

Lynnfield Weekly News 10.2.14

## Letter: Rail Trail Committee working with residents

In response to the September 25, 2014 letter "Proposed rail trail carries various costs", my fellow rail trail advocates and I respect the dialogue initiated by Ms. Giugliano. Our committee invites residents to learn about this much desired amenity that will make our town an even more terrific place to live and raise a family by turning an abandoned rail bed into a vibrant community resource where you can walk, run, bike, rejuvenate, explore and enjoy nature.

The committee appreciates and has researched the concerns raised as these are not uncommon when rail trail projects are under consideration. Please see our website to learn: why residents requested this rail trail, how it will be funded, why Police Chief Breen is a supporter and much more.

Our volunteer team is committed to keeping residents informed and at the advice of Selectman Tom Terranova, just finished a major outreach effort to

those who live closest to the proposed trail. This included a mailing and survey, as well as door-to-door visits to listen and answer abutters questions. We were warmly received and residents' feedback has been invaluable in planning to make this project work for Lynnfield.

We have strong interest for the project and need residents' support to keep it moving ahead.

Our committee is scheduled to update the Board of Selectman in October and will request the spring 2015 warrant include an opportunity for residents to vote to authorize the selectmen to sign a lease with the MBTA for the land.

To ensure that residents are well informed ahead of an April town vote, our project engineers, WorldTech, will return in a few months to present their state-funded initial findings that will include recently begun geotechnical research near the marsh, and answer any questions that residents may have.

We invite input and encourage

residents to learn about the project and see how they can help make it a reality at [www.lynnfieldrail-trail.org](http://www.lynnfieldrail-trail.org) and on Facebook/Lynnfieldrailtrail.

*Janet Long, Chairman,  
Lynnfield Recreational Path  
Committee  
Lynnfield*



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# Letter: Proposed rail trail carries various costs

9.25.14

Lynnfield Weekly New

The proposed Wakefield/Lynnfield Rail-to-Trail would convert the rail bed of the old Boston & Maine Railroad into an approximately 4.4 mile linear path extending from the Galvin Middle School in Wakefield all the way to the Lynnfield/Peabody town line. Roughly 2.5 miles of the path would be located in Lynnfield. I am writing this letter to the editor to let my fellow residents of Lynnfield know what I've found in my own research regarding the rail-to-trail.

Where is the trail going?

According to a Feasibility Study released in 2007, "The North Suburban Bike Paths in Wakefield and Lynnfield will eventually connect to the Border-to-Boston Trail via Peabody." It will also connect to the East Coast Greenway, which describes itself on its website as a "developing trail system, linking many of the major cities of the Eastern Seaboard between Canada and Key West." ([www.greenway.org](http://www.greenway.org)). Most importantly, the Feasibility Study states that, "This connection should be shown in the Plan to emphasize that this is a regional trail system, not an isolated trail." (Fay, 2007)

How would crime affect the town of Lynnfield?

The Lynnfield Recreational Path Committee, the group most vocally supporting this proposal, in their recent pamphlet stated that, "paths do not increase incidents (of crime) and may decrease them..." They say that, "crime is everywhere". But in the more-than-thirty years that I've lived in Lynnfield I cannot recall any crime occurring on the old

Boston & Maine rail bed. Here are just a few of the most recent crimes which allegedly occurred in bike paths around our area. On August 14th in Arlington, as reported by The Boston Globe, a 17-year-old male allegedly committed unarmed robbery and assault and battery against another man on a bike path. Also in Arlington, as reported by the Arlington, Massachusetts Patch on September 10th, "2 Males, One with Knife, Assault Female Teen on Minuteman Bike Path." In Malden, on the morning of Tuesday September 2, a "High-school-age girl (was) sexually accosted." Just google "bike path crime that occurs on bike paths". The number of results is startling.

Will the rail-to-trail burden the Town?

The Lynnfield Recreational Path Committee's flyer claims that the project will require, "No New Taxes" and that Lynnfield and Wakefield are "seeking State and Federal funding."

But what they're not telling us in the flyer is how more-indirect costs such as long-term maintenance, snowplowing, policing, repairing potholes, falling trees, and the resurfacing of the asphalt paths which have a limited lifespan of approximately 8-to-10 years would be paid for. (Keep in mind that gasoline is an important component of asphalt and that if gasoline goes up in price, asphalt will likely go up as well)

Do bike trails affect property values?

The Lynnfield Recreation Path Committee claims in its flyer that property values will be affected, "likely in a good way." But a 20-

year study published by the National Association of Reversionary Property Owners (NARPO) found that in the case of one important trail, properties near the trail saw their values severely reduced when compared to properties further away, increasing only by 26 percent compared to a County average of 325 percent.

Regardless of what your opinion is, whether you are in favor of the proposal or against it, I respect your opinion. I urge you to check these facts so that you can make a fair and well-informed decision about the proposed bike-path. I feel that it will change Lynnfield forever, the quaint town with low crime, no congestion, and a strong community where I proudly chose to bring up my family over thirty-five years ago. We just purchased the Centre Farm for historical preservation, please preserve Lynnfield.

Jill Giugliano,  
Lynnfield