



A gravel base has been laid just north of Lovefield St. but other parts of the new Manhan Rail Trail spur from Easthampton and Northampton have a base layer of pavement.

Project Updates

Coleman Road Section:

This project appears to be inching along. The Southampton Conservation Commission has issued an "Order of Conditions" for the small stretch of trail that lies in that town.

The asbestos is expected to be removed in May or June, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Design work continues by Tighe and Bond, which reports that comments from Mass DOT on the 75% design have been reviewed.

The goal is to bid the project by September 30, 2010.

Northampton Connector:

Construction on the link between Easthampton and Northampton continues. Funded by Federal stimulus dollars, this project runs along the National Grid right-of-way from Ferry Street to Earle Street.

Contractors have worked on waterline relocation near the abutments for the bridge that will cross Route 10.

The bridge that will cross the Manhan River in Easthampton will be located closer to Lovefield Street because of overhead power lines. The bridge project must be advertised in September, the deadline for using these stimulus funds.

It is hoped that the rest of the connector (aside from the Manhan River bridge) will be completed this construction season.



In this photo, dated 1898, a train runs on the old bridge over Lovefield Street. The sign before the bridge reads: Your Money Back if goods are not satisfactory. Clothe Your Boys at Hubbell's Cash Clothier Northampton. (photo courtesy the Easthampton Historical Society)



This photo, taken April 2010, shows the remnants of the old bridge abutment. The earth, once built up to support the tracks, will be leveled somewhat to accommodate the new section of the Manhan Rail Trail.

History of New Trail's Lovefield Street Crossing

by John Bator

After crossing the Manhan River via a new bridge, the new section of the Manhan Rail Trail connecting Easthampton to Northampton then must traverse Lovefield Street, and it is here where a bit of railroad history comes into play.

Back in the latter part of the 1800's and early 1900's, an overpass for the New Haven and Northampton Railroad was located at this site (also known as Maloney's Crossing).

Its removal in the mid 1950's underscored the decline of railroads as a major influence in modern times. A trolley line also ran along Lovefield during this period, and O'Neil Street hadn't been constructed yet.

After the extension is completed and in use, perhaps some of us will recall that glorious old engine, black smoke billowing from its stack, as it chugged along the tracks of a by-gone era.

Rail Trail Tidbits

Trail Clean Up May 1st!

Volunteers are needed Sat., May 1 to help clean up the trail. Meet at the mural at 8:30 AM, where the trail crosses Payson Ave. Bring gloves, rakes, shovels, etc.

Derrill's Race on Trail

The 7th Annual Derrill's Race will take place on the Manhan Rail Trail Sunday, May 2. The 5K Run/Walk benefits cancer research and other charities. Last year, the race committee donated \$9,500 to the rail trail's repair at the sink hole. Visit www.derrillsrace.com for race info.

Are you on Facebook?

Then why not become a fan of the Manhan Rail Trail! Feel free to post anything you'd like others to know about the trail and things trail related!

Culvert Checks

We are asking for everyone's help in keeping an eye on culverts along the bike path. It is important to keep these clear so that water can flow through them and not back up. It was a clogged culvert that caused the disastrous washout near East Street in the fall of 2008.

The Easthampton DPW is keeping a watch on several ravines along the trail, but has asked for help from the community. If you notice a back up of water on the upstream side of the path, please call Jim Gracia at the DPW as soon as possible.

This newsletter is published by the Friends of the Manhan Rail Trail and edited by Wendy Hammerle. Comments or questions may be directed to: (413)529-1460 - info@manhanrailtrail.org or visit our web site at:

www.manhanrailtrail.org

Donations may be sent to:
Manhan Rail Trail
Easthampton Municipal Office Building
50 Payson Ave.
Easthampton, MA 01027

"Share the Road" Signs Are Installed

Thanks to the efforts of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and City Planners from both Easthampton and Northampton, several new *Share the Road* signs have been installed on area roadways.

The signs are placed strategically on roads heavily used by cyclists, especially those accessing the Manhan Rail Trail. (shown right: East Street, Easthampton)



Trail Rides For Persons with Disabilities

Once again, Easthampton residents with disabilities will be able to do some adaptive cycling on the Manhan Rail Trail this season. All Out Adventures provides riders of most abilities with stable recumbent tricycles, tandem cycles, hand-pedaled cycles and more. And yes, you can bring a friend or family member.

This is a free program funded by the city of Easthampton through a Dept. of Housing and Community Dev. Block Grant. The program runs from April 25 through Sept. 23. Call 413-527-8980 or visit www.alloutadventures.org for the complete schedule.



Kiosk Destroyed by Vandals

If you are wondering what happened to the trail kiosk near the new Millside Park (by Ferry St.) we are sorry to report that it succumbed to vandalism.

In September 2009, the kiosk was knocked over twice. Volunteers Peter Brooks and Ron Perrier repaired it, installing new wooden 6x6 posts. But within days, it was burned to the ground.

If anyone knows how to build a vandal-proof kiosk, please let us know!

Breakfast Fundraiser

Sun. May 23rd (9-11am)

Apollo Grill

Eastworks Building, 119 Pleasant St.

Celebrate Bike Commute Week and help support the Manhan Rail Trail! (\$10 suggested donation)

