
Vision

To transform the abandoned rail bed into a recreational asset for Topsfield residents of all ages for walking, jogging, biking, cross country skiing and horseback-riding, while respecting the privacy of our trail neighbors and the environment.

To create a linear common, the Topsfield Linear Common (TLC) – a place for people to meet and greet one another as they enjoy their outdoor exercise.

Overview

The abandoned rail bed, last used for freight service in the 1950s and passenger service in the late 1970s, runs north-south from Wakefield to Newburyport. In Topsfield it goes from the Wenham town line to the Boxford town line (approximately 4 miles).



The TLC by the Proctor School



Section of the Beverly-Salem Waterway accessible from the rail trail near Rt. 97

Description

The Topsfield Linear Common connects the southern border of Topsfield and the Fairgrounds with Topsfield Center, the Proctor School and Boxford. This last part is not finished but is passable on a grass surface. The trail provides a safe route to school for our children. Little Brook Village and Washington Meadows residents can use the sidewalk along Washington St. to access the TLC. The trail is part of the “Border-to-Boston Trail” connecting Danvers to the New Hampshire border.

The steel railroad bridge over the Ipswich River has been re-decked by volunteers as has the “spillway”, a smaller bridge nearby. The wooden bridge that spans the Beverly – Salem Waterway canal has been replaced.. This little known canal is over two miles long and provides for additional recreational opportunities (see the photo above). The TLC provides convenient access to this hidden treasure. Although not fully finished the **TLC is now 3.9 miles long. You can ride or walk from the North Shore Shopping Center in Peabody through Danvers, Wenham and Topsfield into Boxford.**



Town of Topsfield

Topsfield, MA 01983

Topsfield’s Rail Trail

“TLC” Topsfield Linear Common

A Community Connection

Topsfield Rail Trail Committee

www.TopsfieldTrail.org

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Background

Topsfield and the MBTA signed a 99-year lease in 2006 for the southern half of the rail trail. For the northern portion of the trail, which is owned by the National Grid, Topsfield has joined forces with the towns of Boxford, Georgetown, and Newbury to negotiate a user license which will hopefully lead to a lease.

Recent Improvements

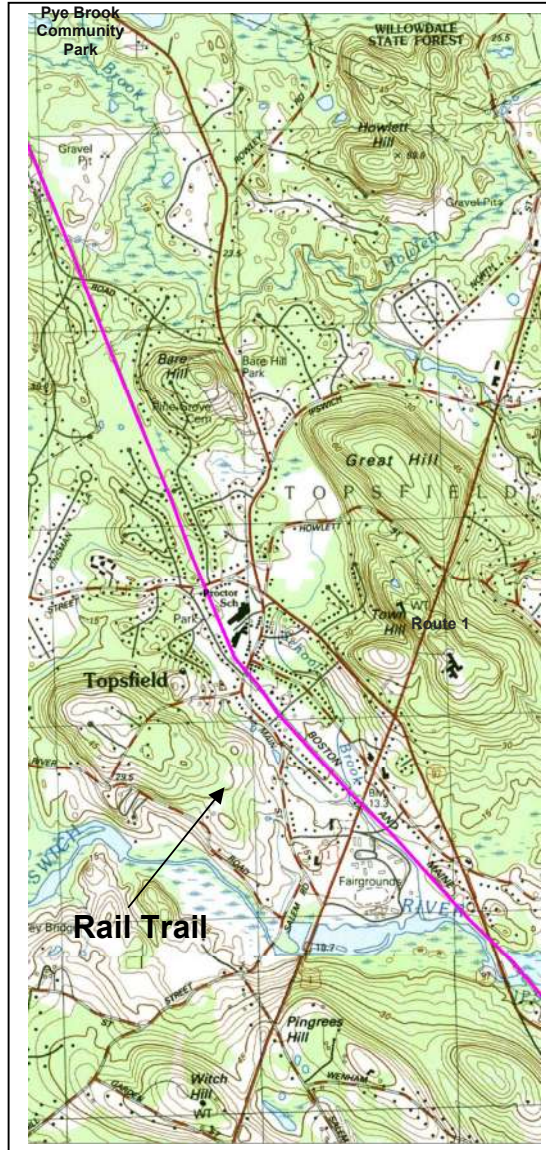
Solar powered flashing LED lights and crosswalks have been added to the Rt. 1 and Rt. 97 trail crossings. This major, and costly, improvement greatly improves trail safety. Funding for these projects, totaling about \$40,000, were from a Mass. Dept. of Conservation and Recreation grant.

Funding

Our goal is to provide and maintain the TLC at no cost to the Town of Topsfield.

Due to the national and state-wide interest in developing recreational trails, several funding sources have become available. Topsfield has received grants from the National Park Service for Border-to-Boston trail consulting services, several grants from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation's Recreational Trails program. Our volunteers have put in countless hours pursuing their passion to see trail users achieving their fitness goals in a sociable setting.

The Friends of Topsfield Trails www.FriendsofTopsfieldTrails.org a 501(c)3 non-profit, has received grants from the Essex National Heritage Commission, as well as grants from New England Grassroots, Essex County Trails Assn. and ECHO.



USGS map showing the Topsfield rail trail route

For More Information

More detailed information regarding the rail trail can be found at:

www.TopsfieldTrail.org
railtrail@Topsfield-MA.Gov

In 2005 the Rail Trail Committee was created by the Topsfield Selectmen. We hold meetings and forums as needed. The meetings are usually in Town Hall. Please check the town website, at www.Topsfield-MA.gov and/or Town Hall postings for meeting dates and times. The Rail Trail Committee meetings are public and all are welcome to attend. If you are interested in volunteering to work with our committee please come to a meeting or contact any of our members.

Chairman

Joe Geller (JDGeller@gmail.com)

Members

Kat Tremblay, Bill Rossiter,
David Read, Gregg Demers, and Roy
Baessler

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