



DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

THURSDAY JUNE 13, 2013

AT

**KEN OLSON CONFERENCE ROOM
10 CLOCK TOWER PLACE, BUILDING 4
146 MAIN STREET**

MAYNARD, MASSACHUSETTS

7:00 PM

FOR THE PROPOSED

ASSABET RIVER RAIL TRAIL (ARRT)

IN THE TOWNS OF ACTON & MAYNARD, MASSACHUSETTS

PROJECT FILE NUMBER 604531

PROJECT MANAGEMENT SECTION

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

**FRANCIS A. DEPAOLA, P.E.
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**THOMAS F. BRODERICK, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER**

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
PROJECT FILE No.604531

A Design Public Hearing will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed Acton/Maynard Assabet River Rail Trail project in Acton & Maynard, MA.

WHERE: Ken Olson Conference Room
10 Clock Tower Place, Building 4
146 Main Street
Maynard, MA 01754

WHEN: Thursday, June 13, 2013 @ 7:00 pm

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Acton/Maynard Assabet River Rail 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 construction of the Assabet River Rail Trail from the Stow/Maynard Town line to the MBTA station in South Acton, a distance of 3.4 miles. The work will also include replacement of the existing bridges at Mill Pond and Downtown Maynard. A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The towns of Acton & Maynard are 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 Thomas F. Broderick, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Roadway Project Management, Project File No. 604531. 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

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/>

FRANCIS A. DEPAOLA, P.E.
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

THOMAS F. BRODERICK, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER

HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR LETTER
(to be inserted here by Web Administrators)

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.

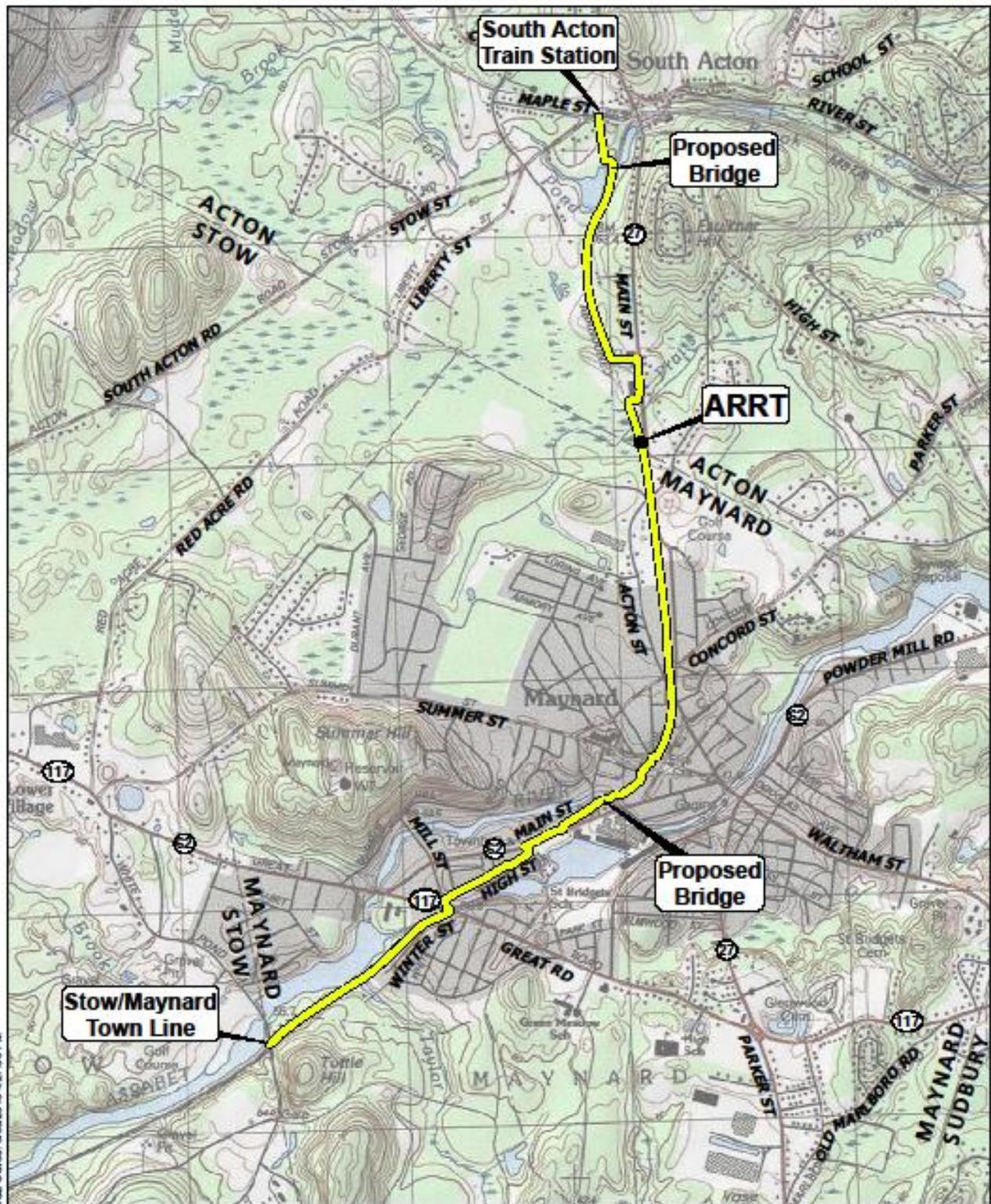
A Right of Entry is a document that is signed by the owner. It allows the Contractor to perform certain types of work on the owner's land. The work is usually minor in nature and frequently consists of loaming/seeding behind sidewalks, new driveway apron work, grading/sloping, and wetland protection,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



Path: M:\work\ARRR\GIS\Map\locus_Stow_Acton.mxd
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Portion of Maynard Quadrangle.
 Data provided by Esri.

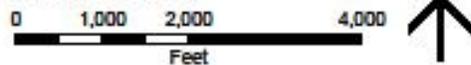


Figure 1
Locus Map
 Assabet River Rail Trail (ARRT)
 Stow/Maynard Townline to South Acton (3.4 Miles)

MAYNARD-ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS
ASSABET RIVER RAIL TRAIL

The proposed project displayed for public viewing and comment will be presented in detail to provide the residents of Maynard and Acton a full understanding of the project improvements. Public comments are encouraged and will be recorded and used to assist the Towns and MassDOT during the next and final stage of the rail trail design.

Project Location

The proposed Assabet River multi-use Rail Trail (ARRT) work consists of 3.4 miles of multi-use trail construction from the Maynard/Stow town line through Maynard partly along the abandoned Boston & Maine Rail Road alignment and partly through developed areas of Maynard and to South Acton. The multi-use trail will terminate at the South Acton MBTA Train Station which is currently undergoing construction improvements.

Purpose

The towns of Maynard and Acton have retained AECOM Technical Services Inc. (AECOM) to provide professional engineering services to design the proposed ARRT in accordance with MassDOT, Maynard and Acton requirements. As a project, the ARRT provides a safer alternative to bicyclists and pedestrians than shared roadway use with motorized vehicles. Among the anticipated project benefits are the following:

Regional

The ARRT will provide a direct connection to the South Acton commuter rail station for commuters traveling into Boston, relieving the roadways of additional vehicles. The ARRT will also provide regional access for these communities to the commercial and retail centers of each of these communities.

Safety

The project will provide an off-road bicycle and pedestrian route through Maynard and Acton taking cyclists and pedestrian off of the local roads and reducing the interaction of these users with the motoring public. On-street bicycle accommodations do not presently exist. The paved shoulders on many of the roadways are too narrow to provide bicycle or pedestrian accommodations and sidewalks do not exist in many areas. Facility will provide for safe off-street commuting/travel route for bicyclists and other non-motorized modes of transportation.

Economic

The trail will bring recreational users to retail centers and encourage use of existing businesses in these communities. In addition studies have shown that the addition of a trail such as this increases the value of residential property along the path.

Mobility

The need for alternative transportation modes and corridors, especially in Boston urban and suburban areas has been well documented. This proposed Acton / Maynard segment of ARRT provides rail transit access for residents and workers in Maynard, Acton and surrounding communities. The ARRT will also connect many schools, parks and recreational facilities within each community providing much needed links to these services.

Environmental

The reduced number of vehicles and reduced congestion will provide an environmental benefit by reducing emissions from these vehicles. The project will also connect the communities of Stow, Maynard and Acton with the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge encouraging an increased awareness of the wildlife habitat concerns in the local community.

Existing Conditions

The existing location is an abandoned railroad right-of-way that extends from the Stow/Maynard town line, through wooded sections before reaching downtown Maynard, then turning north through mostly wooded sections to the Maynard/Acton town line, then continuing north through Acton until crossing Mill Pond before reaching its terminus at the South Acton MBTA Commuter Rail station. Existing land use adjacent to the railroad ROW is varied, from rural residential to downtown commercial areas. The abandoned ROW itself is overgrown in places, with rails and ties removed in some areas and still in place in others.

Proposed Scope of Work

The proposed trail will consist of a 12-foot paved surface, with two-foot wide grass, stone dust, or paved shoulders (depending upon location). There will be nine (9) locations where the trail crosses existing roadways and vehicle traffic – signage, pavement marking and treatments, and traffic control measures will be provided based upon conditions at each crossing.

The Trail will incorporate proposed landscaping and enhance existing landscaping creating a natural trail user experience. At 5 locations where there is a change from developed trail sections to wooded trail sections, a trail head splitter raised landscaped island will be placed to define and separate the trail from the standard sidewalks.

The Maynard portion of the trail begins at the Stow/Maynard town line and ends at the Maynard/Acton line. The southerly limit of the Maynard portion abuts the Assabet River and the northern limit is within a residential neighborhood. The central segments are through the downtown area.

This first segment of trail starting at White Pond Road is through wooded RR ROW. Then at approximately 2,100 feet along the proposed trail, a parking lot is proposed to be constructed adjacent to the DPW facilities, which is located approximately in the middle from Track Road to Great Road, providing parking for approximately 20 cars.

The ARRT then proceeds approximately 1,200 feet along the RR ROW where it connects to Winter Street. A former railroad bridge crossing of the stream is no longer in place, so the trail will utilize the northwesterly limit of the Winter Street ROW. The ARRT will proceed 500 feet along Winter Street to where it intersects Great Road (Route 117). At the approach for this intersection of Winter Street and Great Road, the trail alignment will be pushed slightly to the east into Winter Street to avoid wetland impacts. A retaining wall and roadway widening is proposed at this location.

The Trail then has a pedestrian crossing of Great Road (Route 117), and then connects to the RR ROW at Mill and Pine Streets. Great Road (Route 117) has moderate traffic volumes (10,000 ADT), with a crest hill located to the east of the proposed rail trail crossing. A flashing pedestrian beacon is being proposed at the crossing of Great Road at Winter Street. The ARRT will then follow the RR ROW to Sudbury Street at Main Street (Route 62). Access and parking can be provided along High Street. This trail segment is approximately 1,500 feet in length.

The Trail then crosses Sudbury Street and proceeds along the northerly edge of the Clocktower Place parking lot. The RR ROW is privately owned and has been developed as parking for Clocktower Place, so the trail will follow Main Street as part of combined sidewalk and trail configuration. The ARRT then crosses Main Street (Route 62) at a modified pedestrian crosswalk at Railroad Street, to become a trail crossing. The Trail then will cross Florida Road, continue through the parking lot to Tobin Park. The existing bridge at Tobin Park will be replaced with a new steel structure across the Assabet River. The trail will then proceed through the Maynard Municipal Parking Lot first on the east side then on the west side to Summer Street at Maple Street. This Trail segment is approximately 2,400 feet in length.

After crossing Summer Street the Trail follows the former RR ROW through Maynard to the Acton town line, mostly in wooded areas with a crossing at the Acton Street/Haynes Street/Concord Street intersection crossing. This final trail segment in Maynard is approximately 4,700 feet and the total Maynard portion of trail is approximately 2.3 miles.

In Acton the trail makes a turn east to cross in front of the Saab Dealership on the Wedgewood Property. Then the trail crosses a combination of two (2) drainage treatment basis and wetland by way of a boardwalk structure. The boardwalk is proposed to be composed of an aesthetic concrete deck and wood railing and is approximately 575 feet in length. The deck will be approximately 5 feet above the wetland surface and designed for pedestrian loads.

The existing timber trestle crossing of Mill Pond in Acton is approximately 75 feet long. It is proposed to span the entire crossing with a new pre-fabricated structure. The existing timber bents will be left in place to avoid impacts to the river in trying to remove them.

The section of Trail from Maynard / Acton town line to the Mill Pond is approximately 5,000 feet in length. After Mill Pond the Trail will meander for 800 feet through a newly acquired farm parcel to meet Maple Street across from the South Acton MBTA Commuter Rail Station at Maple Street. A parking lot with 11 parking spaces is proposed to be constructed along an existing paved maintenance access road off Maple Street. The Trail will terminate at this location of the MBTA Station.

Utility Impacts

For a 3.4 mile trail construction project through developed areas, a relatively small amount of utility impacts are anticipated. Much effort has been undertaken to avoid impacts to existing structures. At this preliminary design stage, the following utility impacts are anticipated; relocate a utility anchor (guy) pole near Tobin Park, a water line at the Tobin Park bridge will be relocated, a fire hydrant and utility pole at the municipal parking lot after Tobin park will be relocated, and a fire hydrant near the proposed boardwalk will need to be relocated. Further detail study of utilities will be done in final design.

Environmental Impacts

Trail construction will have minor grading impacts to upland slopes of the Assabet River and Taylor Brook in Maynard and Pratts Brook and Mill Pond in Acton. To minimize wetland impacts, rip-rap (stone) slopes, and in one area and a retaining wall are being proposed.

Within the trail alignment, particularly at water body crossings, bridge and culvert crossing will be encountered. The two proposed bridge structures will span the river banks for minimal or no wetland impacts. All existing culverts will be field inspected and then analyzed for hydraulic capacity and carrying strength. Culverts in good condition will be cleaned and culverts in poor condition will be addressed as necessary.

Right-of-Way Impacts

Temporary and permanent easements will be needed from private property owners for work outside existing Rail Road ROW, public ROW in the towns of Maynard and Acton, or previously acquired ARRT easements. The MassDOT's policy regarding land acquisition will be discussed at the public hearing.

Project Status / Schedule

The Plans on display this evening are 25% (preliminary design stage) complete. Comments from the public presentation will be reviewed and addressed in the final design stage. The process will continue to the final Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E), and the award of construction contract. Construction is anticipated to be complete within two construction seasons (2 years).

Currently the project is listed on the 2015 MassDOT Traffic Improvement Program (TIP). With this planned funding being set, construction will begin in 2016 and the ARRT will be complete in 2018.

Project Cost

At this time the estimated participating cost of construction is approximately \$4.5 million dollars

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Thomas F. Broderick, P.E.
Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3973

RE: Public Hearing
ASSABET RIVER RAIL TRAIL
IN THE TOWNS OF ACTON & MAYNARD
Project File No. 604531
Project Management Section

