



Neponset River Greenway Council Meeting

Thursday, June 8, 2017, 7:00 – 9:00 pm
District E-18 Police Station, 1249 Hyde Park Ave., Hyde Park, MA

AGENDA

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Guests

2. Along the Greenway with Stella Lensing, DCR Project Manager

Hyde Park:

- Segment 7 – Fairmount to Dana Ave. *Next steps toward something along Truman Parkway?*
- Segment 9 – Connecting Trail to Paul's Bridge *Is anything happening yet?*

Milton:

- Segment 6 – Crossing Blue Hill Ave. *Will there be a formal opening?*
- Segment 2 – Central Ave to Mattapan Square: It's open!! *Is there a date for an opening ceremony?*
- *Sign placement along Segment 2?*

Dorchester:

- **Port Norfolk Park was officially opened!**
- Segment 3 – Victory Rd to Morrissey Blvd *Is there a design completion date? MassDOT contact?*
- Segment 4 – Tenean Beach to Victory Rd. *Bridge support letter to Stella*
- Segment 8 – Morrissey Blvd. drawbridge to UMass: *Date for next meeting?*

Mattapan:

- Segment 6 – Crossing Blue Hill Ave.: *Is there any progress for a crossing along River St.?*
- Apartments on Mattapan Station parking lot. *Construction start date?*
- Model of Mattapan-Milton trail section – *See it in the Mattapan Library!*

3. Events

- Thursday, June 1, 2017, 7pm-8:30pm: "Revealing the Neponset River" film screening, Fuller Village, 1372 Brush Hill Rd., Milton
- Wednesday June 7, 2017 6:30 pm: Neponset River Watershed Association 50th annual meeting, Four Points by Sheraton Norwood, 1125 Boston-Providence Highway (Rt 1), Norwood
- Saturday, July 8, 2017 2:00-3:00 pm: Geology Tour of The Trustees Signal Hill Reservation, Canton
- See newsletter for reports on the events of the past month!

Upcoming Meetings – Meetings held first Wednesday of the month at 7:00pm

July 5, 2017 Port Norfolk Yacht Club August 2, 2017 Foley Senior Residences, Mattapan
September 6, 2017 Milton Yacht Club, Milton October 4, 2017 Hyde Park Police Station, Hyde Park

Issues on the trail? (non-emergency) MassParks line: 617-626-1250, 0 for operator or email mass.parks@state.ma.us
Join neponsetgreenway@googlegroups.com to take part in discussions between Greenway Council meetings
Join the Neponset River Greenway Council group on Facebook.



'Just awesome' Latest Greenway link opens to rave reviews

By **Jennifer Smith, Reporter Staff** May. 19, 2017

The new Harvest River Bridge over the Neponset connects Milton and Mattapan near Ryan Playground. Lee Toma photo

The latest stretch of the Neponset River Greenway is now open to the public, connecting Pope John Paul Park II and Mattapan Square and filling in a long-missing link in the biking and pedestrian trail.

The trail opened at 5 p.m. last Friday afternoon, according to state Department of Conservation and Recreation officials. A celebratory ribbon cutting remains a few weeks off.

Robert Lowell, acting chief engineer at DCR, said "this is the connection that's been sought for so many years."

A 1.3-mile stretch, the extension features two dramatic crossings — including the prominent arched Harvest River Bridge that connects the Milton and Mattapan sides of the Neponset River, and a canopy walk that winds over the Mattapan high-speed trolley path before sloping down on the other side of the station near the busy square along Blue Hill Avenue.

On Saturday, as walkers and bicyclists buzzed past, one runner summed up the common reaction as he flew by: "Just awesome. So worth the wait!"

Paul Nutting, a prominent advocate for the Greenway's extension, agreed.

"I think it's awesome. It's going to be an amazing asset to link all of the neighborhoods together," Nutting said.

The higher walk was necessary for practical reasons, Lowell said, with the older-powered, direct current, live-rail trolley making an at-grade crossing infeasible. So, "this solution made for a long-term safer crossing," he said. "The thinking was to provide really a tree canopy-height boardwalk to get more of the nature experience."

Walkers and bikers will hear the familiar rattle of the historic Mattapan trolley echo along the trail at regular intervals as the path winds between the Mattapan and the Central Ave stations.

DCR officials initially planned for the path to open in Spring 2016, but "fairly normal restrictions" on contractors were among the factors that pushed the project out a year, Lowell said. "This year the fairly mild winter enabled it to stay on track and bring it to completion," he said.

After years of outreach to make sure "what was going to be done was going to meet community needs," the final path connects with parks and general thoroughfares as it connects historically underserved neighborhoods that have long clamored for accessible greenways.

"It's really to try to get people out and enjoying natural resources by walking, biking, and any other foot travel methods out there," Lowell said.

As recently as last week, DCR managers still expected to open the trail later in the spring, but contractors concluded their work and gave the go-ahead earlier than anticipated, allowing the state to throw open the proverbial gates to the trail before Memorial Day.

Including outdoor transportation options and access to these state-run green spaces has been a priority for Gov. Charlie Baker, spokesman Mark Steffen told the Reporter. "It's obviously a multi-modal path that communities are going to have the opportunity to enjoy," he said. "With the size of these communities, having transit options beside cars, beside the MBTA is very important."

Lowell said DCR expects work toward designing and funding the greenway stretch near the National Grid gas tank to move forward over the next year or so, with managers now entering the permitting stage for that portion.

Reporter editor Bill Forry contributed to this story.