMAC, now Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG)), and representatives from Chelmsford, Westford, Carlisle, Concord, and Sudbury to discuss converting the EOT owned right-of-way into a bicycle path. The bike path would be modeled on the Cape Cod Rail Trail. Three issues were identified: 1) surveillance and discouragement of motor vehicles, 2) liability for accidents on the trail, and 3) need for town-wide approval of the proposed trail. Bruce Freeman agreed to research these issues and talk to proponents of the Cape Cod Rail Trail and report at the next meeting in September.<sup>13</sup>
- September. Meeting held at Chelmsford Town Offices to discuss the proposed Lowell-Sudbury bike path. Bruce Freeman reported on the results of the preliminary feasibility study conducted by his office. The feasibility study identified some issues, such as the crossing of Route 2 in Concord. Additional meetings were held in 1985, and again under the direction of NMAC, in 1986.<sup>14</sup>
- 1986 June. Death of Chelmsford Representative, Bruce N. Freeman<sup>15</sup>
- December. First meeting of Lowell-Sudbury Rail Trail Advisory Committee was held. Representatives from towns (Chelmsford, Sudbury, and Westford), CTPS, DEM (now DCR), MAPC, MDPW (now MHD), and NMAC (now NMCOG) were in attendance. Concerns were subsequently raised by DEM that there was insufficient support in the seven communities as evidenced by the lack of participation in the Advisory Committee.<sup>16</sup>
- 1987 May. Chelmsford Rep. Carol Cleven introduced House Bill 1455. This bill is for “An Act Creating the Bruce N. Freeman Memorial Bike Path” in Chelmsford, Westford, Carlisle, Acton, Concord and Sudbury.<sup>17</sup>
- October. Central Transportation Planning Staff, of the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization released the “Lowell-Sudbury Bicycle Path Study” covering the potential for a rail trail from the Lowell/Chelmsford line south to the Mass. Central crossing in Sudbury. The study was done in conjunction with NMAC. This study asserts the feasibility of building a bicycle/hiking trail along the rail right-of-way. The study includes maps and details the intersections and potential difficulties along the route.<sup>18</sup>

- 1989 February. A decision was made to split the proposed 20-mile bike path project into two phases. “Rather than spending limited time and resources on further study of major problem areas scattered along the 20-mile right-of-way and then proposing a multi-million dollar design and construction project, the agency representatives concluded that the project should be broken into smaller, more manageable segments and implemented in phases. The experience and momentum gained from Phase 1 can contribute to eventual completion of the entire 20-mile project, including continued funding support from the legislature”. The 7-mile stretch in Lowell, Chelmsford, and Westford was recommended for Phase 1 “because it has relatively minor physical obstacles compared to other sections”.<sup>19</sup>
- 1989 April. Governor Dukakis signed House Bill 1455 (An Act Creating the Bruce N. Freeman Memorial Bike Path) into law.<sup>20</sup>
- 1993 Train service between West Concord and North Acton was discontinued. This was the last section of the Phase 2 rail bed to be used for rail service.<sup>21</sup>
- 2000 A train derailed on the CSX rail bed in South Sudbury. CSX discontinued service on its section of the Framingham-Lowell rail line after that incident. This was the last rail service on the line. Discussions began concerning a Phase 3 of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail on the rail bed owned by CSX.
- 2007 March. MAPC and its sister organization MPO released the “Regional Bicycle Plan” for the MAPC region. The plan lists Phase 2 of the BFRT as Short-term priority (0-5 years) and Phase 3 as Conceptual, Long-term priority (10-20 years).<sup>22</sup>

April 26. Senator Steven Pangiotakos and Representative Jamie Eldridge invited state officials, senators, representatives and trail proponents to attend the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Forum at the State House. Speakers in support of the trail included Senator Pam Resor, Senator Karen Spilka, Rep. Jamie Eldridge, Rep. Robert Hargraves, Rep. Geoffrey Hall and MassHighway Commissioner Luisa Paiewonsky. Attendees included officials from MassHighway, EOT, CTPS, MAPC, NMCOG, MBTA, and DCR. Senators and representatives from all of the towns through which the BFRT passes also attended along with Town officials from Acton, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Framingham, and Westford.<sup>23</sup>

October 24. MassHighway organized a Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Coordinating Committee to exchange information and coordinate activities in the communities along the Phase 2 and Phase 3 sections of the trail. Only proponents of the rail trail were invited to attend. The meeting at the MassHighway District 4 office was chaired by Lawrence Cash, Project Manager for Phase 2.<sup>24</sup>

December. The Concord River Greenway organization in Lowell received a \$25,000 grant from the EPA for community outreach and planning for a connector between the Greenway (along the Concord River in Lowell) and the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. Construction of the first sections of the Concord River Greenway will begin in 2009.<sup>25</sup>

## • Timeline for Phase 1, Chelmsford/Lowell line south to Route 225 in Westford

- 1989 Phase 1 was put on hold due to the statewide fiscal crisis.<sup>26</sup>
- 1995 MassHighway initiated actions to design and construct Phase 1.<sup>27</sup> MassHighway led the design and development of Phase 1.
- Chelmsford and Westford Selectmen accepted responsibility for policing and maintenance of the rail trail in those Towns.<sup>28</sup>
- November. MassHighway Project Review Committee approved design funding for Phase 1.<sup>29</sup>
- 1997 June. Memorandum of Agreement was executed between MassHighway, DEM and the municipalities of Chelmsford, Westford and Lowell to coordinate the design and construction of Phase 1.<sup>30</sup>
- August. MassHighway selected Holden Engineering of Concord, NH for design of the bike path.<sup>31</sup>
- State Rep. Carol Cleven earmarked state construction funding for Phase 1 in the 1998 state budget.<sup>32</sup>
- December. A public information meeting took place in Chelmsford to discuss the Preliminary Corridor Report prepared by Holden Engineering.<sup>33</sup>
- 1998 January-June. DEM and NMCOG conducted interviews with each of the abutters to solicit concerns so they could be addressed in the design.<sup>34</sup>
- April. A new group, Chelmsford Community Impact, was formed to urge the BOS to reverse their 1995 vote for construction of the rail trail.<sup>35</sup>
- June 23. A public hearing on the 25% (preliminary) design took place in Chelmsford. Some abutters voiced major concerns.<sup>36</sup>
- July. The design team met with abutters in the Hart Pond area to discuss fencing alternatives.<sup>37</sup>
- December 2. A public hearing on the 75% design convened by MassHighway took place in Chelmsford.<sup>38</sup>
- 2000 January. MEPA ruled that no Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was needed.<sup>39</sup>
- 2001 September. Phase I was advertised for construction. (estimated cost \$2.7M).<sup>40</sup>  
The design was close to being complete at that time. The project was advertised at that time in an attempt to secure CMAQ funding.<sup>41</sup>
- September. The Federal Highway Administration approved CMAQ funding for construction of Phase 1.<sup>42</sup>
- December. Notice of Intent was filed with the Town of Westford.<sup>43</sup>
- 2002 January. Notice of Intent was filed with the Town of Chelmsford. The Notices of Intent were filed at this point in the process with the expectation that Orders of Conditions would be in place prior to the

start of construction. Since the interval between advertising and contract execution can take several months, it makes it less likely the Order of Conditions would need to be renewed during the construction process if they were issued at this point in the process.<sup>44</sup>

March. Westford issued an Order of Conditions.<sup>45</sup>

June. Chelmsford issued an Order of Conditions. It included a requirement that “relocated soils” from the railbed be tested for hazardous materials. MassHighway thought there was no justification for this requirement and requested a ruling from DEP. MassHighway had concerns about the unforeseeable project costs that could result from the soil tests.<sup>46</sup>

Construction of a tunnel for the rail trail under Route 3 in Chelmsford began as part of the regional Route 3 reconstruction project.<sup>47</sup>

2003 September. DEP concurred that there was no justification for the soil-testing requirement, as specified by the Chelmsford Conservation Commission, and issued a Superceding Order of Conditions for Chelmsford that eliminated the soil-testing requirement. Provision was made by MassHighway to provide a professional for addressing issues of potentially hazardous materials should such issues arise during construction.<sup>48</sup>

2005 January. Bids were opened. S&R Construction was the low bidder (\$3.7M).<sup>49</sup>

March. Shortly before the award of a construction contract for Phase 1, MassHighway stopped the process because of concern over possible cost overruns due to movement and removal of potentially contaminated soil in the rail bed. This concern arose because of design and construction problems that occurred during construction of the Assabet River Rail Trail in Marlborough and Hudson.<sup>50</sup>

July. The S&R bid was officially rejected by MassHighway. The project was redesigned and readvertised.<sup>51</sup>

2005-2007 MassHighway and Holden Engineering redesigned the rail trail to keep as much of the soil as possible within the rail bed. Special provisions were added to the construction specifications to address testing and handling of potentially hazardous material. The excavated railbed ballast will be used instead of off-site gravel borrow.<sup>52</sup>

2006 August. DEP extended the Superceding Order of Conditions for Chelmsford. This extension allowed construction to proceed without revisiting the Order of Conditions.<sup>53</sup>

September. Westford issued a new Order of Conditions. The original Order of Conditions had expired and additional Conservation Commission hearings were thus required.<sup>54</sup>

October. Route 3 tunnel was completed except for paving. Paving will be performed as part of Phase 1 construction.

December. The Federal Highway Administration approved CMAQ funding for the second time.<sup>55</sup>

2007 February. Massachusetts Emergency Transportation Bond Bill, to fund long delayed projects, was signed into law. The Bond Bill provides the funding for the state’s fraction of the overall Phase 1 construction costs.<sup>56</sup>

April. A bill to set the terms of the bonds to be issued under the Emergency Transportation Bond Bill became law. It had an emergency preamble, so it went into effect ten days after passage. MassHighway began opening bids and advertising new transportation projects.<sup>57</sup>

April. Phase 1 was advertised for construction for the second time (\$4.95M estimated cost).<sup>58</sup>

June, Bids for Phase 1 were opened. S&R Construction of Lowell, MA was the low bidder (\$4.24M). This is the same firm that constructed the Nashua River Rail Trail.<sup>59</sup>

July. Contract to construct Phase 1 was awarded for the first time.<sup>60</sup>

August. Notice to Proceed (letter) was issued<sup>61</sup> and a preconstruction conference was held. Actual construction began during September.

October 9. MassHighway held a formal ground breaking ceremony in Chelmsford.<sup>62, 63</sup>

## • Time Line for Phase 2, Route 225 in Westford South to the Mass. Central Crossing in Sudbury

2000 Acton Town Meeting approved \$25,000 of CPA funds for a feasibility study.<sup>64</sup>

2002 In October, the first meeting of the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail took place in Concord.<sup>65</sup>

2003 February 26. Acton Town staff and engineering consultants Fay, Spofford and Thorndike met to discuss a feasibility study for rail trail conversion in that town.

August. The Central Transportation Planning Staff of the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization released a study of the “Proposed Concord-Sudbury Bikeway.” This is an update of the 1987 CTPS “Lowell-Sudbury Bicycle Path Feasibility Study”. The update addresses only the Concord and Sudbury sections of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. The focus is on automotive traffic volumes, crash data and intersecting streets. No impediments to a rail trail were identified.<sup>66</sup>

2004 January. Contractor design firm Fay, Spofford & Thorndike released the “Town of Acton Bruce N. Freeman Memorial Bicycle Path, Feasibility Study”. This study covers the 4.6 miles in Acton. The study concludes that a rail trail is feasible, but flags special concern over the crossing of Route 2A/119 near the busy intersection with Route 27. The problematic crossing of Route 2 near the prison rotary was not included in the study.<sup>67</sup>

A contractor carried out a title review of the section of the rail trail in Acton.

In Concord, Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail raised \$25,000 by August that was subsequently given to the Town of Concord which used the money to fund a feasibility study of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail in Concord.

2005 February. The Town of Concord selected Fay, Spofford and Thorndike as the contractor to carry out the feasibility study.<sup>68</sup>

Acton Town Meeting unanimously approved \$75,000 of CPA funds for rail trail right-of-way negotiations and a study of a safe Route 2A crossing.<sup>69</sup>

May. FST met with Concord planners and engineers to discuss their draft report.

June 16. A preliminary report of the FST feasibility study was presented to the Town of Concord.<sup>70</sup>

August, Contractor Fay, Spofford & Thorndike released the “Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Environmental and Engineering Assessment Report: Concord Section”. This feasibility study covers 3.5 miles of the 3.6 miles of the right-of-way in Concord. The study excludes the Route 2 crossing near the prison rotary.<sup>71</sup>

September. Concord BOS voted to form a Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee to advise the Selectmen and Town Manager on matters concerning design, development and maintenance of the rail trail.<sup>72</sup>

2005 to present. The Route 2 crossing is included as part of the ongoing deliberations concerning the redesign of the Route 2 (Prison) Rotary. Earth Tech has teamed with Fay, Spofford and Thorndike to incorporate the rail trail into the Route 2 rotary redesign project.<sup>73</sup>

2006 March. The Towns of Westford, Carlisle and Acton submitted to MassHighway the Project Initiation Form and the Project Need Form to formally institute the Phase 2 rail-trail project in those Towns.<sup>74</sup>

April. Acton Town Meeting unanimously approved \$175,000 of CPA funds as start-up funds for the section of the rail trail in Acton. Funds are to be used for right-of-way acquisition, study of a trail route around or through Rex Lumber and surveying.<sup>75</sup>

April. Concord Town Meeting approved \$160,000 of CPA funds for a centerline survey and title review, in-depth environmental assessment, historic artifacts inventory, and preliminary design.<sup>76</sup>

The Friends of Concord Rural Trails was formed with the goal of minimizing the width of the trail and constructing the trail with a non-asphalt surface.<sup>77</sup>

May 6. Westford Town Meeting unanimously approved \$20,000 of CPA funds for the 25% design of the rail trail from Route 225 south to the Carlisle town line (0.25 miles).<sup>78</sup>

May. Carlisle Town Meeting unanimously approved \$20,000 of CPA funds for the 25% design of the rail trail from the Westford Town line to the Acton Town line (0.25 miles).

August 23. The Towns of Westford, Acton and Carlisle issued an RFP for the 25% design of the rail trail.

October 11. The Westford Conservation Commission unanimously voted to issue a new Order of Conditions for Phase 1 of the rail trail.

December. The Towns of Westford, Carlisle and Acton selected the design firm of Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI) to carry out the 25% design of the rail trail in those Towns.<sup>79</sup>

2007 January. Concord Citizens for Responsible Land Stewardship and Sudbury Citizens for Responsible Land Stewardship requested a determination from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) concerning whether the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail constitutes a common plan or undertaking requiring the filing of an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) or mandating the preparation of an Environmental Impact Review (EIR).<sup>80</sup>

March. Deerin Babbit-Brott, Assistant Secretary of the EOEA, directed towns along the right of way to determine their review obligations individually, but determined that the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail does not constitute a common plan or undertaking for purposes of environmental review.<sup>81</sup>

April. Acton Town Meeting unanimously approved \$202,000 of CPA funds for the 25% design of the rail trail and for environmental liability insurance.<sup>82</sup>

February. GPI held a project kickoff meeting with the three towns.

May through September. A series of hearings were held in Concord that focused on specific aspects of the 25% design of the rail trail in that Town. Hearings were led by the contractor Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. VHB and the Town's Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee.<sup>83</sup> Significant concern was voiced, especially from residents who live near White Pond.<sup>84</sup>



June. GPI and town officials from Westford, Carlisle and Acton met with key rail trail abutters.<sup>85</sup> These abutters voiced no opposition to the project.

June 12. The first public hearing concerning the 25% design of the rail trail in Westford, Carlisle and Acton was held at Acton Town Hall. GPI and Acton Town Planner Roland Bartls facilitated the discussions. No speaker voiced opposition to the trail or to the design details presented. A major result of the hearing was a strong consensus to carry the rail trail over Routes 2A/119 on a bridge.<sup>86</sup>

July-September – A survey of Concord residents funded by a private citizen indicated that most respondents to the survey are aware of the project and would like the rail trail constructed. A “recreational stone dust trail” was preferred over an “asphalt commuter trail”.<sup>87</sup>

August 10. GPI submitted a Project Initiation Form to MassHighway on behalf of the towns of Westford, Carlisle and Acton.<sup>88</sup> The preliminary design includes rehabilitation of seven small existing bridges plus the construction of a large new bridge over Routes 2A/119.

The group A Rail Trail for Everyone was formed in Concord with the goal of having a paved rail trail built to shared-use path standards.

November 5. Concord Special Town Meeting considered two articles related to proposed rail trails. The articles were submitted by Friends of Concord Rural Trails. The first article asked for a more extensive environmental review than is currently underway. The second article asked that the 25% design be approved by a vote of Town Meeting before being submitted to MassHighway. Both articles were defeated.

• **Time Line for Phase 3, Mass. Central Crossing in Sudbury South to Route 9 in Framingham.**

2000 April. CSX train derailed in south Sudbury. Subsequently, CSX decided to discontinue rail service on what became known as Phase 3 of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.<sup>89</sup>

2001 Representatives from Sudbury, Framingham, the MetroWest Growth management Committee and Metropolitan Planning Council met to discuss plans to purchase 4.8 miles of the CSX rail bed and turn it into a bicycle trail.<sup>90</sup>

August. The Towns of Sudbury and Framingham asked for \$350,000 from the Department of Environmental Management for purchase of the CSX rail bed. The application was subsequently turned down.<sup>91</sup>

2002 April 25, representatives from Sudbury, Framingham and CSX met to begin discussions of the use of the CSX-owned corridor for a rail trail.

May 13. The Framingham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee led a tour of the rail bed in Framingham. Opinions both for against the rail trail were voiced during the walk.<sup>92</sup>

Fall. The group Citizens Against Rail Trails (CART) was formed in Framingham.

October 22. Massachusetts communities involved in negotiations with CSX for acquisition of unused rights-of-way for rail trails sent representatives to a meeting in Worcester.

October 31. The Framingham Rail Trail Task Force held its first heavily attended public hearing. Abutters voiced considerable concern.

In the fall, the Framingham Rail Trail Task Force held three meetings with abutters of the proposed rail trail.

December. The Framingham Board of Selectmen voted to support a study by CTPS of the feasibility of converting the CSX corridor into a rail trail.<sup>93 94</sup>

2003. June 23. The Framingham Rail Trail Task Force held a second heavily attended public hearing concerning the rail trail.

2004 August 19. The Framingham Rail Trail Task Force gave their final report to the BOS recommending that the Town pursue the development of the rail trail. After that, the Task Force was dissolved.<sup>95</sup>

December. Cathy Lewis of CTPS assembled the Framingham-Sudbury Task Force to assist CTPS in the feasibility study for Phase 3. Task Force members included appointees from CTPS, EOT, MAPC, DCR and the Towns of Framingham and Sudbury.

2005. CSX removed rails and ties along the rail bed.

January 11. The first meeting was held of the Task Force established by CTPS to study the feasibility of a rail trail on the Phase-3 section.

February 2. The first public hearing of the Framingham-Sudbury Task Force was held at the Framingham Memorial Building.<sup>96</sup>

February 17. A second Task Force hearing was held in Sudbury Town Hall.<sup>97</sup>

2006 August 22. Cathy Lewis presented a synopsis of the CTPS Phase 3 study to the Framingham Board of Selectmen as part of a discussion of a request by the Town of Framingham to “rail bank” the rail bed. The Selectmen unanimously approved a “Letter of Intent” to CSX to begin negotiations and a request to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to “rail bank” the corridor while CSX negotiations proceed. STB approved the request.<sup>98</sup>

October. CTPS released the report “Feasibility Study for a Proposed Extension of the Bruce N. Freeman Memorial Path in Sudbury and Framingham”.<sup>99</sup>

2007 January 11. Massachusetts communities involved in negotiations with CSX for acquisition of unused rights-of-way for rail trails met in Leominster. All communities except Sudbury sent a Town official to the meeting.

March. The Framingham BOS sent a letter to their elected state officials urging that the EOT include the CSX corridor in the list of major acquisitions to be negotiated between the state and CSX.<sup>100</sup>

April. The Acton BOS, in support of a regional Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, voted to send a letter to their elected state officials urging that the EOT include the CSX corridor in the list of major acquisitions to be negotiated between the state and CSX.<sup>101</sup>

- **Construction Funding**

Phase 1. MassHighway estimated a construction cost of \$4.9 M. Bids came in below this estimate. The chosen low-bid contract is for \$4.2M. Funding comes from the state (20%) and from the Federal Highway Administration under “Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality CMAQ” (80%). There was no requirement for partial funding from either Chelmsford or Westford.

Funding requirements by the Towns for Phase 2 differ from those for Phase 1. Specifically, the state now requires the Towns to fund at least 10% of the total of design and construction costs. State funding is limited to 10% of the total with the remaining 80% coming from federal highway funds.

Phase 2. The Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization MPO has changed both the amount and dates for funding in its Transportation Improvement Plan TIP for construction of the Phase 2 section of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. The most recent TIP includes \$3 M in the 2011 funds.<sup>102</sup> This amount is recognized as insufficient to construct all of Phase 2.

- **Trail Designs**

Phase 1 is designed according to the standards for “Shared-Use Paths” as outlined in the standards established by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials AASHTO. These standards have been incorporated in the Chapter on Shared-Use Paths in the 2006 MassHighway Project Development and Design Guidelines.<sup>103</sup> The travel surface is 10 feet wide with a 2-foot shoulder on each side.

Phase 2 trail design depends on the funding sources. If funded in part with state and federal monies (Transportation Enhancements of CMAQ funding), a multi-use trail must be designed according to Shared-Use Path standards and have a surface that is ADA compliant. GPI has recommended a 12-foot-wide path for Westford, Carlisle and Acton. In Concord, trail design is under intensive discussion.

- **Surfaces**

Rail trails built with federal funding must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act ADA. This requirement influences the choice of trail surface requiring that it be of sufficient width and firmness to permit handicapped access.

Phase 1 in Chelmsford and Westford will have a bituminous concrete (asphalt) travel surface.

GPI has recommended an asphalt surface for the Phase 2 section in Westford, Carlisle and Acton.

The trail surface has been a matter of active discussion during the hearings of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee in Concord.

## Acronyms

AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
BOS	Board of Selectmen
BFRT	Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
CART	Citizens Against Rail Trails
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
CPA	Community Preservation Act
CSX	A railroad company
CTPS	Central Transportation Planning Staff
DCR	Department of Conservation and Recreation (Formerly DEM)
DEM	Department of Environmental Management (now DCR)
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
ENF	Environmental Notification Form
EOEA	Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
EOT	Executive Office of Transportation
FST	Fay, Spofford and Thorndike
GPI	Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.
MAPC	Metropolitan Area Planning Council
MDPW	Massachusetts Department of Public Works
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NMAC	Northern Middlesex Area Commission (now NMCOG)
NMCOG	Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (Formerly NMAC)
RTCAC	Rail Trail Conversion Advisory Committee
STB	Surface Transportation Board
TIP	Transportation Improvement Plan
VHB	Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

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- <sup>1</sup> Sudbury Town Crier, February 25, 1988.
- <sup>2</sup> [http://www.framinghamma.gov/planning\\_dept/tr\\_bicyc\\_ped.htm](http://www.framinghamma.gov/planning_dept/tr_bicyc_ped.htm)
- <sup>3</sup> Minutes, Framingham Board of Selectmen
- <sup>4</sup> Letter from Town Manager to Bike Trail Committee member R. C. Williamson.
- <sup>5</sup> [http://www.town.sudbury.ma.us/committees/committee\\_past\\_meetings.asp?dept=BoardOfSelectmen](http://www.town.sudbury.ma.us/committees/committee_past_meetings.asp?dept=BoardOfSelectmen) Meeting of September 7, 2004.
- <sup>6</sup> Minutes, Sudbury Board of Selectmen, November 4, 2004, agenda item Rail Trail Conversion Advisory Committee – Appointments.  
[http://www.town.sudbury.ma.us/committees/committee\\_past\\_meetings.asp?dept=BoardOfSelectmen](http://www.town.sudbury.ma.us/committees/committee_past_meetings.asp?dept=BoardOfSelectmen)
- <sup>7</sup> <http://www.bostonmpo.org/bostonmpo/resources/Freeman/FrSudfinalreport.pdf>
- <sup>8</sup> Minutes, Concord Board of Selectmen
- <sup>9</sup> Ronald Dale Karr, Railroads of Southern New England, Branch Line Press, 1995.
- <sup>10</sup> Ronald Dale Karr, Railroads of Southern New England, Branch Line Press, 1995.
- <sup>11</sup> The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Environmental and Engineering Assessment, Fay, Spofford and Thorndike, December 2006. Page 3-1  
<http://www.town.sudbury.ma.us/documents/download.asp?id=3097>
- <sup>12</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07
- <sup>13</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07
- <sup>14</sup> [http://www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/about/about\\_bruce\\_freeman.html](http://www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/about/about_bruce_freeman.html)
- <sup>15</sup> [http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/about/about\\_bruce\\_freeman.html](http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/about/about_bruce_freeman.html)
- <sup>16</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07
- <sup>17</sup> [http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/about/about\\_bruce\\_freeman\\_speech.html?/about\\_bruce\\_freeman\\_files/1455.jpg](http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/about/about_bruce_freeman_speech.html?/about_bruce_freeman_files/1455.jpg)
- <sup>18</sup> <http://www.town.sudbury.ma.us/documents/dl/3717/Lowell-Sudbury.pdf>
- <sup>19</sup> Excerpts from letter from James Gutensohn, Commissioner DEM to Dennis Ready, Chairman Chelmsford Board of Selectmen
- <sup>20</sup> [http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/about/about\\_bruce\\_freeman\\_speech.html?/about\\_bruce\\_freeman\\_files/1455.jpg](http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/about/about_bruce_freeman_speech.html?/about_bruce_freeman_files/1455.jpg)
- <sup>21</sup> Ronald Dale Karr, Railroads of Southern New England, Branch Line Press, 1995.
- <sup>22</sup> [http://www.mapc.org/transportation/trans\\_alternatives/Bike\\_plan\\_PDFs/Bike\\_Plan\\_FINAL\\_version\\_3-14-07.pdf](http://www.mapc.org/transportation/trans_alternatives/Bike_plan_PDFs/Bike_Plan_FINAL_version_3-14-07.pdf)
- <sup>23</sup> <http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/events/20070426-statehouse.html>
- <sup>24</sup> Minutes, MassHighway District 4 meeting of 10/24/2007. Only draft minutes currently available.
- <sup>25</sup> [http://www.lowellsun.com/local/ci\\_7779345](http://www.lowellsun.com/local/ci_7779345)
- <sup>26</sup> The Tab, August 8, 1989.
- <sup>27</sup> Steve McLaughlin, Project Manager, MassHighway, 12/7/2007.
- <sup>28</sup> Town Records, Towns of Chelmsford and Westford
- <sup>29</sup> Steve McLaughlin, Project Manager, MassHighway, 12/7/2007.
- <sup>30</sup> Memorandum of Agreement Bruce Freeman Bikeway, June 11, 1997.
- <sup>31</sup> Steve McLaughlin, Project Manager, MassHighway, 12/7/2007.
- <sup>32</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07
- <sup>33</sup> Boston Globe, May 24, 1998
- <sup>34</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07
- <sup>35</sup> Boston Globe, May 24, 1998
- <sup>36</sup> MassHighway Notice of Public Hearing.
- <sup>37</sup> Dan O'Brien, DCR
- <sup>38</sup> MassHighway Notice of Public Hearing.
- <sup>39</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07
- <sup>40</sup> Chelmsford Independent, October 3, 2001.
- <sup>41</sup> Steve McLaughlin, Project Manager, MassHighway, 12/7/2007.

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<sup>42</sup> Steve McLaughlin, Project Manager, MassHighway, 12/7/2007.

<sup>43</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07

<sup>44</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07

<sup>45</sup> Town Records, Town of Westford, MA

<sup>46</sup> Town Records, Town of Chelmsford, MA

<sup>47</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07

<sup>48</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07

<sup>49</sup> Steve McLaughlin, Project Manager, MassHighway, 12/7/2007.

<sup>50</sup> Boston Globe, June 16, 2005

<sup>51</sup> Steve McLaughlin, Project Manager, MassHighway, 12/7/2007.

<sup>52</sup> Steve McLaughlin, Project Manager, MassHighway, 12/7/2007.

<sup>53</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07

<sup>54</sup> Town Records, Town of Westford

<sup>55</sup> Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, 11/29/07

<sup>56</sup> Legislative Records, Commonwealth of Massachusetts

<sup>57</sup> Legislative Records, Commonwealth of Massachusetts

<sup>58</sup> Chelmsford Independent, April 12, 2007

<sup>59</sup> Steve McLaughlin, Project Manager, MassHighway, 12/7/2007.

<sup>60</sup> Letter from MassHighway to S & R Construction

<sup>61</sup> Letter from MassHighway to S & R Construction

<sup>62</sup> <http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/events/2007100907-Groundbreaking.html>

<sup>63</sup> <http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/news/20071010-chelmsfordindependent.html>

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.acton-ma.gov/minutes.asp>

<sup>65</sup> <http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/>

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.bostonmpo.org/bostonmpo/resources/MAGIC/magic.pdf>

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.town.sudbury.ma.us/documents/dl/1802/BruceFreemanFeasibilityStudy.pdf>

<sup>68</sup> Concord Journal, February 17, 2005

<sup>69</sup> Boston Globe, June 16, 2005

<sup>70</sup> Boston Globe, June 16, 2005

<sup>71</sup> [http://www.concordnet.org/dplm/BFRT\\_Assessment%20Complete.pdf](http://www.concordnet.org/dplm/BFRT_Assessment%20Complete.pdf)

<sup>72</sup> [http://www.concordma.gov/pages/ConcordMA\\_Freeman/index](http://www.concordma.gov/pages/ConcordMA_Freeman/index)

<sup>73</sup> Jen Shemowat, Fay, Spofford and Thorndike

<sup>74</sup> [http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/pdf/BFRT\\_MHD\\_ProjectInitiationForm.pdf](http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/pdf/BFRT_MHD_ProjectInitiationForm.pdf)

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.acton-ma.gov/minutes.asp>

<sup>76</sup> [http://www.concordma.gov/pages/ConcordMA\\_BOS/2006actions](http://www.concordma.gov/pages/ConcordMA_BOS/2006actions)

<sup>77</sup> <http://www.concordruraltrails.org/>

<sup>78</sup> [http://www.westford-ma.gov/pages/government/westfordma\\_townmeeting/index](http://www.westford-ma.gov/pages/government/westfordma_townmeeting/index)

<sup>79</sup> [http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/pdf/BRFT\\_Design\\_contract\\_\\_08\\_2006.pdf](http://brucefreemanrailtrail.org/pdf/BRFT_Design_contract__08_2006.pdf)

<sup>80</sup> Letter from Matthew Watsky, attorney, to Deerin Babitt-Brote, Director of EOE, dated January 3, 2007.

<sup>81</sup> Letter from Deerin-Babitt-Brote to Mathew Watsky, dated March 7, 2007.

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.acton-ma.gov/minutes.asp>

<sup>83</sup> [http://www.concordma.gov/pages/ConcordMA\\_Freeman/index](http://www.concordma.gov/pages/ConcordMA_Freeman/index)

<sup>84</sup> Boston Globe, June 22, 2006

<sup>85</sup> GPI Project Initiation Form

<sup>86</sup> Acton Beacon. June 14, 2007

<sup>87</sup> The Concord Journal, September 6, 2007, "Residents react to rail trail survey results". The survey itself can be viewed at:

<sup>88</sup> [http://www.responsivemanagement.com/download/reports/Concord\\_MA\\_Rail\\_Trails\\_Report.pdf](http://www.responsivemanagement.com/download/reports/Concord_MA_Rail_Trails_Report.pdf)

<sup>89</sup> GPI and MassHighway correspondence.

<sup>90</sup> MetroWest Daily News, July 16, 2001

<sup>90</sup> MetroWest Daily News, July 18, 2001

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- <sup>91</sup> Boston Globe, August 2, 2001.
- <sup>92</sup> MetroWest Daily News, May 14, 2002
- <sup>93</sup> <http://www.framinghamma.gov/weblink7/Browse.aspx?startid=11>
- <sup>94</sup> Boston Globe, December 9, 2002.
- <sup>95</sup> Boston Globe, August 26, 2004
- <sup>96</sup> Boston Globe, February 6, 2005
- <sup>97</sup> MetroWest Daily News, February 20, 2005
- <sup>98</sup> <http://www.framinghamma.gov/weblink7/Browse.aspx?startid=11>
- <sup>99</sup> <http://www.town.sudbury.ma.us/documents/dl/3015/FrSudfinalreprt103006.pdf>
- <sup>100</sup> <http://www.framinghamma.gov/weblink7/Browse.aspx?startid=11>
- <sup>101</sup> <https://www.acton-ma.gov/minutes.asp>
- <sup>102</sup> <http://www.ctps.org/bostonmpo/resources/tip/tip.htm>
- <sup>103</sup> <http://www.mhd.state.ma.us/default.asp?pgid=content/designGuide&sid=about>