



DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

FEBRUARY 6, 2020

AT

TOWN HALL – REED ROOM

BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

7:00 PM

FOR THE PROPOSED

MINUTEMAN BIKEWAY EXTENSION PROJECT

Project No. 607738

Roadway Project Management

IN THE TOWN OF BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION**

**JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER**

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING**

Project File No. 607738

A Design Public Hearing Meeting will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed Minuteman Bikeway Extension project in Bedford, MA.

WHERE: Town Hall, Reed Room
10 Mudge Way
Bedford, MA 01730

WHEN: Thursday, February 6, 2020 @ 7PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Minuteman Bikeway Extension project. All views and comments made at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of two segments. The first one includes reconstructing the east-west stretch of Railroad Ave, between its intersection with South Road and about 700 feet west of Highland Avenue (approximately 0.2 mile) where the road takes a sharp turn (north). A 10-foot-wide separated shared-use-path and 5.5-foot-wide sidewalks are provided along the south and north sides of Railroad Ave, respectively. From this point the proposed trail continues as a 12-foot wide shared-used-path (with a 3-foot-wide shoulder on each side) in a westerly direction along the existing Reformatory Branch Trail, terminating at the Concord-Bedford Townline, approximately 1.7 miles. A box-culvert is required to allow the trail to pass below Concord Road.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Town of Bedford is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be discussed at this hearing.

Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing shall be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the hearing begins, with an engineer in attendance to answer questions regarding this project. A project handout will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below.

Written statements and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the Public hearing regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Roadway Project Management, Project File No. 607738. Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after this Public Hearing. Project inquiries may be emailed to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us

This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the meeting.

In case of inclement weather, hearing cancellation announcements will be posted on the internet at <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/>

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER



Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is committed to building and maintaining a transportation infrastructure that is both safe and efficient for all who use our roadways, bridges, bicycle facilities and pedestrian paths, while maintaining the integrity of the environment.

As part of the design process for this project, we are conducting this public hearing to explain the proposed improvements, listen to your comments and answer any questions you may have. At the conclusion of the hearing, MassDOT will review all of your comments and, where feasible, incorporate them into the design of the project.

We recognize that road and bridge construction can create inconveniences for the public. MassDOT places a great deal of emphasis on minimizing the temporary disruptive effects of construction.

MassDOT encourages input from local communities and values your opinions. Please be assured that we will undertake no project without addressing the concerns of the community.

Sincerely,

Patricia A Leavenworth, P. E.
Chief Engineer

WHAT IS A PUBLIC HEARING?

WHY A PUBLIC HEARING?

To provide an assured method whereby the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can furnish to the public information concerning the State's highway construction proposals, and to afford every interested resident of the area an opportunity to be heard on any proposed project. At the same time, the hearings afford the Commonwealth an additional opportunity to receive information from local sources which would be of value to the State in making its final decisions to what design should be advanced for development.

WHY NOT A VOTE ON HIGHWAY PLANS?

The hearings are not intended to be a popular referendum for the purpose of determining the nature of a proposed improvement by a majority of those present. They do not relieve the duly constituted officials of a State highway department of the necessity for making decisions in State highway matters for which they are charged with full responsibility.

WHAT DOES A PUBLIC HEARING ACCOMPLISH?

It is designed to ensure the opportunity for, or the availability of, a forum to provide factual information which is pertinent to the determination of the final alternative considered by the state to best serve the public interest, and on which improvement projects are proposed to be undertaken.

It is important that the people of the area express their views in regard to the proposal being presented, so that views can be properly recorded in the minutes of the meeting. These minutes will be carefully studied and taken into consideration in the determination of the final design.

RIGHT OF WAY ISSUES

A secure right of way is necessary for this project. Temporary construction easements may be required. Your municipality is responsible for acquiring all necessary rights in private or public lands. If your property is affected, your rights are fully protected under law.

1. REASON FOR PROJECT

The completion of this project will serve local needs. The proposed enhancement will also be in the interest of others in the greater community, and provide for the public good.

2. WHO CONTACTS ME?

Representatives of the municipality have already contacted or will contact you. They will explain the procedures used in acquiring any necessary rights in land.

3. WHAT ABOUT DONATIONS? WHAT IS A RIGHT OF ENTRY?

Town officials will often seek donations, of parcels, where permanent rights are required. This procedure will minimize the acquisition cost for your community.

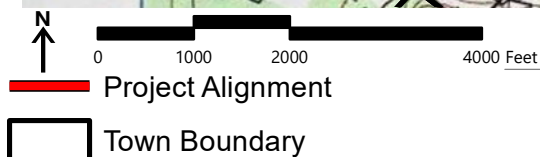
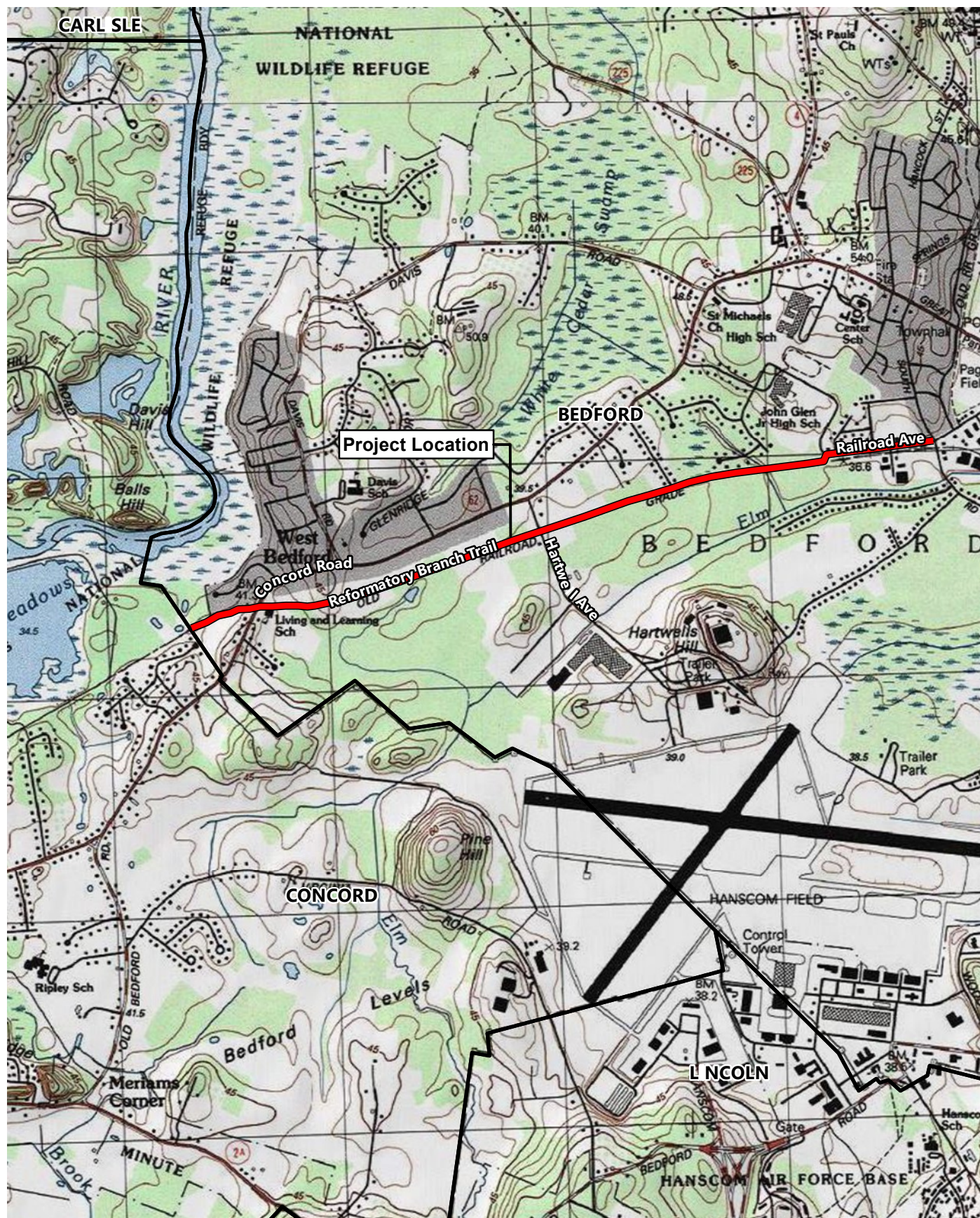
A Right of Entry is a document that is signed by the owner. It allows the Contractor to perform certain types of work on the owner's land. The work is usually minor in nature and frequently consists of loaming/seeding behind sidewalks, new driveway apron work, grading/sloping, and wetland protection, etc. The rights granted are temporary in nature.

4. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR THE ACQUIRED PARCELS?

In the event that donations are not considered, or completed, every effort will be made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded. Municipal and/or outside appraisers will complete an appraisal. Consideration is given to the type of rights needed, whether in fee, permanent or temporary easements. The appraisal will be the basis for arriving at a fair price (for damages that result).

5. MUST I ACCEPT THE MUNICIPALITY OFFER?

No, if the owner feels that the offer is not fair the owner may petition the courts. This action does not stop or delay the acquisition. The action must occur within 3 years. The owner(s) may be paid pro tanto (for the time being). The pro tanto payment will not prejudice the court's final decision.



Minuteman Bikeway Extension Bedford, MA

Figure 1 - Project Site Locus
Source Info: USGS

BEDFORD – MINUTEMAN BIKEWAY EXTENSION

Project File No. 607738

Project Description: The Minuteman Bikeway currently ends at Depot Park, in Bedford, near the intersection of South Road and Loomis Street. This project proposes to extend the bikeway by making a 1,665-foot portion of Railroad Avenue (approximately 0.3 mile) accessible to bikes, and constructing 1.7 miles of bikeway on the Reformatory Branch Trail, from Railroad Avenue past Concord Road to the Bedford/Concord Town line.

The existing Minuteman Bikeway is used as a transportation corridor for regional commuters as well as local residents. Extending the bikeway to the Bedford/Concord Town line will provide on-road links to Railroad Avenue, Hartwell Road and Concord Road (Route 62) in addition to providing access to the schools and connecting the Mary Putnam Webber 20-acre wildlife preserve, the 19-acre Elm Brook Conservation Area and the 15-acre Dellovo Conservation Area. Existing trails through these conservation areas are part of a network of trails that also meander through MassPort properties along the Concord town line south of the trail extension.

The Reformatory Branch Trail is currently unpaved and does not provide safe crossings at Hartwell Avenue or Concord Road. In some portions, the trail is overgrown with vegetation, leaving only a narrow beaten path.

The width of Railroad Avenue varies between 20 and 27 feet, the pavement condition is poor, and although it's in close proximity to the Bedford High School, only provides intermittent sidewalks. A substandard curve near the entrance of the bike path requires speed advisory signs, substandard drainage causes ponding in several areas, and undefined curb cuts result in parking along the layout line.

This project proposes to construct a 12-foot wide paved surface with 3-foot clear zones for about 1.7 miles of the Reformatory Branch Trail. Existing parking areas will be regraded and reconstructed both at the Railroad Avenue end of the project and at the Concord Road end. These enhancements, along with connections to existing paths along the trail, will provide new transportation routes for regional and local commuters, as well as for students to get to school.

Bike and pedestrian accommodations are also proposed for approximately 0.3 mile of a reconstructed Railroad Avenue. As a part of the roadway reconstruction a 10-foot wide shared use path will be constructed along the south side of the road and a new 4.5-foot wide sidewalk will be constructed along the north side of the road. Railroad Avenue itself will be narrowed to two 10-foot travel lanes with 2-foot shoulders. New granite curbing, defined curb cuts, pavement markings, signage and an improved stormwater collection system will also be constructed.

There are five at-grade roadway crossings proposed within the project limits: South Road (at the intersection with Loomis St and Railroad Ave); Railroad Ave (at the beginning of the Reformatory Branch Trail); the Water Dept Access Drive (approximately 570 feet west of Hartwell Ave); Hartwell Ave (approximately 540 feet south of Concord Rd) and at the end of Lavender Lane (at the entrance to the proposed parking lot). At the South Road crossing, bicycles will cross during the existing traffic signal pedestrian phase. At the Railroad Ave and Hartwell Ave Crossing, warning devices (flashing beacons) are proposed that will be activated by pushbuttons to allow bicyclists to cross. All other crossing locations will be simple stop-controlled crossings.

A sixth roadway crossing at Concord Road (Route 62) will be a grade separated crossing. The former rail bed at this location is below the roadway level, though the old wooden bridge has been removed and filled to support Concord Road. Given the high traffic volumes and vehicle speeds, it was determined that the grade separated crossing was the best fit for this location. The proposed bikeway will run in a precast concrete culvert beneath the roadway providing uninterrupted passage for both vehicles and path users.

Right of Way Impacts: A secure right-of-way is necessary for the proposed project. Temporary and permanent easements will be required for the construction of this project.

Traffic Management: It is the intent of the project that all streets remain open to traffic during construction. However, work performed at intersections may require some lane reductions or temporary lane closures to facilitate the construction process. At the proposed Concord Road culvert crossing, it is anticipated that a temporary road will be constructed to shift traffic to the east around the construction area for the culvert and maintain a two-lane access. Driveway access for abutting residences will be maintained at all times during construction.

Project Schedule: The design plans displayed at this meeting are at the 25% design stage. Comments made at this hearing will be incorporated to the maximum extent feasible. The 75% design will commence following the hearing. The project is expected to be advertised for construction in early 2022 subject to obtaining necessary environmental permits and Right-Of Way certificate. This project must be programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program in the appropriate Federal Fiscal Year in order for MassDOT to solicit bids for eventual construction.

Project Construction Cost: The estimated cost of the project is \$6.8 million dollars. This project is funded under the Federal Aid Program whereby 80% of the construction cost will be funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and 20% of the construction cost will be funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Address: _____

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Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E.
Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3973

RE: Public Hearing
Minuteman Bikeway Extension Project
BEDFORD
Project File No. 607738
Roadway Project Management

