

Boston Globe John Laidler 7/10/08

TOPSFIELD

BIKE TRAIL CONSTRUCTION TO

START — A proposed 4-mile bicycle "rail trail" continues to draw attention from bicycle riders, abutters, and selectmen. At a recent meeting, the board approved use of a \$2,000 grant from the Essex National Heritage Commission and \$40,000 from the state's Department of Recreation and Conservation to begin the first phase of the trail, which will run from Main Street to Washington Street. Committee chairman Joe Geller said the trail will be made from tightly packed crushed stone laid over an abandoned rail bed. The stone will help with speed control but will also allow handicapped access. In addition, a new state law will limit liability for the town and for landowners along the trail. The committee will set up a series of public informational meetings and hopes to begin construction by early fall. The Topsfield stretch would be part of a 26-mile route from Salisbury to