



What's New in 2010?

People often ask "What's going on with the rail trail?" As you'll read in this flyer, we continued to make progress in the past year.

We invite you to join us! For the date, time, and location of our next meeting, see www.SquannacookRiverRailTrail.org.

Townsend Board of Selectmen forms rail trail committee to study funding

In November 2008, the Townsend Board of Selectmen appointed the following members to the Squannacook River Rail Trail Funding Exploration Committee: Hirk Fortin, Ken Gerken, Bill Martin, Steve Meehan, and Bill Rideout. This ad-hoc committee was formed to study funding issues involving the proposed Squannacook River Rail Trail. The Groton Board of Selectmen have also refocused Groton's rail trail committee to study funding issues.

Of central interest to both committees is whether 100% funding is possible through federal and state funding. All meetings are open to the public, and minutes are available at www.SquannacookRiverRailTrail.org or at the town clerk's office.

SRRT Committees in continuing discussions with Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

The Townsend and Groton SRRT committees have held a number of meetings with DCR officials, including DCR Commissioner Rick Sullivan. The topic has been possible ways DCR and local groups could co-operate to build and maintain this rail trail. Scenarios for both paved and stone dust trails have been discussed.

Groton and Townsend submit joint rail trail Project Need Form to MassHighway

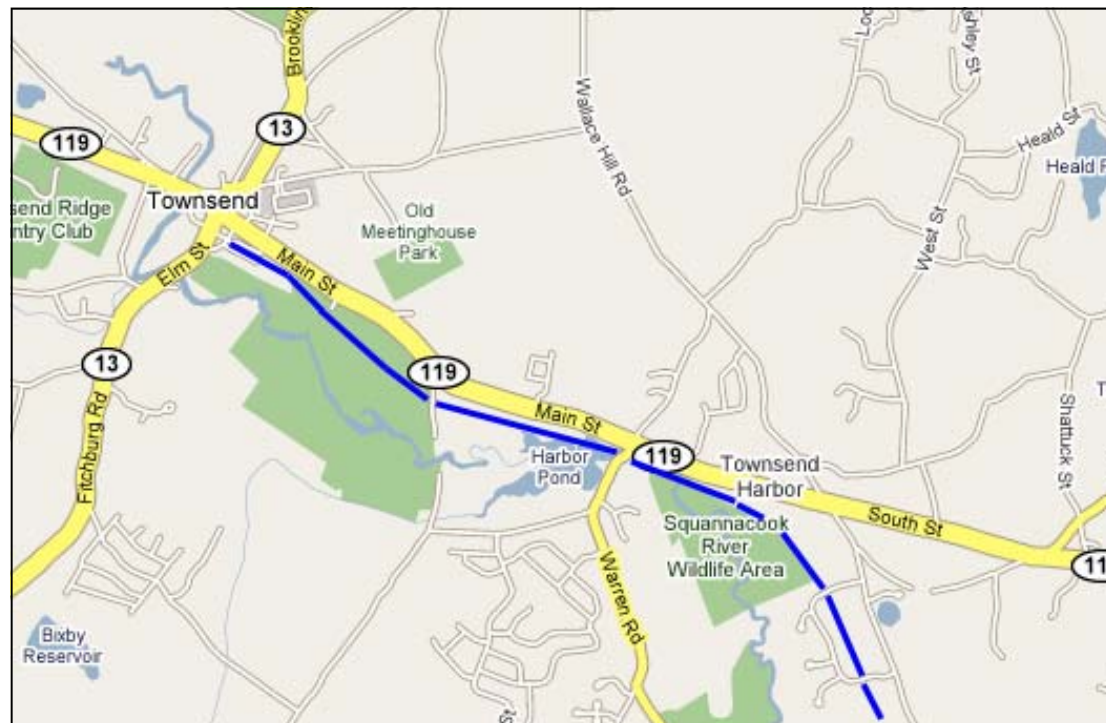
In September 2009, the towns of Groton and Townsend submitted a joint Project Need Form to MassHighway for the Squannacook River Rail Trail. The Project Need Form will trigger a formal study of

the project by MassHighway, and will help the Groton and Townsend town committees further research the financial feasibility of the rail trail. Submission of this document was approved by the Board of Selectmen in both towns.

FST releases final assessment report on the Squannacook River Rail Trail

In August 2008, the final version of an environmental and engineering assessment was released. The results of this professional study, performed by recreational trail experts Fay, Spofford and Thorndike (FST) confirm the conclusion that this project is feasible.

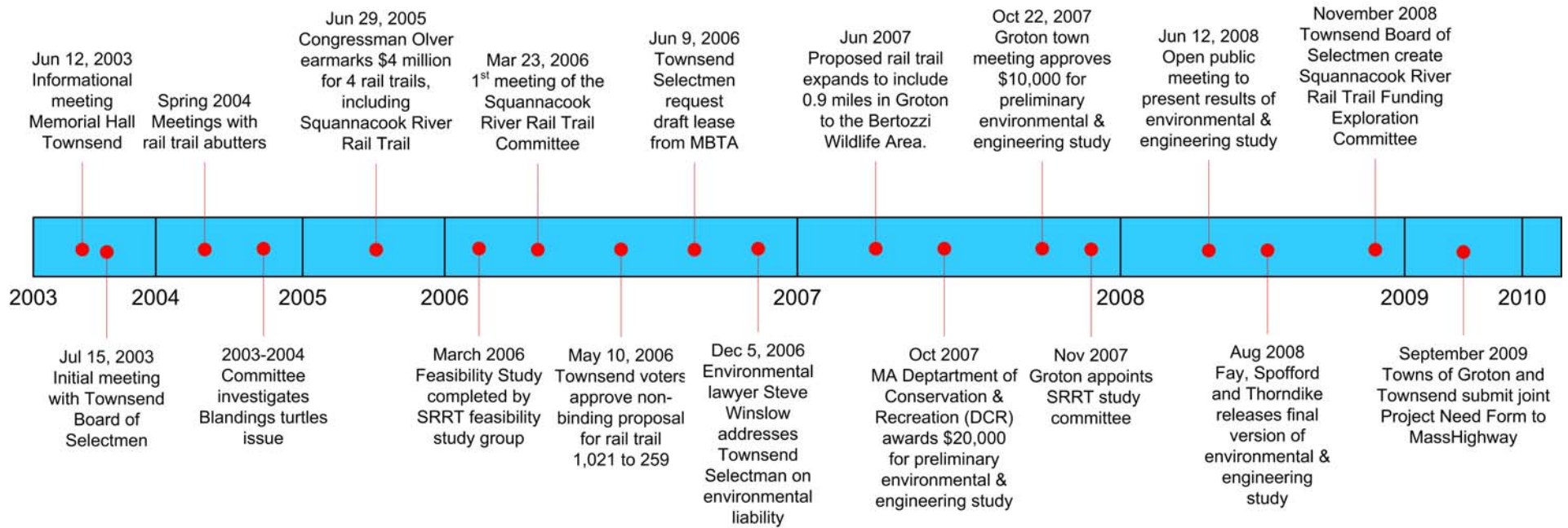
This study is available at www.SquannacookRiverRailTrail.org.



Route of the proposed Squannacook River Rail Trail

Historically, a rail trail can take 7-15 years from conception to completion! The timeline below gives an idea of what we've accomplished so far and what to expect in the next few years.

Where we've been:



What's next?

The Townsend and Groton rail trail committees are investigating two very different scenarios for building a rail trail: paved and stone dust.

If a paved trail scenario is pursued, the next steps would involve the two towns, MassHighway, the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, and possibly the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

A possible scenario for building a stone dust trail would be to have DCR sign the lease, but allow a citizen's group to build the trail as grants become available in the style of the Wachusett Greenways (see www.wachusettgreenways.org).

The next steps will vary greatly depending on which path is ultimately selected.



www.SquannacookRiverRailTrail.org