

Public Comments Submitted to the Boston Region MPO

March 17, 2022

Written comments were submitted for the following projects since the last MPO meeting on March 3, 2022:

- **Belmont:** Chenery Middle School Bicycle Parking (one letter, page 2)
- **Belmont:** Community Path, Belmont Component of the MCRT (Phase 1) (#609204) (two letters, pages 3-7)
- **Cambridge:** Bluebikes System Expansion and Station Replacement (two letters, pages 8-9)
- **Swampscott:** Swampscott Rail Trail (#610666) (seven letters, pages 10-21)
- **Weston:** Intersection Improvements at Boston Post Road (Route 20) at Wellesley Street (#608940) (one letter, page 22)

9 Mar. 2022

Dear Chairperson David Mohler and Members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization:

The Belmont Transportation Advisory Committee would like to express our support for the Belmont Chenery Middle School's Community Connections application for a bicycle shelter that would be installed over existing bike racks at the school.

Chenery is a large middle school centrally located in Belmont with an enrollment of >1,400 students. A large majority of these kids are within biking distance of Chenery, resulting in more than 100 kids who regularly bike to school in dry weather. However, during wet weather the number of kids cycling is significantly lower, due in part to covered bike parking not existing at the school. Adding covered bike parking would provide the option for more kids to bike year-round, and encourage higher bike ridership to the school.

There are many benefits to encouraging more kids to bike versus drive to school. Driving to school creates safety problems, traffic congestion, and reduces air quality in Belmont. An increase in cycling to the school would offset these problems and have a traffic-calming effect that could in turn stimulate more biking and walking to Chenery. Another benefit of this program is that it would help develop healthy patterns of walking and biking for middle-school kids, which increases the likelihood they will follow similar patterns through high school and into adulthood.

There are several factors that make this project have the potential to contribute to significant growth beyond the roughly 100 students currently biking to Chenery in clear weather. First, Chenery Middle School is within biking distance of most students' homes. Second, the school has a high enrollment. Finally, there is growing interest within Belmont for traffic calming measures to improve safety on our streets for cycling and walking. While this proposal is limited to providing one bicycle shelter, high use of it could motivate the Town of Belmont to invest in more covered bike parking at Chenery, as well as at other schools also lacking sheltered bike facilities. The new Belmont High School opened last year and includes over 100 covered bike-parking spaces, which has contributed to a significant increase in year-round ridership to the high school.

In conclusion, this proposal is unique in that it would almost exclusively serve the youth Transportation Equity population, compared to many projects that serve mixed demographics and are not exclusive to equity populations. In addition, it is worth pointing out that these are mostly middle-school kids coming from their homes, rather from transit centers, which should be factored into the scoring of this proposal.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

The Belmont Transportation Advisory Committee

March 4, 2022

Mr. Matt Genova
TIP Manager
CTPS
Boston MPO

Dear Mr. Genova,

At the March 3rd meeting, MPO Board member Daniel Amstutz was wondering if the abutters' complaints had been addressed by Belmont.

The answer is "No". What abutters have been treated to has been a lot of hand waving to make it seem AS IF the town was addressing our complaints while, in reality, the town's juggernaut continued rolling over us. To be specific, this is what we have asked for that have been ignored in the submitted 25% design plan:

1. a 6-8' high fence shielding us from the path to provide us with privacy and peace of mind when in our backyards and homes. Instead, what is planned is a post-and-rail fence meant to visually mark the edge of the path.
2. trash bins to deal with the trash generated by the estimated 1K daily users of the path. Besides breeding flies and yellowjackets, trash breeds rats and we already have plenty in our neighborhood due to the schools and children's park coupled to a very lax trash pick up schedule. People in this area have complained bitterly about the rat problem for years. In desperation, people throw out rat poison indiscriminately and we end up with a lot of dead creatures including birds littering the landscape. As a matter of fact, blowflies (cadaver flies) are more common than house flies in this neighborhood.

Repeatedly, I have brought my concerns to the attention of the town without ever receiving a reply. My latest attempt to contact town officials and Senator Brownsberger has also not yielded a response. (See attached email.)

An NBC news item exposes the rat problem in this neighborhood (link follows) [Belmont, Mass dealing with second rat infestation \(2018\)](#).

3. a safe path-railroad intersection at Brighton Rd. The proposed design flaunts all the safety measures that the MBTA thought relevant. Anyone who walks by the moving gate realizes that it is a danger yet the path will lead people to within 1' of it among other dismal dangerous features of the submitted design.

4. preservation of the mature embankment trees. The trees are part of the enjoyment of our backyards and they serve as habitat for a large variety of wild birds and other creatures that also give us joy. Although it is true that there are Norway maples there, the climate crisis calls for a reasoned, sensitive approach to this linear wild life habitat instead of the proposed “slash and burn” style. We are in a 6th mass extinction* event and the creatures we have left should not be taken for granted.

**the numbers of all manner of wild life are plummeting as exemplified by the 85% drop of the seemingly indestructible and ubiquitous sparrow.*

5. stormwater drainage to conduct away from us rain/snow water that will be displaced by the 12’ asphalt path. The proposed 8” sub-drain is simply hand-waving to give the impression the problem is being addressed. The sub-drain is a typical road drainage system that will only move water under flood conditions. The proposed system sits on top of an embankment so it will never be flooded. What will be flooded will be our backyards.

Besides these issues, the town says that the plan does not call for a lighted path (now the town thinks lights are too expensive). But this contradicts the town’s position that the path will be open 24/7 year round. If not lighted then common sense calls for dawn to dusk hours or will the town give us the nasty news of lights in the future?

If the path is open year round: then where will the snow go? Seemingly it will be thrown on the embankment to then end up flooding our backyards when melted. Where will the ice-melt salt end up? The salt too will end up in our backyards poisoning the trees and our garden plants.

As you can see this smacks of a vanity project that is also politically expedient. Hence for the sake of social standing and politics and forgetting that we are part of the community, they seem quite willing to throw abutters under the bus.

Nothing expresses best what has been happening than Naomi’s response to my recent query as to how the town had treated her. (Naomi is an abutter next to the Clark St terminus and her property will be severely impacted by the path (the reference to “taking” is in regard to the town’s eminent domain.)

**Hello Aleida,
Thank you very much for reaching out to me.**

Last year, I reached out to the town of Belmont, the Community Path committee members and Nitsch to address a property line discrepancy, to get a clarification and explanation about the taking process and to schedule a visit by Nitsche. They never gave us a clear answer and Nitsche didn't come to our house. In general, they just ignored my questions and made me feel miserable, worthless and unwelcome to this

community. Their attitude discouraged me to deal with them and Covid-19 had hit my family so badly, so I have not been dealing with the Community Path problems,

Regarding a property line discrepancy, our record from the seller says the property line is 24 feet away, but the Nitsch plan says only 10 feet away. I first reached out to the town and Nitsch, but they never gave me clear answer or explanation so I started working with the xxx Survey Co. (unfortunately they left without completing the job, so I had to hire a lawyer to deal with them). This project has been a nightmare, causing so much stress and making me spend a lot of time and money.

I don't have enough energy to deal with them, but I really appreciate you providing a lot of information. Please let me know if you would need anything from me.

**Best,
Naomi**

Sincerely yours,

Maria Aleida Leza 91 Channing Rd.
Darin Takemoto 91 Channing Rd.

Also signing:
Margaret Merrie Watters 105 Channing Rd.
Xiaoyun Xie 111 Channing Rd.
Paul Cobuzzi 125 Channing Rd.
Naomi Okugawa 722 Pleasant St.
Eunice Flanders 112 Alexander Ave. - in support of abutters
Wayne Wild 112 Alexander Ave. - - in support of abutters
Allison Lenk P8 Town Meeting Member - in support of abutters

From: Aleida Leza [REDACTED]
Subject: Rats and the Belmont Community Path
Date: February 18, 2022 at 12:44 PM

To: belmontboardofhealth@belmont-ma.gov, adash@belmont-ma.gov, mpaolillo@belmont-ma.gov, Epstein, Roy
repstein@belmont-ma.gov

Cc: Will Brownsberger William.Brownsberger@masenate.gov



Dear Board of Health and Select Board,

On November 18, 2021, I emailed Mr Wesley Chin the following message:

Yesterday, at the CPPC meeting, Mr. Jay Marcotte publicly reaffirmed that the proposed community path would not include trash barrels.

Mr. Marcotte has decided that the path will not have trash barrels and one purpose of this path is to bring an estimated 1000 people daily to or through Belmont's commercial center. Last year, after he informed me that there would not be trash barrels, I asked Mr. Marcotte whether we, abutters, would be forced to be the path's janitors. His reply was "Good point".

Some years ago, I spoke with Stephan Miller, who has overseen the Arlington Minute Man path for over 25 years. He told me that one huge problem in the path is trash. He added that the closer to commercial center, the worse the trash. It makes sense that that is so: people buy food at the commercial center and eat it on the path.

Winn Brook neighborhood has had a rat problem of which you are well aware. The problem seems to be where people sit and eat food: elementary and high school. In addition, the pandemic drove rats out of Boston due to closed restaurants and, as news articles pointed out, they moved to the suburbs which means to places like Belmont. So, rodents are not scarce around here.

By now, I assume you see the problem: a path littered with pizza slices, bagels, sweets, etc. So we are being set up for a rat infestation and I bring this fact to your attention.

I have not received a response to this message, so I am reaching out to you and the Select Board. I assume that Mr. Marcotte's no-bins decision is forced by lack of DPW funding. Hence, it behooves this town to plan to provide DPW with the needed funds as part of the Belmont Community Path's planning. Let me point out that, since image is a concern of many, to have town visitors welcomed by an army of scurrying rats would be detrimental to the town's image.

As an abutter to the Belmont Community Path and as a person with a Medical Health Doctorate, I am very concerned about the public health hazard that not having trash bins represents. I would appreciate it if you would take steps regarding this matter and that you would inform me as to what those steps will be.

Sincerely,

Aleida Leza
Belmont, MA

Belmont (#609204): Community Path, Belmont Component of the MCRT (Phase 1)

March 13, 2022

Dear Mr. Matt Genova,

I'm writing to voice my support for the Belmont Community Path and request that the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization provide Transportation Improvement Program funding for the project as soon as possible.

I'm looking forward to the Belmont Community Path because the path and railroad underpass creates safe routes to school for children. Moreover, the path will improve my commute by providing a direct walkable/bikeable connection to Alewife Station or Belmont Center Station.

Additionally, I'm looking forward to the path because the path will offer recreational opportunities for me and my family.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Edin Insanic
155 Dean St.
Belmont mA 02478

AlewifeTMA



March 2, 2022

Boston MPO
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

To the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization:

I am writing to express Alewife TMA's strong support for the City of Cambridge's Community Connections program application for new Bluebikes station equipment. The Alewife Transportation Management Association (TMA) is a non-profit membership organization comprised of employers, multi-tenant office buildings, and residential buildings in the Alewife/Fresh Pond area. Members join together in a collective effort to increase mobility and commuting options, while reducing traffic congestion and air pollution.

The recent expansion of Bluebikes to the Quadrangle has provide a much-needed connection to Alewife Station for the employees and residents living or working in the Quadrangle. Additionally, it has improved access to the surrounding communities of Somerville, Arlington, Watertown, and Boston, all of which have or will soon have Bluebikes services available.

Bluebikes has proven to be very effective at shifting commuter trips from single occupancy vehicles and having access to Bluebikes in the Quadrangle has opened up an entirely new sustainable commuting option. We believe adding new Bluebikes stations and replacing old station equipment would go a long way in reducing congestion and greenhouse gas emissions in Cambridge while expanding sustainable transportation options for environmental justice communities in Cambridge.

Sincerely,

Melissa Zampitella

Melissa Zampitella | *Executive Director of Alewife TMA*

5 Wheeling Ave, Woburn MA, 01801
EMAIL director@alewifetma.org
MOBILE 617.515.2572
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March 2, 2022

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Letter of Support for the City of Cambridge's Community Connections Program Application

Dear Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization:

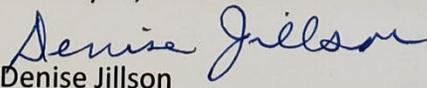
We are pleased to submit this Letter of Support for the City of Cambridge's Community Connections Program Application for new Bluebikes station equipment.

Bluebikes bicycle share brings a wealth of benefits to Cambridge: environmental (less car traffic, and cleaner air), public health (exercise for residents), economic (bike shoppers stay local!), and social (biking brings mobility and interaction in the public space). Adding new Bluebikes stations and updating old Bluebikes station equipment will further strengthen the system and encourage more people to choose bike share to get around Cambridge by keeping the system in a state of good repair.

The Bluebikes stations in Harvard Square have been a well-used amenity benefitting surrounding businesses and institutions. They provide an easy way for residents to get to Harvard Square for shopping, eating, and entertainment; for people who work in the area to commute; and for visitors to easily get here from anywhere in the system area.

The Harvard Square Business Association supports the City of Cambridge's Community Connections Program application. We strongly urge the MPO to consider funding this proposal.

Thank you,


Denise Jillson

Executive Director

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS STATE SENATE
STATE HOUSE BOSTON, MA 02133



BRENDAN P. CRIGHTON
THIRD ESSEX

ROOM 109-C, STATE HOUSE
TEL. (617) 722-1350
FAX: (617)-722-1005

E-Mail: Brendan.Crighton@MASenate.gov

Committees

Chair, Joint Committee on Transportation
Vice Chair, Joint Committee on Revenue
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Personnel and Administration
Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery
Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities
Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure
Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs

March 7, 2022

David Mohler
Chair, Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail (Project number 610666).

Dear Mr. Mohler and Members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization,

I am writing in strong support of the Swampscott Rail Trail and of the Town's request to have this project included in the FFY23-27 Transportation Improvement Program.

This project will provide the missing link that will connect the Northern Strand Community Path with the Marblehead and Salem Community Path. It will also add additional off-road mileage to the East Coast Greenway and the Border to Boston Trail. Clearly, the expansion of this off-road, shared use trail that will provide high-quality recreational experiences. It will create a safe, accessible, and high-quality recreational experience for the whole connective region to explore natural and cultural resources of surrounding communities.

Swampscott is the third most densely populated town in Massachusetts and provides limited busing for students. This trail project, when completed, will connect with three area schools and significantly increase student and pedestrian safety in an area which has seen numerous pedestrian and motor vehicle accidents. This trail will also link to existing open space and hiking trails, allowing residents to access and enjoy these areas more freely. This will all result in an environmentally friendly mode of equitable transportation that will encourage a healthy lifestyle and help spur economic development in the region.

The residents of Swampscott and its community leaders are fully behind this initiative and have been steadfast in making it a reality for quite some time. The Town has been committed to pursuing any and all public and private funding in order to advance this project. Additionally, the Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail has also been seeking private and in-kind donations to help out with costs.

This funding would create many accessibility, environmental, recreational and safety benefits to the Town and region. I respectfully request that you fund this project as part of the FFY23-27 Transportation Improvement Program.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important project. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Brendan P. Crighton
State Senator
Third Essex District



March 7, 2022

Matt Genova
 Transportation Improvement Program Manager
 Central Transportation Planning Staff
 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
 Boston, MA 02116

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Executive Director

Dennis Markatos-Soriano

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail- TIP Project # 610666

Dear Mr. Genova,

The East Coast Greenway Alliance (ECGA) enthusiastically supports the Town of Swampscott's rail trail project. Completing the Swampscott Rail Trail will establish a safe connection between several neighborhoods, three of the town's five schools, as well as create a linear park between recreational and conservation areas. As new segments are completed, they will become part of the East Coast Greenway (ECG), a developing 3,000-mile traffic-separated bicycling and walking path connecting communities from Maine to Florida.

The project fits within the Boston Region MPO's goals of increasing safety, mobility, and air quality, while providing transportation equity, and supporting economic vitality. This project would create a viable alternative transportation option to important local and region destinations that will help to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips by offering residents a safe option to access employment by bike or foot.

The Town, with the support of the MassDOT and others, have successfully constructed the first two phases of the trail, and with the support of the Boston Regional MPO would complete the Swampscott Rail Trail. The ECGA has been supporting the Town with technical assistance to help move this project forward, and I have seen their commitment and determination to complete this project.

Prioritizing this project will have long-lasting and meaningful impacts on the transportation network, as well as the safety, accessibility, health, and mobility for the citizens of Swampscott and users of the East Coast Greenway. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dennis Markatos-Soriano
 Executive Director

Kristine Keeney
 Northern New England Manager





PO Box 637
Swampscott, MA 01907

March 8, 2022

David Mohler, Chair
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116
c/o Matt Genova, mgenova@ctps.org

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail Construction Project 610666

Dear Mr. Mohler:

I am writing on behalf of the Swampscott Conservancy to urge the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization to award Transportation Improvement Program funding for the rail trail construction project in our town. This two-mile community path located on a former rail corridor will run the length of Swampscott and link neighborhoods, schools, parks, and the MBTA Commuter Rail station. One of the greatest benefits of the proposed rail trail is the off-road access and connection to three schools, including a new 900 student district wide K-4 grade school which will provide parents and students a safe active transit solution that would reduce air pollution, encourage fitness and healthy lifestyle.

Moreover, by getting people out of their cars and starting to bike and walk more, trails like this will help fight climate change in a meaningful way given that the transportation sector generates the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions. See: epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions. The Swampscott Rail Trail will provide non-polluting forms of transportation, such as biking and walking, and so help decrease the amount of carbon dioxide and other global-warming gases emitted into the atmosphere. That personal vehicles are a major cause of global warming is not disputed. As the Union of Concerned Scientists, in a 2014 article, noted: “Collectively, cars and trucks account for nearly one-fifth of all US emissions, emitting around 24 pounds of carbon dioxide and other global-warming gases for every gallon of gas. About five pounds comes from the extraction, production, and delivery of the fuel, while the great bulk of heat-trapping emissions—more than 19 pounds per gallon—comes right out of a car’s tailpipe.” See: ucsusa.org/resources/car-emissions-global-warming.

Even though the fuel efficiency of our cars may be improving in recent years, it's negated by the fact that we're driving more. To drive less, we need safe alternatives for biking and walking. Providing these alternatives will be an important part of managing climate change. As observed in an on-line article of railstotrails.org: "Walking and biking currently have a much stronger impact on climate management than the much-ballyhooed Toyota Prius." Swampscott's rail trail offers just such an alternative. See: railstotrails.org/resourcehandler.ashx?id=3766.

The Swampscott Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit volunteer organization that actively collaborates with Town of Swampscott committees, boards, commissions, and departments, as well as other non-profit entities, to maintain and improve public open spaces. The Swampscott Rail Trail will provide much needed open space in Town and will fill a recognized critical gap in the regional trail network. Constructing this gap will meet goals established by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council as well as add additional off-road mileage to the East Coast Greenway and the Border to Boston Trail.

We also intend to work with the Town in designing and providing native plants along the trail. Such plantings have multiple benefits. They create a low maintenance border, saving costs for ongoing upkeep of the trail. Native plantings also provide sources of food for insects (butterflies, honeybees, etc.) and animals (birds, chipmunks, and other small warm-blooded animals) that live in the area and forage these plants. Such plantings also provide opportunities for education regarding native planting, which is particularly important during our era of climate change. And, of course, such vegetation provides evidence of the beauty that exists in nature in New England.

We hope that the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization will award funding for this multi-beneficial project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Toni Bandrowicz". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Toni Bandrowicz, President

cc: Marzie Galazka, Director of Community and Economic Development, Town of Swampscott



SWAMPSCOTT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Swampscott Public Schools
207 Forest Avenue
Swampscott, MA 01907
Phone: 781 596 8800
Fax: 781 599 2502
Superintendent Pamela R. H. Angelakis, M.A., M.Ed.
Email:angelakis@swampscott.k12.ma.us

March 9, 2022

David Mohler, Chair
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116
c/o Matt Genova, mgenova@ctps.org

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail Construction Project 610666

Dear Mr. Mohler:

In 2017 the Swampscott School Committee unanimously joined the following boards and committees in supporting the creation of the Swampscott Rail Trail – a 2-mile linear park benefitting all neighborhoods and all ages:

- Swampscott Select Board
- Finance Committee
- Capital Improvement Committee
- Conservation Commission
- Open Space Committee
- Planning Board
- Recreation Committee

As a member of the 2017 School Committee, and now as Chair of the Swampscott School Building Committee, I am writing to urge the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization to award Transportation Improvement Program funding for the rail trail construction project in our town.

The town will soon be breaking ground on a new district-wide elementary school for our 900 students. The Swampscott Rail Trail is essential to the success of this project. Once complete, it will unite our elementary, middle and high schools, be close to athletic fields and parks, and connect our diverse neighborhoods.

We look forward to the completion of our rail trail before the opening of the new elementary school in 2024. Utilization of the path is an integral part of our traffic mitigation plan. Swampscott is a small town and uses a

Home of a 2018 National Blue Ribbon High School



school bus for only the most remote students, the majority of families provide transportation to school for their children. The rail trail will help alleviate traffic congestion and pollution, especially for the neighbors adjacent to our schools. It will establish a much-needed safe and direct path to school. The use of the trail to and from school will also provide health benefits to our students and families. Trail use will be promoted via signage and convenient access points.

The Swampscott Rail Trail is an important investment for every resident of Swampscott. The trail will increase the quality of life and the broader sense of community for all of Swampscott.

The members of the 2022 Swampscott School Committee would like to join me in signing this letter to reiterate their support of the 2017 School Committee and urge you to award the Swampscott Rail Trail with TIP funding.

Thank you,

Suzanne Wright
School Building Committee, Chair
School Committee, Vice-Chair

Amy OConnor, School Committee, Chair
Glenn Paster, School Committee
John Giantis, School Committee
Carin Marshall, School Committee

cc: Marzie Galazka, Director of Community and Economic Development, Town of Swampscott

Home of a 2018 National Blue Ribbon High School





TOWN OF SWAMPSCOTT
OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN COMMITTEE

ELIHU THOMSON ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
22 MONUMENT AVENUE, SWAMPSCOTT, MA 01907

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March 10, 2022

Mr. David Mohler, Chair
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116
c/o Matt Genova at mgenova@ctps.org

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail Construction Project 610666

On behalf of the Swampscott Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee, I am writing to express our strong support for the Swampscott Rail Trail. We request that the Boston MPO include this project (Swampscott Rail Trail Project 610666) in the FFY 2023-27 Transportation Improvement Plan that is currently under development.

In addition to being one of the specific objectives of Swampscott's 2013 and 2020 Open Space & Recreation Plan, the creation of the Rail Trail was identified as a top priority by residents in the Town's master planning process. "The rail trail has been one of the most supported open space and transportation initiatives during this planning process," the final Swampscott 2025 Master Plan notes, "[it] could serve as the spine of a town-wide green corridor network and offer an additional transportation option for bicycle commuters." Providing an alternative walking and biking route away from traffic, especially for our children, we believe provides a very strong incentive for the creation of the Rail Trail. The rail trail will also provide off-road access and connection to three schools, including a new 900 student district wide K-4 grade school. Construction of the new school will commence later this year.

In addition to promoting healthy recreation and transportation by providing a place for adults and children to walk and safely ride their bikes, the Swampscott Rail Trail will add accessible green space to a Town woefully short on open space. Frederick Law Olmsted, creator of New York City's Central Park and Boston's "Emerald Necklace" of parks -- as well as our own Olmsted District here in Swampscott -- would have wholeheartedly approved of the proposed Rail Trail. He was a believer in the benefits of green space. Parks are the "lungs of the city," he said, and "the heart of the community."

The Rail Trail's 90,000 square foot linear park running the length of Swampscott will provide access for all the Town's residents to open space for enjoying recreation, the outdoors, and our community. It will give Swampscott's residents needed space to breathe and a better connection to our community. The time for fulfilling the creation of this green space is long overdue.

I appreciate your time and attention to this matter. Please contact me with any questions you may have.

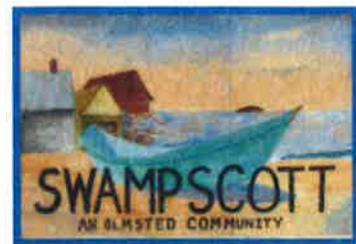
Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tania Lillak". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tania Lillak, Chair
Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee



Town of Swampscott
Community and Economic Development
Elihu Thomson Administrative Building
22 Monument Avenue
Swampscott, MA 01907



March 11, 2022

David Mohler
Chair, Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail (Project number 610666).

Dear Mr. Mohler and Members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization,

As requested during the March 3, 2022, MPO meeting, the Town of Swampscott is pleased to summarize the public engagement process that has taken place to date and provide you with a project update on the Swampscott Rail Trail.

Over the past six decades, the town has had significant community discussions regarding the Swampscott Rail Trail. These discussions go back to 1970's when the town created the Bike Path Committee. Subsequently, a Rail Trail Study Committee was created, and in 2005, 2006, 2009 Town Meeting voted to support the construction of the rail trail, including the use of eminent domain.

In May 2017, the Swampscott Town Meeting approved (by a vote of 210 to 56) a warrant article to move forward with the creation of the Rail Trail within the National Grid utility corridor and to provide funding for the design and engineering of the trail as well as the costs for the acquisition of the easement rights. This warrant article was unanimously sponsored by the Board of Selectmen and supported by the Finance Committee, Capital Improvement Committee, School Committee, Planning Board, Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee, and Conservation Commission.

In June 2017, a town-wide election was held to bring the question of the Rail Trail project to the entire community. Swampscott voters affirmed Town Meeting's approval by a margin of 12%.

To seek input on the planning and design of the trail, the town created the Rail Trail Design and Construction Advisory Committee in 2017. This committee held public meetings and forums to seek input on the initial design of the trail. Swampscott Town Meeting and the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee also provided broad-based support and information on a town wide level.

While some trail neighbors assert ownership in a portion of the National Grid utility corridor, the 2017 town wide vote provides the tools necessary to secure the right of way for construction of the Swampscott Rail Trail and the Select Board unanimously supports moving forward with the acquisitions and working with MassDOT and follow the ROW acquisition process to secure the right of way.

As is evidenced by the two completed sections of the Swampscott Rail Trail, the Town has an established record of working successfully with trail neighbors to address their concerns regarding safety, privacy, and landscaping, among other things.

The Town of Swampscott is a densely populated community. This trail, when fully constructed, will increase pedestrian safety, mobility, and improve air quality, while providing transportation equity, and supporting economic vitality. The completed Swampscott Rail Trail will run two miles through the length of the National Grid utility corridor safely linking neighborhoods, schools, parks, and the MBTA Commuter Rail station.

After the town voted last year to construct a new district-wide K-4 school, one of the greatest community benefits of this trail will be the off-road access and connection to three schools which house all of Swampscott's students from kindergarten through grade 8. This trail is critically needed to provide parents and students with a safe active transit solution that will reduce automobile congestion around the schools, decrease air pollution, and promote walking and bike riding in our three-square mile community.

Since the last Transportation Improvement (TIP) cycle, our design team submitted the 25% design of the Swampscott Rail Trail to MassDOT. At the request of MassDOT we are working to resubmit our 25% design including additional requested geotechnical data to support the design. The status of deliverables required as part of the 25% resubmission are substantially complete and will be resubmitted to MassDOT in early June.

We stand ready to advance this project and respectfully request your support of this project by programming it on the FFY23-27 Transportation Improvement Plan.

Sincerely,



Marzie Galazka, Director
Office of Community and Economic Development

SWAMPSCOTT RAIL TRAIL

Community transportation, open space & recreation



March 13, 2022

David Mohler
Chair, Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116
c/o Matt Genova, mgenova@ctps.org

RE: Swampscott Rail Trail (Project number 610666).

Dear Mr. Mohler and members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization:

On behalf of the community group Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail I am writing to urge you to award Transportation Improvement Program funding to the Swampscott Rail Trail construction project. Our community has enthusiastically embraced the currently completed two segments of the trail and eagerly anticipate the completion of the remainder of this two-mile green corridor for off-road, safe transportation linking neighborhoods, schools, parks, and the MBTA Commuter Rail station.

In addition, the completed Swampscott Rail Trail will fill a recognized critical gap in the regional trail network with our current connections to the Marblehead Rail Trail and Salem Bike Path to the north and the future connections to the Northern Strand Community Path in Lynn to the south. Constructing this gap will meet goals established by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council as well as add additional off-road mileage to the East Coast Greenway and the Border to Boston Trail, of which we are already a part.

The Friends group was created in 2017 by Swampscott residents with the mission of advocating for the creation and use of the Swampscott Rail Trail, providing maintenance and upkeep of the trail, and fundraising for trail creation and beautification. To date, we have successfully raised almost \$200,000 from community members as well as local businesses. In August 2021, we presented the Town of Swampscott with \$150,000 for the continued design and engineering of the Swampscott Rail Trail, one of the largest gifts to the Town from a community organization. This gift will enable the town to complete 25% of the Rail Trail design to advance the project's eligibility for TIP funding.

We hope that you will support the Swampscott Rail Trail Construction Project for the lasting benefit it will bring to the community of Swampscott and all of Massachusetts. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alexis Runstadler, President
Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail

Friends of the Swampscott Rail Trail



89 Burrill Street
Swampscott, MA 01907



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swampscottrailtrail.org



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 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

March 11, 2022

Matt Genova
 Transportation Improvement Program Manager
 Central Transportation Planning Staff
 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
 Boston, MA 02116

Re: Route 20/Wellesley Street/Boston Post Road Intersection – Weston, MA TIP I.D. 608940

Dear Mr. Genova,

On behalf of the Town of Wellesley, I am writing to support the proposed Transportation Improvement Project submitted by the Town of Weston for the installation of a new traffic signal system; geometric revisions to the intersection, particularly at Winsor Way; payment mill/overlay; drainage modifications; installation of buffered bicycle lanes; sidewalk reconstruction and pavement markings/signage.

The Town of Wellesley has few north/south local corridors connecting to broader regional transit networks. The Wellesley Street (Weston, MA) connection with Weston Road (Wellesley, MA) is a major arterial connection to Route 20 for vehicles, runners, and cyclists. This corridor serves as regional access to Route 95 for Wellesley commuters and Town staff, college students attending Regis College, and high school students attending The Rivers School.

The Town of Weston's analysis indicates that proposed improvements will address significant safety and crash related incidents and has been supported locally. I reach out to verify the importance of this project regionally and recommend with full support the proposed project be added to the FY23 Transportation Improvement Program.

Please feel free to reach out to me directly for any additional information.

Sincerely,


 Meghan C. Jop, AICP
 Executive Director

Cc: Leon Gaumont, Weston Town Manager