

Jack MacKeen

June 12, 2013

Thomas F. Broderick, P.E.
Chief Engineer, MassDOT
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

Attention: Roadway Project Management. Project File No. 604531

Also Reference: Project File No. 601577 (August 2004, now terminated)

Dear Mr. Broderick:

As I will be unable to attend the June 13, 2013, public hearing on the above project I am submitting the comments below as provided for in the hearing notice.

The design drawings posted as part of the hearing notice indicate that in Maynard the proposed rail trail will cross Acton Street and then run on the west side of Haynes Street (Rte. 27) up to its intersection with Concord Street, then turning to run briefly west on Concord until turning north to cross Concord and return to the original rail bed. This route as planned reinforces the current position of Rte. 27 at the site and apparently does not take into account requirements made by MassDOT in an earlier project as cited below and now being discussed again both on its own merit and as part of traffic studies for Maynard recently completed as part of a major development proposal on Parker Street.

The intersection of Concord and Haynes Streets is still one of the most dangerous intersections in Maynard. In 2004 this intersection was contracted to be redesigned (Project 601577), including at the insistence of MassDOT a repositioning of Rte. 27 for better sight lines approaching the blind curve where Acton Street joins Rte. 27, as well as installation of traffic signals at the intersection of Concord and Rte. 27 (Haynes St.). The contract was terminated after delays triggered by a lawsuit against the Town by an abutter. It is my understanding the litigation decision favored the town. The only visible evidence of that construction is that Maynard relocated the fire hydrant to conform to the state required contour of the proposed new position of Rte 27.

Within the past 18-24 months, I believe there were conversations with the Maynard Town Administrator's office and elected representatives about putting funding for the Rte. 27-Concord Street intersection rebuild back into an upcoming TIP budget. Based on this, the potential exists

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that taxpayer funds will be spent in FY2014 to implement the rail trail at the above location, followed at some point by spending additional funds to redo the same intersection and relocate both Rte. 27 and the rail trail.

I believe that a discussion of integrating these two projects would better serve the public from both safety and cost saving points of view.

I look forward to the response of your team.

Sincerely,



Jack MacKeen

Cc: Kevin Sweet, Interim Town Administrator, 195 Main St., Maynard, MA 01754
Christopher Okafor, Director of Operations, Public Works, 195 Main St., Maynard, MA
01754
Linda Hansen, Conservation Agent, 195 Main St., Maynard, MA 01754

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

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MAY 21 2013

Acton & Maynard, MA
Assabet River Rail Trail
Project File No. 604531

MassDOT
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. Please return your sheet, with comments, to a staff member at the meeting, or mail to:

Thomas F. Broderick, P.E., Chief Engineer
MassDOT - Highway Division
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116-3973
Attn: Michael Papadopoulos, Project Manager

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PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.

- ① In Maynard, behind CVS, I prefer the new alternative of moving the trail up to the grassy area - it makes much more sense and will be safe for everyone using the trail or parking area.
- ② In South Acton, please try to move the K-turn on the farm closer in - removing 1 or 2 parking slots should do it. That disturbs the beauty of the farmland less.
- ③ please consider the ADA-approved non-asphalt alternative paving surface for the farmland area.
- Thank you for supporting this project!

Name: Clare Siska Title: South Acton neighbor

Organization: _____

Address: 14 Staw Street

Acton, MA 01720

June 14th, 2013

To: Thomas F. Broderick, P.E.
From: Jennifer Montgomery, 36 Winter Street, Maynard MA 01754
Re: Assabet River Rail Trail 25% design public hearing held on June 13, 2013
Project File No. 604531
Project Management Section

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I'm writing to express my concerns and to comment in reference to Project File No. 604531, the Assabet River Rail Trail in Maynard/ Acton, MA. I bought my house at 36 Winter Street in May of 2012, one of the selling points being the quiet natural surroundings at the end of a tree lined street. I live and work in Maynard and am a member of the Massachusetts Organization of State Engineers and Scientists, and while I support the idea of the Rail Trail, I don't want my taxes supporting design aspects that are destructive to the environment and potentially dangerous to Maynard residents.

A few nights ago a neighbor let me know about the public hearing and I attended. After reviewing the plans and listening to comments at the meeting, I have a lot of concerns regarding the proposed construction, in particular to the Winter Street area. Most alarming is the proposal to build a substantial 20 car parking lot adjacent to the Ice House Landing site. Instead of looking out my front window to see a line of trees with the river in the background, I will get to see a desolate parking lot; I don't know anyone who would want that, if it was proposed to be in your front yard, you would feel the same. I thought the main goal of the Rail Trail was to appreciate nature, not destroy it and turn it into a parking lot that will likely go unused. In looking back at your initial proposal from 2007 (10% design public hearing), you only had a line of 5 parking spots which would NOT destroy the integrity of the area and accommodate more than enough cars. I can tell you as a resident after seeing the area over the course of the last year, I have NEVER seen more than 1 car parked at the opening of the Ice House Landing site. I don't understand how the parking lot went from 5 to 20 cars!? After attending the meeting and listening to the comments of other neighbors, they expressed the same dismay. First and foremost, aside from the destructive element of the design, it is not needed as there is a large public parking lot not a quarter mile away at the Assabet Valley NWR (and for the record, I rarely see more than 2 or 3 cars parked there when I use their trails for biking). Why not promote a parking site that is already available and in existence instead of making a new one right down the road. It would also make sense financially; you don't need something that is already there.

Additionally, I feel a parking lot in that area would seriously lower my property value which is obviously very concerning to me. A parking lot will just destroy the natural beauty that exists there now, the same peace and beauty that drew me to buy a home in the area. If you want to keep Maynard's "Green Community" status, you will either consider getting rid of the parking lot altogether, or as a concession, go back to the original 5 space design which is much less obtrusive and destructive.

I also have serious objection to the crossing beacon at the end of the street. The resident at 1 Winter Street said the only way to safely cross at that location would be to RUN and he is absolutely correct. People speed over the hill and even with a safety beacon, there is not enough time to stop, I feel it's just a matter of time before someone gets seriously hurt. The safety of that area will not be remedied by a blinking light, there needs to be an alternative plan that addresses the safety concerns in that area (one idea

brought up at the meeting was the installation of a bridge- use the money not spent on the parking lot to fund it).

I hope you take the time to look at these concerns and put yourself in my shoes- what would you do if it was your neighborhood? While I support the idea of the Rail Trail, I think there are some design elements that still need work. Thank you for your time.



Jennifer Montgomery

36 Winter Street

Maynard MA 01754

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THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

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Acton & Maynard, MA
Assabet River Rail Trail
Project File No. 604531

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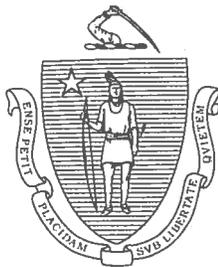
Thomas F. Broderick, P.E., Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116-3973
Attn: Michael Papadopoulos, Project Manager

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PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.

Regarding the proposed Parking lot at Ice House Landing, A parking area already exists 1/4 mile away - why not advertise that instead of replacing a beautiful area with a paved eyesore? Please reconsider this parking area.

Name: Chris Lawson Title: Concerned Citizen
Organization: Maynard Resident
Address: 36 Winter St.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

SENATOR JAMES B. ELDRIDGE

Middlesex and Worcester District

STATE HOUSE, ROOM 413A
BOSTON, MA 02133-1053
TEL. (617) 722-1120
FAX (617) 722-1089

JAMES.ELDRIDGE@MASENATE.GOV
WWW.MASENATE.GOV

Chairman
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Vice Chairman
SENATE COMMITTEE ON GLOBAL WARMING
AND CLIMATE CHANGE

DISTRICT OFFICE
225 MAIN STREET, ROOM 106
MARLBOROUGH, MA 01752
TEL. (508) 786-3040

June 10, 2013

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Mr. Thomas F. Broderick, P.E., Chief Engineer
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

JUN 21 2013

MassDOT
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Re: Project File No.604531 – Acton/Maynard Assabet River Rail Trail

Dear Mr. Broderick,

I write in strong support of the proposed Acton/Maynard Assabet River Rail Trail project. Rail trails are examples of infrastructure improvements that offer residents increased transportation and recreational opportunities. Rail trails are a healthy and cost effective alternative to motor vehicles that will help protect our environment from harmful emissions and provide a creative use for old infrastructure.

Investing in rail trails like the Assabet River Rail Trail will allow communities like Acton and Maynard to enable their residents to bike and walk safely for their transportation needs. By creating a statewide network of rail trails we can better connect our communities and regions together. Small businesses along rail trails will benefit from tourism revenue and a sustainable stream of commerce which can lead to higher home and business property values in trail corridors.

We need to build and maintain a strong transportation system in the Commonwealth and rail trails are a key component. Expanding rail trails is a strategic investment that will enhance the transportation and recreational infrastructure in the state and will provide long term benefits to our residents. I appreciate the Patrick-Murray Administration for prioritizing and funding multi-modal transportation as the Assabet River Rail Trail will connect to the South Acton train station.

The completion of the Acton/Maynard Assabet River Rail Trail project will not only be a positive step towards protecting the environment, but will also enhance the quality of life in our communities and encourage healthy lifestyles for our residents.

Thank you for your consideration and if you would like to discuss this project further please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff.

Sincerely,



Jamie Eldridge

State Senator

Middlesex and Worcester District

10:01 A 81 JUL 2005

Jack MacKeen

June 12, 2013

Thomas F. Broderick, P.E.
Chief Engineer, MassDOT
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

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THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

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Acton & Maynard, MA
Assabet River Rail Trail
Project File No. 604531

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JUN 26 2013

MassDOT
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. Please return your sheet, with comments, to a staff member at the meeting, or mail to:

Thomas F. Broderick, P.E., Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116-3973
Attn: Michael Papadopoulos, Project Manager

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My comments are informed by my experience as a Maynard Conservation Commission member, as a former agent for conservation commissions in other towns, and as a regular bicyclist for many years. In general, I believe that the trail will be a wonderful amenity for the region and will attract persons of all ages to better enjoy outdoor recreation in safety and comfort. But I also believe that by reducing further the width of the trail and shoulder in certain key areas the project can be accomplished with less environmental loss, particularly to wetlands, and with less loss of scarce park area.

In particular, the large chunk that the trail would take out of Maplebrook Park will be a significant loss to Maynard. (This well-kept garden park has been created out of a former gravel parking lot over the recent decade or so by a very dedicated group of citizens.) Also, the loss to the small park at Haynes Street will be visually significant.

I am concerned, too about the significant wetland filling that will be needed to widen the old rail bed to the more than 16 feet needed for the trail in wetlands. How much wetland will be filled along the path in Acton and Maynard? Can this be reduced further to reduce the impacts to the values protected by the Wetland Protection Act? Is this project exempt from any or all provisions of that Act and Town bylaws? These questions were not addressed in your presentation.

Name: Peter Keenan Title: Member of Maynard Conservation
Organization: & Citizen of Maynard Commission
Address: 263 Great Road, Maynard, MA 01754

-----Original Message-----

From: david@dmarknutrition.com [<mailto:david@dmarknutrition.com>]

Sent: Monday, June 17, 2013 6:45 AM

To: DOT Feedback Highway

Subject: Assabet River Rail Trail design hearing

Michael Papadopoulos -

I attended the ARRT design hearing on 6/13/13 and have a comment concerning the options proposed for skirting the parking lot northeast of the footbridge in Maynard.

The natural flow of foot traffic from footbridge heading northeast is on the right (south) side. Creating a wide sidewalk to the left (north) side would not get the foot traffic.

Bicycle traffic will do what it does now (proceed up the center of the

parking lot, and then in the right vehicle lane while going up the hill), ignoring any sidewalk. This is not to mean that a sidewalk is not needed for that section north of Dunn Oil, just that cyclists will not bother.

David A. Mark
10 Maple Street
Maynard, MA 01754
978-897-0890
david@dmarknutrition.com

JOHN E. MCNAMARA
31 OLD MARLBORO ROAD
MAYNARD, MASSACHUSETTS 01754

18 June 2013

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MassDOT
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

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

Attn: Michael Papadopoulos, Project Manager, File No. 604531

To Whom it May Concern:

I would like to comment in favor of the Acton/Maynard ARRT 25% design. It creatively and economically responds to several design challenges.

I am anxious to see this project underway, as it would be a useful adjunct to the MassRIDES program and would complement the new South Acton train station project. It would also be an excellent economic stimulus for downtown Maynard businesses and hopefully reduce the number of empty storefronts.

It would also inspire me to restore my bicycle!

Sincerely,



John E. McNamara

2013 JUN 21 6 3:01



Assabet River Rail Trail, Inc.

246 Essex Street • Marlborough, MA 01752 • www.ARRTinc.org
A Non-Profit Organization

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

June 17, 2013

Attn. Michael Papadopoulos, Project Manager

Ref: Acton & Maynard, MA
Assabet River Rail Trail
Project File No. 604531

Comments are about two Maynard locations on ARRT

Location 1: Winter St section and Rt 117/Great Rd crossing

A previous design had a bridge across the millpond canal that parallels Winter St as the railroad did and crossed Rt 117 on a level section of the road and in alignment with the railroad right-of-way. This is safer than the present design which parallels Winter St on a narrow shelf, crosses Rt 117 near the foot of a hill, and makes a 90 degree left turn to use the Rt 117 sidewalk on the east side of the crossing to connect with the railroad right-of-way. Please reconsider the previous design for safety and trail width reasons.

Location 2: Parking lot behind stores on Nason St

A west side route through the parking lot was suggested by the presenter as an alternative to using the east side sidewalk and crossing to the west side near the Summer St exit. The west side alternative would eliminate the need for crossing the lot exits at Nason St and Summer St, if it can be done.

Duncan Power
Duncan Power, Clerk

Assabet River Rail Trail, Inc.
246 Essex St., Marlborough, MA 01752

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THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

NON FEDERAL AID

Acton & Maynard, MA
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PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.

As a concerned citizen & member of Maynard CAN, I support immediate funding for the ARRT in order to reduce pollution & congestion, increase ~~the~~ cycling safety and recreational opportunities for families and individuals.

As a clinical social worker, I see how the epidemic of obesity and inactivity are hurting our citizens, particularly youth, and ^{is} draining our state budget through associated medical treatment ~~of~~ for diabetes, stroke, heart attacks, cancer & related illnesses. Safe cycling options increase health, stimulate the brain & ability to learn, creating more intelligent & productive citizens who give back more to the Commonwealth, & save money. Poor unemployed residents could hike to the commuter rail for Boston jobs, pay taxes & reduce welfare payments. Thank you!

Name: Sherry Jefferson Zitter, LICSW Title: Clinical Social Worker and
Organization: concerned citizen & volunteer with Maynard Climate Action Network
Address: 21 Lewis St.
Maynard MA 01754

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
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I support the Assabet River Rail Trail.

Name: fifi ball Title: _____
Organization: MaynardCAN!
Address: 9 Maple Street
Maynard, MA 01754

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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The rail trail is a great idea. It could reduce vehicle traffic between Maynard and Acton. It also provides a good and safe walking environment for those who like to walk and hike.

Name: Sander S. Lyden Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: 5 Apple Ridge Rd U-3
Maynard, MA 01754

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
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We have so wanted to have a way to
commute by bikes around this area
between STOW, MAYNARD, and ACTON -
(Concord too.) where we shop.

We support this effort whole heartedly!
We also love jogging and walking.

Name: Sam & Jeppson Zitter Title: citizen

Organization: Maynard CAN

Address: 21 Lewis St. Maynard, MA

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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I strongly support funding for the Assabet River Rail Trail. It is a great way to encourage people ~~to~~ not to use cars as much, which has a number of benefits including reducing carbon emissions, making people healthier, & it's a great way for people to get outside with their families & very inexpensively.

Name: Mark Lane Title: Concerned citizen
Organization: Maynard CAN
Address: 27 Butler Ave, Apt. 4, Maynard 01754

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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I SUPPORT FUNDING THE ARRT IN MAYNARD / ACTON / STOW

Name: ROBIN SCHWARTZ Title: CITIZEN

Organization: _____

Address: 28 THIRD ST MAYNARD MA

JUN 20 2013 4:15

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

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Please see attached document
(4 pages attached)

Name: Rebecca Chafel Title: DVM
Organization: Maynard Resident
Address: 47 Boeske Avenue
Maynard MA 01754

Rebecca M. Chafel, D.V.M.
47 Boeske Avenue
Maynard, MA 01754
(978) 461-2070
rchafel@yahoo.com

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JUN 26 2013
MassDOT
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

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

June 18, 2013

Re: Project File No. 604531-Acton and Maynard Assabet River Rail Trail (ARRT)

Dear Mr. Broderick:

On June 13, 2013, I attended the public hearing on the design proposal for the Acton and Maynard section of the ARRT. I am an avid bike rider and I support the Rail Trail mission of providing recreational opportunities for the public. I do however have concerns regarding this project especially as they relate to environmental and safety issues. In this letter, I will also restate some of the questions which were not answered at the hearing, in the hope that these questions can be answered in the near future. I have lived on Boeske Avenue, adjacent to the Maynard Department of Public Works for over twenty years and am very familiar with the area.

The following are my concerns:

- 1) Environmental impact of installing a 20 car parking lot on Winter Street at the entrance to Ice House Landing, Maynard, MA.

The parking lot is proposed for a heavily wooded area which is only 100-150 feet from the wetlands of the Assabet River. I do not understand how the installation of a parking lot and paving can occur within the 200 ft. wetland boundary. There is a downgrade slope from both Boeske Avenue and Winter Street, through to the River's edge. The runoff of water from the paved DPW/Winter Street area onto the dirt of Track Road is already evident now and will be increased bringing the runoff closer to the water's edge should this paving occur. The potential contamination with salt and other debris from the Maynard Department of Public Works (DPW) is a significant risk. In addition, the destruction of these woods which are a vital habitat to many species of animals, including Baltimore Orioles, is both unnecessary and environmentally unsound. One only has to look at the excessive amount of unnecessary destruction recently of the woodlands along Route 2 in Lincoln to be concerned about the potential problems which can occur with clearing for a paved parking lot along Winter Street.

Since the opening of Ice House Landing in 2002, there has been a steady stream of kayakers, canoeists, joggers, walkers, birders, and bike riders using this area. There are currently at least 10 parking spaces at the entrance to Ice House Landing, 4-5 spaces on

the wooded side, and another 5-6 spaces, including a posted handicapped space on the opposite side along an existing building. On busy weekends I have never seen more than 5-6 cars parked down at these spots. The majority of individuals parking here are boaters or walkers. Bike riders (road, touring, and mountain bikers) access this area by bike, not by driving their cars here. The current parking is sufficient and during my 2-3 trips a day down Track Road, I have never encountered anyone suggesting that parking was difficult or insufficient. There is also plenty of existing parking near the start of ARRT at the National Wildlife Refuge should people wish to bike or park and walk down the ARRT. The Maynard DPW is town owned land and there are multiple paved parking areas at the DPW that should be considered for use before destroying woodland habitats. It is perplexing why the proposal allows for 11 Parking spaces in an existing paved maintenance access road off Maple Street in Acton but for some reason 20 spaces are required in Maynard. At the public hearing, there was no answer to the question regarding who would be responsible for plowing this proposed paved parking lot in Maynard.

2) Environmental impact of installing a paved surface to Track Road.

Again, I fail to understand how Track Road can be paved with asphalt as it is within the 200 ft. exclusion zone for wetlands. The paving will greatly affect water runoff into the Assabet River. If the ARRT feels they must alter the dirt road, it must consider utilizing another substrate, such as stone dust, which is ADA compliant.

3) Safety concerns at Rt 117 and Winter Street crossing.

The direct Rail Trail road crossing over the Rt 117 highway with a mere flashing light to stop traffic is dangerous. At the Winter Street proposed crossing of Rt 117, there is a hill summit to the east of this proposed crossing which obscures the visibility of approaching cars heading west on Rt 117. From Winter Street it is difficult to turn left or go straight towards Pine Street because of the speed of the cars coming over that hill. I don't attempt this on a bike or walking and do so with trepidation in a car. The frequent presence of Maynard Police speed traps at Rt 117 near the Mobil Station and the several accidents occurring there are an indication of the problems with traffic, speed, and obeying signals in this area of Rt 117. Has a traffic study of this area of Rt 117 been conducted for this project?

At the public hearing, the reason given by MassDOT for not having a raised bridge or protected crossing of Rt 117 at this point was that it cost too much money. I do not think the State of Massachusetts should put public safety behind monetary concerns. One obvious plan the ARRT and the MassDOT should consider is using the money intended for installation of an unnecessary parking lot and paving, and instead, invest in solving this dangerous Rail Trail crossing at Rt 117 and Winter Street.

4) Safety concerns regarding a parking lot on Winter Street.

If the ARRT and Massachusetts Department of Transport feel that a 20 car parking lot is essential at Ice House Landing, then this would mean that they would expect a significant increase in traffic to use this parking lot, not just along Winter Street, but also along the following roads: Taylor, Sheridan, Driscoll, O'Moore, Espie, White, and Boeske. These

roads are frequently used by individuals in cars to access the DPW, Ice House Landing, and Track Road, instead of driving down Winter Street. These roads, including Winter Street, do not have sidewalks and many children, including my own, walk home from the Maynard Public Schools because they live too close to the schools to be bussed. These roads are also used heavily by bikers, joggers, and walkers with strollers and dogs. There is not sufficient room for two lane traffic on Boeske Avenue, a dirt road, and the added pedestrian or bike traffic makes it necessary for individuals to access lawns or driveways to avoid the cars. Increasing traffic on Boeske Avenue, which is a private dirt road in poor condition, is not in the best interest of public safety.

As pointed out at the public hearing, the speed of the traffic on Winter Street, is far in excess of the posted 20 mph. Trucks are also frequently traveling this road to access the DPW. The point at which the Rail Trail emerges onto Winter Street has a hill summit to the right of the trail exit. This area is another safety concern due to the of poor visibility for both bikers and approaching traffic.

The placement of the parking lot is also problematic on Saturdays when the DPW is open for brush, metal, and hazardous waste drop off. The line of cars stopped on Winter Street waiting to access the DPW yard is well beyond Sheridan Avenue. On these Saturdays, Winter Street becomes a one lane road due to the line of cars which will block the proposed parking entrance and exit.

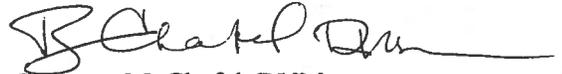
Finally, I am concerned with the lack of investment made into looking at the environmental impact of this project by MassDOT, ARRT, and AECOM Technical Services Inc. Instead of throwing out vague comments such as the following quoted from the public hearing handout-the Rail Trail will be "relieving the roadways of additional vehicles" and "reduced number of vehicles and reduced congestion which will provide an environmental benefit by reducing emissions from these vehicles" it would be beneficial to know facts. When asked how many bikers (or bike lockers) are now accessing the South Acton Station and what increase MassDOT and AECOM expected with this alternative transport via the Rail Trail, it was stated that no one had looked at these numbers. This question should be addressed as the Rail Trail will have environmental impact. Also, under the Environmental Impact Section of the public hearing handout, the only impact noted is minor grading impacts to upland slopes and culverts. There is no mention of the destruction of woodlands in Maynard for a proposed paved parking lot and paving so close to wetlands. Nor is there mention of the "aesthetic concrete boardwalk" that is actually placed in the wetlands in Acton. It is not clear to me from the public hearing comments, the handout, or the proposal itself that the environment is a major concern to the organizations involved in planning the Acton/Maynard Rail Trail.

As I mentioned previously, I do support the ARRT mission of providing a multi-use recreational Rail Trail for the general public. However, I am very concerned with lack of data gathering and environmental and safety consideration that has occurred when designing the Maynard section of the trail. It is imperative that this stunning section of trail from Rt 117 to the National Wildlife Refuge be preserved as close to its natural character as possible. The preservation of this area of trail will in turn serve to protect the Assabet River, something we all work hard to do. In addition, in the current ARRT proposal, the safety designs of the road crossings in Maynard, particularly the Winter Street/Rt 117 crossing, must be improved in order to ensure public safety.

Thank you for considering my comments. Should you need additional information, including photographs of the areas in question, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I also request that this document be read into the minutes of the June 13, 2013 MassDOT public hearing, the Town of Maynard Conservation Commission minutes, and the Town of Maynard Board of Selectman minutes.

Sincerely,



Rebecca M. Chafel, DVM

Cc: Senator James Eldridge
Representative Kate Hogan
Congresswoman Niki Tsongas
Town of Maynard, Conservation Commission
Town of Maynard, Board of Selectman

2013 JUN 13 8:13

June 19, 2013

Thomas F. Broderick, P.E., Chief Engineer
MassDOT Highway Division
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116-3973
Attn: Michael Papadopoulos, Project Manager

RECEIVED
JUN 26 2013
MassDOT
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Re: Project File No. 604531 Acton & Maynard Assabet River Rail Trail (ARRT)

Dear Sirs:

While we support the concept of the Rails to Trails initiative, it is with deep concern that we view the impact certain aspects of the current proposal will have on both the environment and the climate of our neighborhood in the western portion of Maynard.

1. We view the installation of a new parking lot at the end of Winter Street as completely unnecessary and an unwarranted imposition upon our neighborhood, the disadvantages of which far outweigh its benefits. The track road, as it is known locally, has been used in its current state for about 70 years by walkers, runners, bikers, dog walkers, families with baby strollers, skiers, horseback riders, boaters and fishermen, and never has there been an issue with the abundant existing parking space at the end of the street. On the busiest day there have never been more than a few cars there, a rare occurrence, with still plenty of room for more.

Access to the proposed bikeway is readily available throughout the length of Maynard and it is unreasonable to assume that a Maynard commuter wishing to bicycle to the South Acton train station would drive by car up to a mile, dependent on where he resided, to park his vehicle here at nearly the extreme western edge of town, to then bike back in the opposite direction again, now an even greater distance to the train station, when he could have simply accessed the trail from the point nearest his home. Nor are residents of Stow likely to use this lot because they have a much shorter and more direct route to South Acton.

In short, there is absolutely no reason to chop down a wooded area, which contains an ancient white pine well over 100 years old as well as vernal ponds on both sides of track road and numerous creatures in their natural habitat, to create an unnecessary parking lot and destroy the sense of small town village neighborhood we have always enjoyed here in the west end. Nor is it just or reasonable that those of us on Winter Street should be made to suddenly find our front doors opening onto a parking lot and our front yards facing the same, and our neighborhood being forced to suffer an unnecessary increase in traffic for the hypothetical convenience of a few from another part of town who could readily access the bike trail closer to home. This plan is not very well thought out.

2. While paving that portion of the trail from Sudbury Street, or even Mill Street if unavoidable, as far as South Acton does make good sense; to pave from Great Road to White Pond Road does not necessarily. Asphalt paving is neither environmentally sound nor in keeping with the atmosphere and spirit of the old country road with which the track road has been imbued for

nearly three quarters of a century. Ideally the road should be retained in its natural state. It directly abuts wetlands and runs within a few feet of the river off and on for about two miles. The current packed earth surface is certainly handicapped accessible. The next best thing would be to use a surface which is a natural material. While not as good as packed earth, stone dust is ADA compliant and certainly more sensible than asphalt. There may be other suitable natural materials as well.

3. Our final area of major concern lies at the other end of Winter Street and is three-part.

First, we would prefer the proposed bike trail to follow the same path that track road currently does where it joins Winter Street. It is only a very short distance from there to where the trail would emerge onto to Winter Street anyway, and it seems both unreasonable and destructive to cut a swath for that brief distance along the RR ROW, removing old oak trees overlooking the canal in the belief that those few feet are somehow going to significantly lessen the exposure of trail users to the minimal traffic on Winter Street, even with DPW use.

Second, the family at number 1 Winter Street has gone to great lengths to turn what was once an unsightly and disused sand pit into a very attractive home and landscaped property, providing a most pleasant and welcoming entryway to the street. There is no reason to reward this kind of community public spiritedness with the unintentionally mean-spirited act of further abbreviating their already small front yard by unnecessarily widening Winter Street at this point.

Third is the safety issue of crossing Great Road and the proposed signal beacon. Traffic often comes over the crest of the hill to the east at considerable speed and even without the heavy trucks, would have difficulty stopping in time for pedestrians or cyclists crossing. There needs to be a warning for motorists prior to the crest of the hill and the blinking light should be placed somewhat east of Winter Street on 117 and shielded to prevent glare into any nearby households.

The family at Number 1 Winter Street faces the possibility of a threefold loss: a portion of their front yard, greater exposure to passing traffic on 117 with the proposed elimination of trees along the canal, and the prospect of a flashing light practically in their front yard. This hardly seems the low impact, community-friendly proposal this project presents itself as, and taken as a whole, the cumulative effect of the three concerns expressed here will have a decidedly negative impact on our west end neighborhood, not a beneficial one.

We whole heartedly agree that there is much potential advantage to be gained by our community from a properly designed and executed bike trail, and wishing to support this effort we lay our neighborhood concerns before you in the hope that we can reach some accommodation. Thank you for the recent MassDOT public hearing at Clock Tower Place and the opportunity for input regarding a project which carries the potential to benefit our entire community and does not penalize any part of it.

Yours truly,



Bruce Pekkala

14 Winter Street

Maynard, MA 01754

June 25, 2013

RECEIVED

JUL 11 2013

Thomas F. Broderick, P.E., Chief Engineer
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116
Attention: Roadway Project Management, Project File No. 604531

MassDOT
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

RE: Assabet River Rail Trail Impact on Maplebrook Park

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Assabet River Rail Trail ("ARRT") at this early stage in the design process. On behalf of the Maynard Community Gardeners ("MCG"), I would like to express support for the ARRT. MCG has a long tradition of contributing to natural and recreational resource in Maynard. The ARRT will be an excellent addition to these resources and to the Town as a whole. MCG has participated in public hearings for the proposed ARRT over the past few years as well as the June 13, 2013 Public Hearing. MCG has contributed to the development process and identified potential impacts to Maplebrook Park from construction of the ARRT. MCG is concerned about this potential impact and offers the following information and comments.

Description of Maplebrook Park

Maplebrook Park is on a town owned parcel and is maintained by MCG. Maplebrook Park was created in the 90's by a joint community and Town effort lead by the Maple and Brooks Street neighborhoods. The Park is a perennial garden with walking trails and a sitting area that is open to the public. A plan of the Park is attached to this letter.

Maplebrook Park is a valuable resource to the community based on its prominent location adjacent to downtown and its natural beauty. Maplebrook Park serves all members of this community. Maplebrook Park is an educational resource, a playground and place for quiet contemplation.

Addition of Maplebrook Park to Design Plans, Project Narrative and Public Hearing Presentation

Maplebrook Park is not identified in the Design Plans, Project Narrative or in the Public Hearing Presentation. Maplebrook Park must be added to these public documents to allow full public comment that will ensure the MHD identifies all issues at this early stage of the design process.

Impacts to Maplebrook Park

Maplebrook Park is an approximately a 3,000 square foot park. Based on a review of the 25% design plans, approximately 1,000 square feet Maplebrook Park would be impacted by the ARRT. Several major trees and shrubs would be eliminated as well as dozens of small plants and ground cover. A plan of the park and the area that may be impacted outlined in blue is attached. Loss of one third of Maplebrook Park would be a significant impact that must be considered in the ongoing design process.

Design Alternatives

MCG requests that the MHD evaluate the following minor design alternatives to the ARRT in the vicinity of Maplebrook Park (approximately Station 76+00 to 77+00) to reduce the 10 foot disturbance of the Park:

- Reduce trail width from 12 feet to 8 feet
- Lower the final grade of the Trail
- Increase the side slopes from a 3:1 slope to a 2:1 slope
- A combination of these design alternatives

Public comments were made at the recent hearing on issues that were identified and resolved in the past. In an effort to avoid repeated discussion of these issues at future public hearings, MCG requests that MHD submit a letter to MCG that documents their analysis including descriptions, plans, methodology to assess impacts and conclusions.

Continued Collaboration

MCG's has been a responsible steward of Maplebrook Park for the benefit of this community for many years. MCG is available to meet with the MHD to provide any additional information on Maplebrook that may be required to address our concerns and to assist in the successful completion of the ARRT.

Sincerely,



Daniel Stuart, President
Maynard Community Gardeners

Attachments: Plan of Maplebrook Park

CC: Maynard Board of Selectmen
Action Board of Selectmen
Assabet River Rail Trail, Inc.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

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NON FEDERAL AID

JUL 11 2013

Acton & Maynard, MA
Assabet River Rail Trail
Project File No. 604531

MassDOT
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. Please return your sheet, with comments, to a staff member at the meeting, or mail to:

Thomas F. Broderick, P.E., Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116-3973
Attn: Michael Papadopoulos, Project Manager

The final date for receipt of written statements and exhibits for inclusion into the official hearing transcript will be ten (10) days after the Public Hearing.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.

I support funding for the ARRT to benefit
the community

Name: Mike Stevens Title: Mr (Teacher)
Organization: Maynard CAN
Address: 4 Bent Ave, Maynard, MA 01754