



**DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING**

**MARCH 7, 2019**

**AT**

**NORTHAMPTON CITY HALL**

**210 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, Northampton, MA 01060**

**NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

**7:00 PM**

**FOR THE PROPOSED**

**NORTHAMPTON ROCKY HILL GREENWAY MULTI-USE TRAIL FROM THE  
MANHAN RAIL TRAIL TO ROCKY HILL ROAD**

**Project No. 608413**

**Roadway Project Management**

**IN THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON, 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. 608413**

A Design Public Hearing will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed Rocky Hill Greenway Multi-Use Trail, from the Manhan Rail Trail to Rocky Hill Trail (0.5 mile) in Northampton, MA.

**WHERE:** Northampton City Hall  
210 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Northampton, MA 01060  
**WHEN:** Thursday, March 7, 2019 @ 7:00 PM

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Rocky Hill Green way Multi-use Trail 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 a 2,630 linear foot (0.5 mile) multi-use trail designed as a spur trail to connect two existing trails in the vicinity. The proposed project is located entirely within a City-owned parcel situated between Rocky Hill Road (MA Route 66) and Easthampton Road (MA Route 10) in Northampton, Massachusetts. The proposed trail project will improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities by connecting the residential areas along Rocky Hill Road and Ice Pond Drive to the New Haven and Northampton Canal/Manhan Rail Trail. Bicyclists and pedestrians will benefit from being able to connect to these corridors more directly and with limited interaction with vehicular traffic, providing a safer and more direct route to the existing rail trail. Additionally, it will provide access to an eventual multi-use trail serving the southwestern and western half of the City, which is not currently served by any multi-use trails.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The City of Northampton 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. 608413. Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked within ten (10) business days of this Public Hearing. Project inquiries may be emailed to [dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us](mailto: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](mailto: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.

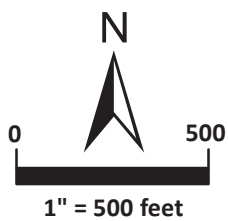


Document Path: H:\Projects\2015\15004 Northampton Rocky Hill Greenway Trail\GIS\Maps\Aerial.mxd

## Legend

-  Rocky Hill Greenway Multi-Use Trail (approximate)
-  Parcels

\*Aerial Imagery - ESRI 2016



**Horsley Witten Group**  
Sustainable Environmental Solutions  
90 Route 6A • Unit 1 • Sandwich, MA 02563  
508-833-6000 • horsleywitten.com



Aerial Photo  
Rocky Hill Greenway Multi-Use  
Trail (Bike Path)  
Northampton, MA

Date: 1/19/2018

Figure 2



## **Project Summary**

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation - Highway Division (MassDOT) and the City of Northampton is proposing a multi-use trail project located starting at the intersection of Rocky Hill Road (Route 66) and Ice Pond Drive and ending at the Northampton Canal/Manhan Rail Trail in Northampton.

The proposed Rocky Hill Greenway Multi-Use Trail will support the City's recreational goals by adding to the existing network of bike paths in the region and encouraging non-motorized travel, advancing the goals of the City of Northampton *Open Space, Recreation, and Multi-Use Trail Plan* (2011-2018). This Plan seeks (among other goals) to maintain vibrant urban centers, develop multi-use trails for easy public access, and create recreational opportunities while protecting valuable habitat and natural resources. The *Open Space, Recreation & Multi-Use Trail Plan* is an adoptive component of the *Sustainable Northampton Comprehensive Plan* (2008) and has been adopted or endorsed by a number of City Boards and approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (June 23, 2011).

The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Rocky Hill Greenway Multi-Use Trail project. All views and comments made at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

## **Existing Conditions**

The proposed Rocky Hill Greenway Multi-Use Trail will be sited within a City-owned parcel (37-049-001) located between Rocky Hill Road (MA Route 66) and Easthampton Road (MA Route 10) in Northampton, Massachusetts (Figures 1 and 2). The existing conditions at the site are varied. The northern portion of the proposed trail, starting at Rocky Hill Road, is currently occupied by a gravel driveway, which leads to a gas pumping station owned by the Tennessee Gas Transmission Company of Houston, Texas (Parcel 37-050-001). The proposed trail then passes through an easement of the Massachusetts Electric Company, which has overhead utility lines running through the maintained corridor. After crossing the easement, the southern portion of the proposed trail follows part of an existing footpath and then winds through undeveloped woodland area with grass, shrubs, and trees before connecting with the existing Manhan Rail Trail.

## **Proposed Improvements**

The proposed project consists of a 2,630 linear foot (0.50 mile) multi-use trail designed as a spur trail to connect two existing trails in the vicinity. The proposed project is located entirely within a City-owned parcel situated between Rocky Hill Road (MA Route 66) and Easthampton Road (MA Route 10) in Northampton, Massachusetts. The proposed trail project will improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities by connecting the residential areas along Rocky Hill Road and Ice Pond Drive to the New Haven and Northampton Canal / Manhan Rail Trail. Bicyclists and pedestrians will benefit from being able to connect to these corridors more directly and with limited interaction with vehicular traffic, providing a safer and more direct route to the existing rail trail. Additionally, it will provide access to an eventual multi-use trail serving the southwestern and western half of the City, which is not currently served by any multi-use trails.

Rocky Hill Greenway Multi-Use Trail will be constructed of bituminous asphalt pavement and with the off-street section having varying widths between 10 and 16 feet and the on-street section along Rocky Hill Road to be 8 feet in width with vertical granite curb. At its northern end, off of Rocky Hill Road, the trail will follow the existing gravel driveway and will be 16 feet wide; this portion of the trail will act as a shared multi-use trail and driveway, allowing restricted vehicle access to the existing gas pumping station. The trail will then narrow to ten feet in width at the wetland crossing, and will be limited to pedestrians and bicycles for the remaining length of the spur trail to the junction with the existing Manhan Rail Trail. The proposed project also includes retaining walls, stone embankments, culvert replacements, and stormwater management areas. Retaining walls are only proposed at the HC parking spot. New culverts are proposed to replace undersized existing culverts or in locations that the trail crosses existing drainage ways/ditches. For the trail section that is proposed outside an existing gravel trail or driveway (south of the overhead wire easement crossing) we are proposing to manage stormwater via a vegetated swale.

### **Right of Way**

There will be ROW acquisitions for the project.

### **Maintenance of Traffic During Construction**

It is the intent of this project that all streets remain open to through traffic. However, some short-term lane reductions may be required to facilitate the construction process. It is anticipated that during non-peak traffic conditions, traffic may consist of alternating one-way traffic under police control if required to construct the project. Notice will be provided in advance to the public. Property owners within the project area will have access to their properties at all times.

### **Project Status - Project Schedule**

This project is in the process of being programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. No date has been set for construction yet. The plans on display tonight are at the 25% Design Stage (Preliminary Design Stage). Comments received this evening will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

### **Project Construction Cost**

The project construction cost will be funded by the Federal and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The current estimated construction cost is \$800,000. Any non-participating items the Town wishes to implement must be funded by the Town.



Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Fold and Tape



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

RE: Public Hearing  
NORTHAMPTON ROCKY HILL GREENWAY MULTI-USE TRAIL FROM THE  
MANHAN RAIL TRAIL TO ROCKY HILL ROAD  
**NORTHAMPTON**  
Project File No. 608413  
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