

**Georgetown Recreational Path Current Status - State of Town Meeting
March 15, 2008**

The committee is delighted for the opportunity to present this report at the State of the Town program. This report highlights current status and is a continuum of the FY2007 town report which is available on the town Web site. Your comments or question are always welcome at recpath@yahoo.com or 978-352-2587. Thank you. Richard M. Paganelli, Chairman

Current Committee – Richard M. Paganelli-Chairman; Kelly Lombardo-Clerk, William Hastings, Jeff Wade, and William Monroe. Friends of the Committee who are actively working with committee are: Attorney Charles Keilty, Elizabeth Rose, and Chris Roop.

B2B Task Force - Mass Highway Commissioner Luisa Paiewonsky announced the creation of a Mass Highway Border to Boston Task Force on January 21, 2007. Georgetown is represented on this Task Force and so far there have been several productive monthly meetings at Mass Highway headquarters in Boston which have served to move the project forward.

Feasibility and Conceptual Design Study - The Study was completed by Fay, Spoofer, and Thorndike LLC in July 2007. The findings supported the feasibility of moving forward. Many of issues highlighted need to be resolved with design specific solutions. The study can be view on the Committee's WEB page:
http://www.georgetownma.gov/Public_Documents/GeorgetownMA_BComm/rec_path.

Securing Right-of-Way – We are making progress in securing rights on the abandoned RR Row. Volunteer Attorney Chuck Keilty has joined our team. We are obtaining pro bono services from a major legal firm through the auspices of Select board Chairman Matt Vincent and the National Essex Heritage Commission. They are in the process of doing some essential fundamental research for us. Mass Highway and the Federal Highway Administration are working with National Grid Company to resolve the issues of lease or license. We have been working with private owners of the ROW and have agreed in principle for easements and are in process of formalizing agreements. National Grid VP Shannon Larson is a member of the B2B Task force and is involved in discussion concerning Georgetown's securing of rights. We also are having focused meetings with Boxford and Topsfield whose RR ROW is also owned fully or partially by National Grid. One of the deliverables of the 25% design is a formal ROW plan. In order to meet criteria for any Federal Funds, we have to comply with strict rules of the Uniform Act for land acquisitions. Finalized agreements cannot be made until the 25% design is complete.

Conditional Project Approval - The Mass Highway Project Review Committee formally notified the Georgetown Board of Selectmen on December 21, 2007 that the Border to Boston Shared –Use Rail-Trail is approved up to the 25% design stage. As specific construction phases are identified, they will need to be submitted to the Project Review Committee for approval.

Funding for 25% Design – A January 15, 2008 letter from Mass Highway to BOS Chairman, Matt Vincent, was received announcing the funding of \$960,000 towards the 25% design of the entire Border to Boston Multi-use trail from Salisbury to Danvers. Although the costs are expected to exceed the funds available, Mass Highway hopes to provide the balance. Funding for the final design and construction are not yet identified. It is incumbent on the municipalities to lead and be responsible for securing the necessary right-of-way. (This work is underway in Georgetown as part of Phase II of the project)

Bidding for 25% Consultant - The bidding process for the 25% design consultant has begun. The scope of work was developed from inputs from all the B2B municipalities. A consultant is expected to be selected by the end of 2008. The 25% design is anticipated to be completed in later 2009.

Estimated Project Costs - The current estimates of project costs for Georgetown based on the Feasibility and Conceptual Design Study are: Construction \$4.4 M; Design - \$550K. Part of the design is preliminary (25%) which is covered by the \$960,000.

Funding – Potential sources of funding for final design and construction are Federal Transportation Enhancements, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program, and/or specific federal project earmarks. It is going to take creative energy from all to work with our elected representatives, planning agencies, and others to secure funding, a fundamental requirement is completing the 25% design and securing the necessary right-of-way; we are optimistic and well on our way to meet this milestone. There may or may not be a local 10% match for federal funds final design and construction funds. It is the committees' position to prepare for the match with Community Preservation Funds. If the match requirement is not required, the funds will be returned to the CPC.