

Wellesley Trails Committee

Future Trails Development and Improvement Projects

In response to the Planning Board's request for input to the Wellesley Comprehensive Plan, the Trails Committee has prepared a list of future projects to improve and extend our trails network.

The projects represent ideas proposed by the committee members during the last several years. Although some of the projects are more feasible than others, because of either complexity or cost, we believe that these projects will significantly enhance our existing trails network.

Projects

There are ten projects that we would like included in the Comprehensive Plan. Project locations are shown on the attached map by project number. The projects, in rank order of priority starting with highest priority, are:

1. Sudbury Path: New trail along the Sudbury Aqueduct from the Needham town line at Hunnewell St. to the Wellesley Research Center on Washington St.
2. Brook Path Improvements at High School: Part of the Fuller Brook Restoration Master Plan. Provide a continuous, well-defined path between the State St. parking lot and the trail off Paine St.
3. Weston Road Trail Parking: Parking and a safe pedestrian crossing at Weston Rd. and Linden St.
4. Guernsey Path Extension: Extension of the current trail from the Waban Arches to the Crosstown Trail.
5. Charles River Path Extension in Lower Falls: Part of the Wellesley Lower Falls Riverway Project. Trail extension from Washington St. to the Charles River will provide the Wellesley link for the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) plan to develop a foot and bike path along the old railroad right-of-way to the MBTA Riverside station. Our proposal includes a picturesque bridge of flowers over the Charles.
6. Charles River Path Extension to Boulevard Rd: A continuation of the Lower Falls Charles River Path Extension in Lower Falls. Trail will run along the Charles River, beginning in back of the former Grossman's site and proceeding along DCR land to the end of Boulevard Rd.
7. Elm Bank Trail: A new trail along the Charles River from the Waban Arches to Cheney Dr.
8. Rosemary Brook Trail: New woodland trail through the Town Forest north of Rt. 9.
9. Overbrook Trail: New woodland trail through the Overbrook Reservation.
10. Charles River Footbridge to Elm Bank: Proposed footbridge across the Charles River that will connect open space near the Waban Arches to Elm Bank. The bridge is inspired by the Blue Heron Bridge recently built by DCR across the Charles connecting Newton to Watertown.

The above list is a summary of the trail projects we propose. Details for each project are given in the Appendix and contain the following additional information:

1. Purpose of the new trail or trail improvement.
2. Route of the trail or segment and connections to other trails.
3. Trail access issues that must be considered/resolved prior to startup.
4. Dependence on other town or state projects.
5. Betterments requiring town capital expenditures.
6. Expenses for town maintenance in subsequent years.

In setting our priorities, we compared key issues and cost. The projects are rated according to the following criteria:

1. Benefits to trails network: High, Medium, Low
2. Trail access issues*: Difficult, Moderate, Easy, None
3. Town capital cost: High (greater than \$10,000), Moderate (between \$1,000 and \$10,000), Low (less than \$1,000), None
4. Town ongoing expense: High (greater than \$1,000/year), Moderate (between \$100 and \$1,000/year), Low (less than \$100/year), None

Comparison of Trails Projects

Project	Benefits to Trails Network	Access Issues*	Capital Cost	Ongoing Expense
1. Sudbury Path	High	Difficult	High	Moderate
2. Brook Path Improvements at High School	High	Moderate	Moderate	None
3. Weston Road Trail Parking	High	Moderate	High	Moderate
4. Guernsey Path Extension	High	Difficult	Moderate	None
5. Charles River Path Extension in Lower Falls	High	Easy	Moderate	Moderate
6. Charles River Path Extension to Boulevard Rd	High	Moderate	None	None
7. Elm Bank Trail	Medium	Difficult	Low	None
8. Rosemary Brook Trail	Low	Moderate	None	None
9. Overbrook Trail	Low	Difficult	Low	None
10. Charles River Footbridge to Elm Bank	Medium	Moderate	None**	None

* Access issues include permission from landowners, safety concerns, terrain conditions, parking availability, and trail route compromises (see Appendix for details).

** It is assumed that the footbridge will be built and funded by DCR.

Additional Information

The following websites provide additional information:

1. Wellesley Trails Network: www.wellesleytrails.org
2. Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR): <http://www.mass.gov/dcr>
3. Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA): www.mwra.state.ma.us
4. Charles River Link Trail: www.charlesriverlink.org

Respectively submitted,

WELLESLEY TRAILS COMMITTEE

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Appendix

Detailed Project Information

1. Sudbury Path

Purpose:

1. Provide a trail along the Sudbury Aqueduct.
2. Provide a major network trail that connects together the historic Waban Arches, Beebe Meadow, the Town Forest and continues on to Echo Bridge in Needham at Hemlock Gorge.

Route:

1. Follow the Sudbury Aqueduct from Hunnewell St. at the Needham town line to the Wellesley Research Center on Washington St.
2. Open space is not contiguous along the aqueduct, and the trail will be routed off of the aqueduct at three locations:
 - 2a. Wellesley Country Club to Great Plain Ave: Trail will be routed along Wellesley St. and through Babson and Olin Colleges.
 - 2b. At the intersection of Benvenue and Grove Sts: Trail will be routed along Benvenue St.
 - 2c. Behind the Wellesley Research Center the trail will be routed through the Wellesley College property to Washington St.
3. Trail has connections to Hemlock Gorge, Charles River Path, Beard Trail, Guernsey Path, Charles River Link, and Elm Bank Trail.

Access Issues:

1. Permission from MWRA for Sudbury Aqueduct access. Aqueduct is an operational, tertiary-backup water supply for Boston.
2. Permission from Babson College to route trail through campus from the intersection of Forest and Wellesley Sts. to the existing trail in back of skating rink.
3. Permission from Olin College to route trail from behind the skating rink to Sudbury Aqueduct near Great Plain Ave.
4. Wellesley College has previously granted us access permission through the Wellesley Research Center, and we need to confirm the agreement.
5. We would like to continue the trail along Washington St to Cheney Dr. There are two reasons we have decided not to include this option in our current proposal: 1) Narrow shoulders along the south side of Washington St. would make construction of a sidewalk difficult, and 2) inadequate sight visibility for a crosswalk to the north side of Washington St., where there is sufficient room for a sidewalk.
6. Mitigation of safety concerns using Waban Arches as Waban Brook trail crossing.

Dependence on Other Projects:

1. None.

Betterments:

1. Sidewalk along golf course on north side of Wellesley St. at Forest St. intersection.
2. Crosswalk at Great Plain Ave. aqueduct crossing (need to work with Needham).
3. Sidewalk along Benvenue St. from Grove St. west to intersection of Sudbury Aqueduct. An alternative option is to use path to Buckingham Ter. off Grove St., and construct sidewalk on Dover Rd.
4. Crosswalk on Dover Rd. at aqueduct crossing.

Ongoing Expenses:

1. MWRA will most likely want us to support trail maintenance along aqueduct.

2. Brook Path Improvements at High School

Purpose:

1. Reduce walkers' confusion navigating this section of Brook Path.
2. Provide well-defined path through high school playing fields and past high school.

Route:

1. Trail section is from the State St. parking lot to the wood-chipped trail off Paine St.

Access Issues:

1. Proximity to active sports.
2. Wet areas need to be avoided.

Dependence on Other Projects:

1. Fuller Brook Restoration Master Plan.

Betterments:

1. Construct new path.
2. Move State St parking lot about 4-ft to the south to allow for safer pedestrian access along Fuller Brook.
3. Costs to be included under the NRC's Fuller Brook Restoration Master Plan.

Ongoing Expenses:

1. None.

3. Weston Road Trail Parking

Purpose:

1. Provide crosswalk across Weston Rd. at Linden St. to improve pedestrian safety.
2. Provide parking for Crosstown Trail and Cochituate Path at Weston Rd. and Linden St.

Route:

1. N/A.

Access Issues:

1. A temporary parking lot adjacent to the electric substation was used during renovation of the Wellesley Congregational Church and could be made into a permanent parking lot.
2. Note that there are access issues for cars entering and exiting the driveway to the parking lot.

Dependence on Other Projects:

1. None.

Betterments:

1. Install blinking-light pedestrian crossing at driveway to electric substation.
2. Pave public parking area in front of electric substation.

Ongoing Expenses:

1. Maintenance of parking lot and blinking-light pedestrian crossing.

4. Guernsey Path Extension

Purpose:

1. Provide a trail from the Waban Arches to the Crosstown Trail.

Route:

1. From the current end of the Guernsey Path at Waban Arches, go under the arches and follow trails and road east through golf course to Dover Rd. Follow Dover Rd north to Washington St., east on Washington St. to Weston Rd., and north on Weston Rd. to Linden St.
2. Connection to the Sudbury Path, Brook Path, and Crosstown Trail.

Access Issues:

1. Permission from Wellesley College for access along road through Nehoiden golf course. Roadway crosses two fairways, but is used by vehicles to access golfer's parking and the Nehoiden House.

Dependence on Other Projects:

1. None.

Betterments:

1. Complete sidewalk along Dover Rd. from Ingraham Rd. to Leighton Rd.

Ongoing Expenses:

1. None.

5. Charles River Path Extension in Lower Falls

Purpose:

1. Provide a foot and bike path which will link with a DCR project to provide access to Riverside MBTA station along old railroad right-of-way in Lower Falls.
2. Create a picturesque crossing over the Charles River with a bridge of flowers.

Route:

1. Washington St. to railroad bridge across Charles River.

Access Issues:

1. Provide access from right-of-way strip to railroad bridge. Currently there is a fence there.
2. Note that DCR is planning to refurbish the railroad bridge and develop the trail from the Newton side of the bridge to Riverside.

Dependence on Other Projects:

1. DCR refurbishing of railroad bridge across the Charles and developing the trail from the Newton side of the bridge to Riverside.
2. Lower Falls Riverway Project.

Betterments:

1. Trail access from Washington St. to railroad bridge.
2. Bridge of flowers on railroad bridge.
3. Costs to be included under the Planning Board's Lower Falls Riverway Project.

Ongoing Expenses

1. Planting and maintenance of flowers and flowerboxes (Wellesley garden clubs?).

6. Charles River Path Extension to Boulevard Rd.

Purpose:

1. Provide a trail along the Charles in Lower Falls behind the former Grossman's site.
2. Provide a trail along the river from Lower Falls to proposed canoe landing at end of Boulevard Rd.

Route:

1. Follow Charles River from the railroad bridge crossing to the end of Boulevard Rd.

Access Issues:

1. Include as a condition for development of former Grossman's site the development of a trail along the river.
2. Permission from DCR for developing a trail along Charles from former Grossman's site to end of Boulevard Rd.

Dependence on Other Projects:

1. Development of the former Grossman's site.

Betterments:

1. None for trail behind former Grossman's site. Provided by the developer.
2. Extend existing trail through DCR land along Charles River. There is already a footbridge across Indian Springs Brook built by DCR.

Ongoing Expenses

1. None.

7. Elm Bank Trail

Purpose:

1. Provide a trail along the Charles River from the Waban Arches to Elm Bank.

Route:

1. Waban Arches along Charles River to Cheney Dr.
2. Connection from Sudbury Path to Elm Bank Trail.

Access Issues:

1. Permission from Wellesley College for trail access from Waban Arches to Hunnewell private property along the river.

2. Obtain access agreements or renegotiate CRs with private-property landowners for permission for public trail along river.

Dependence on Other Projects:

1. None.

Betterments:

1. Develop a footpath along wooded sections of river.
2. Construct a footbridge over Pollock Brook which flows into the Charles.

Ongoing Expenses:

1. None.

8. Rosemary Brook Trail

Purpose:

1. Provide a woodland trail through the Town Forest north of Rt. 9.

Route:

1. Start trail off Rt. 9 west-bound ramp at Electric Substation building and follow Rosemary Brook west to Water Department building on Rt. 9.
2. Connection to the Charles River Path on Cedar St.

Access Issues:

1. Parking lots not available on either end of the trail (restricted to Water and Electric Departments' vehicles). Parking is along ramp to Rt. 9 or off Cedar St.

Dependence on Other Projects:

1. None.

Betterments:

1. Trail needs to be cleared through the pine grove woods adjacent to Rosemary Brook.

Ongoing Expenses:

1. None.

9. Overbrook Trail

Purpose:

1. Provide a neighborhood woodland trail through the Overbrook Reservation in the Fells part of town.

Route:

1. Start at Overbrook Reservation sign on Weston Rd. and loop around land on the north side of Boulder Brook.
2. No connection to other trails.

Access Issues:

1. Only access to this open space is along a short section of Weston Rd., the ramp up to Rt. 9, and along Rt. 9.
2. To improve neighborhood access, obtain trail easement from resident on Shirley or Livingston Rd. This may be difficult to obtain.

Dependence on Other Projects:

1. None.

Betterments:

1. Construct steps down from Weston Rd. sidewalk.
2. Construct a 15-ft footbridge across Boulder Bk.
3. Construct some bog bridges to get over wet spots between Weston Rd. and footbridge.
4. Develop loop trail on high ground north of brook.

Ongoing Expenses:

1. None.

10. Charles River Footbridge to Elm Bank

Purpose:

1. Provide a scenic bridge over the Charles linking open space in Wellesley and Dover.
2. Direct connection from Wellesley to Elm Bank.

Route:

1. Bridge connecting Elm Bank Trail to DCR trails in Elm Bank.

Access Issues:

1. Permission from Wellesley College for footbridge. Wellesley side of footbridge is located on Wellesley College property west of Waban Arches.

Dependence on Other Projects:

1. Get DCR interested in constructing the footbridge and making it a DCR funded project.

Betterments:

1. No cost to town. It is assumed that DCR will obtain funding for construction and build the footbridge.

Ongoing Expenses:

1. None. It is assumed that DCR will maintain the footbridge.