

# Encouragement to a 12-year-old about wonderful things

**Dear Editor:**

When I read the letter to the editor from the 12-year-old boy and his fears concerning the proposed Lynnfield Trail, I felt very sad in several respects (12-year-old asks townspeople to consider negative impacts, Villager, Feb. 25, 2015). Someone frightened this boy very badly about the world and I want to encourage him. Let me start by encouraging all 12-year-olds that despite the loss of the great sledding hills due to the MarketStreet development, the good news is that the Lynnfield Trail is going to be a great new park in Lynnfield – it will afford all kinds of recreational opportunities and will be a magnificent addition to the town. The Lynnfield Trail will be a new place for enjoyment and fun for every family. Everyone from moms or dads pushing babies in strollers to tikes on little trikes to older folks on big tricycles will enjoy

it. Amazingly, the Lynnfield Trail will be a safer place to enjoy all these activities than the street in front of your house because there will be no cars or traffic!

When spring arrives, let me encourage you to ask your parents to take you for a ride or walk on any of the bike trails that have been enjoyed in many nearby towns for many years. I bet you will really enjoy the experience. Let me encourage you to stop a few people and talk with them; you will learn that the people using the trail feel that their lives are healthier and happier and that they have a stronger sense of community by being out of their homes and seeing their friends and neighbors also enjoying the outdoors in a beautiful setting.

Don't be surprised when you find that the people who love the trail the most are the people who live closest to it – they have a park at their door-

step! How great is that, not to have to share the road with any cars?

I want to encourage you that the Lynnfield Trail won't be an avenue for criminals; think about this a little bit: If a criminal wanted to get away fast, get away with a lot of loot or get away undetected, a car is far more practical than a bike – and the idea of a bike trail is to have a car-free zone for outdoor activity! The trail will be no closer to anyone's back yard than the street in front of your house is now and I doubt anyone is scared to play in their own front yard. We have a strong and well-connected community and parks tend to get people out more and make stronger, better connected communities. The amazing thing about parks is the more people who use them, the safer they are. After all this snow, doesn't it sound great to get out to get some exercise and to see your

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friends, too?

Let me encourage you about Lynnfield's history. Did you know that Lynnfield was once a vacation spot to which many hundreds of families would retreat to escape the hot summers and density of Boston, Lynn and other cities? It is in Lynnfield's tradition to provide recreation in beautiful outdoor settings. Pillings Pond was a magnet for visitors for a century; how great it was to spend a summer afternoon on or at the pond! That's why so many of these visitors eventually moved here.

As another historical observation, I do not think that the folks living in the homes near the path of the proposed Lynnfield Trail would welcome the return of 10 trains a day going through town; indeed, I think most folks will really enjoy being able to step onto a traffic-free park that is several miles long and enjoy the freedom this provides.

Will visitors come to Lynnfield to enjoy the trail? I hope so, because I know they will enjoy and admire our town. Some may come to live here, too. We already host thousands of visitors every year to our parks, schools and athletic fields and their visits are a great way for us to make new friends. Yes, you need to be aware of what's going on around you

but the overwhelming majority of people are good – especially if they are actively engaged in recreation to make themselves better, healthier and happier.

Finally, let me offer encouragement to think of the Lynnfield Trail as a great place to play, socialize and exercise: perhaps a vigorous Rollerblade spin for you with your friends, a joyful tricycle or stroller ride for younger kids or a quiet walk to breathe in the beautiful woods and meadows through which the path will meander for our older residents.

To all our youth, I am very happy

*Lynnfield Villager*

to encourage you to get outside, dream of the great opportunities this trail will provide and enjoy it thoroughly with your friends and neighbors when it is built. It encourages me to think of the Lynnfield Trail as an opportunity for you to learn much about the world, nature, the power of community and the force of change for doing good. I look forward to a day when I see you on the trail on some beautiful day; we smile in recognition and say to each other, "see how great this is – wow, this the best thing this town has ever done!"

**Bob Miller**

3.4.15