

Article #22 – Peninsula Trail – Southborough Trails Committee



Article: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$47,011 from the CPA annual revenue for the 1.6-mile Peninsula Trail. The funds will be leveraged as matching funds to apply for a MassTrails recreation grant to pay for further trail improvements, eliminating the need to apply for more CPA funds.

These funds are necessary to move forward with this project. Without the funds, the core project will not move forward as planned, and there will be no matching funds to apply for a MassTrails grant to expand the project.

We appreciate your vote to support!

Additional information can be found on the Trails website warrant article page: www.southboroughtrails.org (check out the Listening/FAQ Session recording during the Town Meeting Lunch Break)

Project overview:

- Open a **1.6-mile section** of the Boroughs Loop/Aqueduct Trail near Fayville dam (the **largest remaining gap** for this trail system in Southborough)
- Connect **3 regional trails**: (Boroughs Loop/Aqueduct/Bay Circuit Trail)
- Tentatively scheduled to **open 2022**



Who supports this project?

- Boroughs Loop Trail is a **collaborative effort** (2012) Includes a mix of municipalities, non-profits, land trusts, and state agencies
- The project is **supported BY EVERY** Board, Commission, Committee, state agency, community stakeholder that has been asked to support this initiative: DCR, MWRA, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Sudbury Valley Trustees, BOS, Advisory, Recreation, Historical, Marlborough, Westborough, Northborough, Westborough Community Land Trust, Mass Conservation Voters
- **Over 1600 signatures** were collected from the community to urge DCR to move forward with the public access plan so we could open this section of trail (Dec'20-Mar'21). Effort succeeded: DCR **has agreed** to move forward with the public access plan in 2021.

Project Scope:

- Add wayfinding, regulatory, interpretive signage (kiosks, permitted uses, educational & historical info)
- Install fence around existing drinking water infrastructure (riser shaft)

What do the CPA funds in this article pay for?

- Signage
- Improvements (fence) to MWRA property that are required for public access to existing pathways
- Ability to apply for a state grant that requires matching funds and which, if awarded, could reduce cost to the town

No CPA Funds = No ability to apply for MassTrails Grant = No Access to Trail

What is the town's return on investment?

- If the town were to build a **comparable trail** from the ground up, it would cost roughly **\$245,000 - \$292,000** (excluding equipment rental)
- For \$47,011 the town **will gain public access** to this trail (with enhancements), and...
- The funds will enable the Committee to apply for a MassTrails Grant of up to \$235,000 (illustrative purposes only; project cost not expected to reach this amount. The **CPA funds will be leveraged** to apply for more funds to pay for more trail improvements)

Why does this project include an expensive fence?

- It is a condition to allow access; a standard requirement by MWRA when providing access to these properties
- Non-negotiable fence specifications to **secure infrastructure** that provides drinking water to **3 million people**
- State procurement regulations will be followed to ensure the **most cost-effective approach**



Who is responsible for maintaining the fence?

- The town will maintain the fence (Trails Committee)
- Confirmed that the town's insurance policy covers liability; no trespassing/no climbing/private property signs will be installed

What do the neighbors think?

- We asked...letters were sent to neighbors closest to the trail inviting them to the May 6th Listening & FAQ Session and we asked for their input (Phase I outreach)
- Phase II outreach will include the other neighbors in the broader area

Can I walk my dog on this trail?

- Dogs are **PROHIBITED** on all DCR property within the Sudbury Reservoir Watershed. Although, Dogs **ARE ALLOWED** at Beals Preserve, Breakneck Hill, and at the Town Forest. All Dogs **must be leashed and all waste must be bagged and packed out. Thank you for doing your part to keep Southborough clean!**

Will there be parking?

- Yes: 3-4 cars can park at the gate at 142 Boston Road (intersection of Rt.30 & Central St, more parking at Fayville Park on Central Street (short walk to trailhead), and one other possible location near Stony Brook Rd) (TBD)

What is the expanded scope that the MassTrails Grant will help fund?

- Add 50-100' **boardwalk** and raised **footbridge** over stony brook (~30') to provide safer alternative to walking on Rt.30 (*Confirmed: MWRA is open to discussing this opportunity*)
- Trail has possibility of becoming Southborough's **first wooded ADA accessible trail** (*pending approvals and compliance requirements*): Move gate, accessible parking, address slope issues
- Option to install trees to create a **natural screen** for **trail neighbors**
- Install **crosswalk** at Central St. & Rt. 30
- Add additional **historical/interpretative signage** to improve "other" trails in town

