



For immediate release
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DCR SCHEDULES PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS CONVERTING RAILROAD BRIDGE IN LOWER MILLS

BOSTON - The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has scheduled a public meeting for November 17 to discuss the agency's plans to convert a former railroad bridge into a pedestrian bridge across the Neponset River between Dorchester and Milton.

The bridge, built in 1917 as a railway spur serving the former Walter Baker Chocolate Factory, is in severe disrepair. The project will include repairing the steel structure of the bridge, replacing the existing railroad ties with a new 10-foot-wide timber deck, extending a new paved path to existing pathways on both sides of the river, and reconstructing the eroded riverbank on the Milton side of the Neponset.

Converting it to a pedestrian bridge will create a connection between the Neponset River Greenway's bicycle and pedestrian path and the residential area that includes the Baker Square Condominiums.

The public meeting will be November 17, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., in the Park Mill Function Room of the Baker Square Condominiums, 1243 Adams Street, Dorchester.

"This bridge will create a nice, direct connection between the pathway and residential areas across the river, helping make the greenway easily accessible for everyone," said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr.

"This bridge project is another positive step toward opening up the majestic beauty of the Neponset River for the use and enjoyment of area residents," said State Senator Brian A. Joyce.

"I am very pleased that the Patrick Administration continues to prioritize projects like this along the Neponset River," said State Representative Linda Dorcena Forry. "This pedestrian bridge will increase access for people throughout our community to enjoy this beautiful natural resource."

Funding for the estimated \$843,300 project will come from the Patrick-Murray Administration's Accelerated Bridge Program. Winn Development, which is redeveloping the

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historic Baker mill complex, also is contributing \$70,000 toward the cost of construction as part of the company's agreement with DCR to upgrade land along the Neponset River.

Work is expected to start this winter and be completed in late summer 2011.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.