



## Spring 2014 Newsletter

*GoffstownRailTrail.org*



### Goffstown Rail Trail Turns Ten Years Old

It was ten years ago this spring that the town finalized an agreement with the Boston & Maine Railroad to purchase the old corridor where the rail trail is being developed. Most of the funds came from a 1998 Transportation Enhancement grant, with matching funds approved by town voters. A Trail Design Charrette soon followed, where interested parties participated in discus-



Even before the deal closed, volunteers began cleanup work, hauling out huge piles of trash and junk.

sions and brainstorming with volunteer design professionals on the future of the trail.

The first actual trail construction didn't occur until 2008, with the first award of a Recreational Trails grant to Goffstown. Since then, segments have slowly been completed as grant funding has allowed, and volunteers have continued to play an important role. Almost half of the trail still awaits funding for construction, so the work continues.



Groundbreaking ceremony in 2008: FGRT's Lowell Von Ruden is third from right.

### Piscataquog Bridge Construction This Fall?

After several delays, many trail users are understandably eager for Manchester to complete their Transportation Enhancement project to replace the old railroad trestle over the Piscataquog River and connect with Goffstown.

At last report, their final plans had been approved by the NH Department of Trans-

portation. They are finalizing their bid package (which must also be approved by DOT), and hope to advertise for bids by early summer. If that happens, construction could begin this fall, setting the stage for use in 2015.



### Rail Trail Committee Presents Overview at All-Boards Meeting

Annually, the Selectmen convene a meeting with chairs of all of the town's committees, boards, and commissions. The theme of this year's May 12th meeting was economic development. David Pierce, Chair of the town's Rail Trail Committee, presented an overview of how completion of the trail dovetails into economic development of the region.

At its core, the trail promotes alternative transportation including bicycling to work, school, and other destinations. With younger people having reduced interest in traditional car ownership, there is more interest in rail, bus, and bicycling opportunities. As Manchester completes its trail bridge over the Piscataquog River at Kelley Falls (see article at lower left), travel from Goffstown to the center of Manchester solely by bicycle and rail trail becomes possible.

An environment for family and social recreational opportunities has always been an important factor in promoting living in a particular community. The Goffstown Rail Trail, which in essence is a 5.5-mile long park, will allow the Parks & Recreation Department to expand its programs to incorporate the trail. Its eventual access to downtown Manchester will enable regional events and activities that in turn promote Goffstown.

### Grant Application Withdrawn For 2014

In February, the Friends of the Rail Trail prepared a grant application for the town to submit to the NH Trail Bureau asking for \$26,000 in funding from the Recreational Trails Program. The work to be accomplished was the building of the trail between Moose Club Park Road and Lynchville Park Road, a distance of 2/3 mile. The project was modeled after two previous successful grant applications, in which the Department of Public Works did the construction and used the grant to buy materials. The value of DPW employees' labor satisfied the 20% match requirement.

The Board of Selectmen reviewed the grant application, four days before the submission deadline. Earlier, the Director of Public Works endorsed the construction model and indicated their work would be scheduled in a way that would not upset any primary road construction activities. Such scheduling flexibility was possible because the trail project could be accomplished in the late fall and early spring.

Nevertheless, the Board felt that the demands placed upon Public Works were overly intrusive in their primary mission. By a narrow 3-2 vote, the Board required the grant application be rewritten such that one or several undetermined construction firms would

(cont. on back)



Do you believe in  
doppelgangers?



## CEDS Proposes Completion of Trail

In a joint effort of two regional planning commissions, Goffstown and 25 other communities were invited to define ventures called Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) projects. These are meant to facilitate regional economic development. CEDS projects are reviewed and endorsed through various governmental levels, up to the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). A collection of such projects becomes the basis for EDA to establish an Economic Development District, and the funding of individual projects.

A CEDS project must satisfy certain goals. Most goals relate to major civil engineering infrastructure required for robust business development. However, one goal is more encompassing in its definition: To provide an attractive place for living, working, and recreating. Under the former set of goals, Goffstown recommended a sewer line project and a natural gas distribution project. Under the latter set, Goffstown was able to justify the overall project to complete the Rail Trail.

## Grant Application Withdrawal cont.

voluntarily do the heavy equipment earth work. They would allow Public Works involvement only in the hauling of gravel from the supplier to the work site.

Rewriting of the grant application using the constraints imposed by the Selectmen was not possible, and effectively forced the application to be withdrawn. In a grant application, contributors to a project need to be known, and if several firms are involved, there must be agree-

ments as to how their contributions fit together. Such details and agreements might require months of negotiations and could not be done in the limited time remaining before the grant submission deadline.

Had the original application been submitted, chances for approval by the state would likely have been very good, based on historical statistics. Six of the seven previous RTP grant applications were approved by the State.

## Grant Report

### 2010 Federal TE Grant

The town received funds from the 2010 Transportation Enhancement Program for construction of safe trail crossings of public roads at three sites and carrying the trail across the gap of the former Henry Bridge Road. For the past 3 years, the design and construction management firm, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., has been engaged managing the various milestones required by a complex Federal construction manual, and the oversight provided by the NH Department of Transportation.

In May, VHB submitted comments and design changes to answer the state's review of the 100% design plan. A favorable decision by DOT on the design plan is a requirement towards getting bids for construction.

There is another equally important milestone before getting bids: If some portion of the construction activity uses abutting property, then deeds of easements from owners of private property must be completed. The Goffstown Department of Public Works is responsible for negotiating the easements.

## Trail Work Sessions

The third Saturdays of June, July, August, and September are when the Friends of the Rail Trail handle trail improvement tasks. Specific sites are announced via our email distribution list (visit website [GoffstownRailTrail.org](http://GoffstownRailTrail.org) to sign up). Sessions run from 9AM to around noon.

If you've never attended a session, consider giving the trail a few hours of your time. No experience is necessary, and any tool requirements are mentioned in the postings. Thanks for the support!



### DATELINE MAY 2014:

An unconfirmed report from a usually reliable source describes a heretofore unknown "secret Goffstown Rail Trail hand wave". Originally considered a flight of some hiker's fantasy, this covert gesture was recently captured in a clandestine photograph, reproduced here. Be on the lookout for this signal from others traveling the trail... consider returning the wave too!



*Next Issue:* How the Rail Trail evolved as a direct result of the Big Bang

## PLC Rides the Rail Trail Sunday June 8th

On Sunday June 8th, the Piscataquog Land Conservancy will host a bicycle ride on the Goffstown Rail Trail. A leisurely pace is expected, riding to Manchester and back. More info and registration at [plcnh.org/events](http://plcnh.org/events).



**FGRT welcomes your input, photos, feedback, and questions! Send them to:**

**Friends of the Goffstown Rail Trail, PO Box 2, Goffstown NH 03045**  
**[info@GoffstownRailTrail.org](mailto:info@GoffstownRailTrail.org) - A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization**

Been out on the trail and saw a tree down, trail damage, or other issue? Report it to [Trail.Report@GoffstownRailTrail.org](mailto:Trail.Report@GoffstownRailTrail.org) and we will investigate. Thanks!

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