



# Northampton Rail-trail News

Friends of the Northampton Trails and Greenways, Inc. (<http://www.fntg.net>) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that supports the expanding network of rail-trails in Northampton, Massachusetts. Volume 2, July 2007

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## Summer updates and activities

While the summer is well underway, there are lots of things happening on the expanding rail trail network in Northampton. This network serves critically important multipurpose transportation and recreation needs. I'm excited about what the Friends of Northampton Trails and Greenways is doing to make this connected system a reality.

This mini-newsletter is designed to give you a quick update and let you know how you can learn more about the trails, and get involved. I hope to see you at one of these events, or on the trails!

**Map publication** We've been busy distributing the map and brochure, and wanted to make sure you had a copy (as well as one to share with someone else). Please thank our sponsors (Bidwell ID, Serio's, Cooper's Corner, Hott Productions, Northampton Bike, Sugar Maple Trailside Inn and last but not least Craig Della Penna) when you see them!

**Signage project** Efforts are underway to provide on-road signage to help people navigate between the Norwottuck extension and the Northampton bike-way until the tunnel under the King Street rail line is in place.

**Kiosk proposal** We are working to submit a proposal for state funding of kiosks that detail the trail network throughout town.

There are also some exciting updates on local trails:

**Norwottuck connection** the State Department of Conservation and Recreation is putting the final

touches on the Damon Road to Woodmont connector (1/2 mile), and is tentatively planning a September official opening for the trail.

**Roundhouse to Earle St/Grove St.** the bids from this project are scheduled to be opened sometime this month. When completed, it will connect Downtown to the skateboard park/Felt Building/Smith College physical plant by the old State Hospital and Route 10 (with eventual continuation to Easthampton and the Manhan Rail Trail).

**Rail with trail along King Street** this project is a major priority, as it will provide a connection between the Norwottuck trail and downtown, with a fence separating the trail from the active rail line. Major efforts are underway to include this project in the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), which determines how state transportation projects are prioritized.

**Leeds extension** this project would extend from Look Park to the Williamsburg line, providing connectivity between Leeds School and the JFK Middle School. A June forum on roundabouts addressed how the reworked intersection of Route 9 and Bridge St. would accommodate this path.

**Norwottuck resurfacing** discussions are now underway on how to resurface the Norwottuck (which has suffered extensive root damage in recent years as well as the continued problems of glass that was included in the original construction).

The Friends of Northampton Trails and Greenways, organized in 2006, helps to support these trails by rais-

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ing funds and awareness, pushing for their continued development, educating and encouraging new users of the trails, creating resources to improve them (such as our recently published map), and organizing fun, community-building activities.

As a member organization, FNTG is strengthened by its broad-based community of members who join because they, like you, are interested in seeing our trails

in Northampton flourish. If you have ideas for projects, or want to volunteer, please contact us. Thanks for your support!

*Nicholas Horton*  
President, FNTG

## Mass Central Rail Trail meeting

The Mass Central Rail Trail coalition is working to build out the rail trail network stretching from Northampton to Boston. On Thursday, July 26th, the MCRT coalition will be meeting in Northampton.

There will be two guided tours, both at 3:00pm. Susan Voss will be leading a walking tour of the existing and soon to be built connections through downtown Northampton (leaving from Northampton Brewery's Hampton Avenue entrance). Craig Della Penna will be leading a biking tour from the Sugar Maple Trailside Inn that will head east on the City of Northampton

Bikeway—the oldest municipally built rail trail in New England—through the edge of Stop and Shop parking lot, cross Rt 5 and then head onto the soon to be opened, newly built extension of the Norwottuck Trail.

At 5:00pm, both groups will adjourn to the Northampton Brewery for a short business meeting and then a group dinner (\$10 not including beverages).

More information can be found at <http://masscentralrailtrail.org/northamptonevent.html>; contact Craig Della Penna at [craig4135@comcast.net](mailto:craig4135@comcast.net) or 413-575-2277 to sign up for any or all of the events (deadline of Thursday, July 19th for the dinner).

## Upcoming events

**Tuesday, July 17th, 2007** *Trail tour on bike (four separate tours repeating on Tuesday nights throughout the summer)*

One of a series of free guided biking tours of the trail network taking place on the first, second, third and fourth Tuesdays in July and August, beginning at 6:00pm. This tour explores the Manhan Rail Trail starting from the Oxbow in Northampton. See <http://www.fntg.net> for a flier with information, and call 413-575-2277 to signup.

**Tuesday, July 24th, 2007** *Norwottuck trail tour*

This tour explores the Norwottuck Trail starting from the Damon Road trailhead in Northampton. See July 17th for details.

**Thursday, July 26th, 2007** *Friends of Northampton Trails and Greenways meeting/MCRT*

See article above

**Tuesday, August 7th, 2007** *Florence and Leeds trail tour*

This tour explores the Northampton Bikeway, Look Park and Leeds extension along the Mill River starting from Florence. See July 17th for details.

**Tuesday, August 14th, 2007** *Northampton Bikeway and Norwottuck trail tour*

This tour explores the Northampton Bikeway and its connection to the Norwottuck Trail starting from Florence. See July 17th for details.

**Tuesday, August 21st, 2007** *Norwottuck trail tour*

This tour explores the Norwottuck Trail starting from the Damon Road trailhead in Northampton. See July 17th for details.

**Monday, August 27th, 2007** *Friends of Northampton Trails and Greenways annual meeting*

The FNTG will be meeting on Monday, August 27th at 7:00pm for its annual meeting. The agenda includes election of officers, budget approval, and plans for the future. The meeting will be taking place at the Sugar Maple Trailside Inn, Chestnut Street in Florence. All are welcome to attend.

**Tuesday, August 28th, 2007** *Norwottuck trail tour*

This tour (last of the 16 offered this summer) explores the Norwottuck Trail starting from the Damon Road trailhead in Northampton. See July 17th for details.