



Neponset River Greenway Council Meeting

Wednesday, March 1, 2017, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

St. Brendan's Church, 589 Gallivan Blvd., Dorchester, MA

AGENDA

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Guests

2. Along the Greenway with Stella Lensing, DCR Project Manager

Dorchester:

- Port Norfolk Park – *Is there an opening ceremony date?*
- Segment 3 – Victory Rd to Morrissey Blvd *Is there a design completion date?*
- Segment 4 – Tenean Beach to Victory Rd. *Is MassDOT moving ahead?*
- Segment 8 – Morrissey Blvd. drawbridge to UMass: *What's next? Date for next meeting?*

Milton:

- Segment 2 – Central Ave to Mattapan Square: *Is there a guess for a soft opening date?*
- Segment 6 – Crossing Blue Hill Ave. *Will there be any sort of an opening ceremony?*

Mattapan:

- Segment 6 – Crossing Blue Hill Ave.: *Is there any progress for a crossing along River St.?*
- Apartments on Mattapan Station parking lot: *Any movement?*
- Model of Mattapan-Milton trail section – *Dates for Mattapan and/or Milton Libraries?*

Hyde Park:

- Segment 7 – Fairmount to Dana Ave. *Next steps toward something along Truman Parkway?*
- Fairmount Greenway – Doyle (DCR) and West St. Urban Wild (City) sections along the Neponset

High Speed Line: Public meetings on major repairs (See back for Dorchester Reporter story)

- Monday, April 3 at the Mattapan Library
- Thursday, April 13 at Milton High School
- Monday, April 24 at the Lower Mills Library

3. Events

- **Bike and walk the newest section of the Neponset Trail** 1:00 pm the next Saturday afternoon after the bridges open from Mattapan Station to Central Ave.
- **First Weekend of Spring Bike Ride**, Saturday, March 25, 10:00 am: Bike along the Neponset Trail, present and future, 27 miles from Paul's Bridge to Castle Island and back.
- **Earth Day Stony Brook Ride**, Saturday, April 15, 10:00 am: Follow the route of Stony Brook from the top of Bellevue Hill in Stony Brook Reservation to the Back Bay Fens.
- **Neponset River Cleanup on DCR Park Serve Day**, Saturday, April 29, 9:00 am – noon
Quincy River Walk, Granite Ave. marshes and Neponset Trail in Dorchester, Baker Dam and Neponset Trail at Dorchester Lower Mills. Sign up at "Events" at <http://www.neponset.org/>.
- **Bike Month Mother Brook Ride**, Sunday, May 7, 1:00 pm: Bike from the corner of Nott St. and Fairmount St. (at the Hyde Park sign) in Hyde Park to the Charles River and back, partly following the Dedham Rail Trail.

Upcoming Meetings – Meetings held first Wednesday of the month at 7:00pm

April 5, 2017	Foley Senior Residences, Mattapan	May 3, 2017	Milton Yacht Club, Milton
June 7, 2017	Hyde Park Police Station, Hyde Park	July 5, 2017	Port Norfolk Yacht Club

Issues on the trail? (non-emergency)

MassParks line: 617-626-1250, 0 for operator or email mass.parks@state.ma.us

Join neponsetgreenway@googlegroups.com to take part in discussions between Greenway Council meetings and comment on the first draft of the agenda or join the Neponset River Greenway Council group on Facebook.

T officials plan major repairs to Mattapan trolleys; public meetings set for April

By Bill Forry, *Dorchester Reporter*, February 27, 2017

The MBTA will pump \$7.9 million into a repair project that will keep their fleet of PCC trolley cars running on the Mattapan Hi-Speed Line for "the near future" as an independent review of the line's infrastructure continues this year. T officials say that the investment will focus on rebuilding the trolley "trucks"— the undercarriage that houses the key mechanical components of the World War II-era, Worcester-built cars.

The plan was outlined in a "State of the Line" report to the MBTA's Fiscal and Management Control Board today at MBTA headquarters. MBTA officials plan to host three public meetings in Mattapan, Dorchester and Milton in April to offer a more detailed explanation and solicit input from the community.

The MBTA currently maintains a 10-car fleet of the aging PCC cars, which have been in service in the system since 1945-46. The vehicles have been kept in service with major repair projects in the 1980s and again in the early 2000s. MBTA union engineers and craftsmen have also kept the trolleys running by manufacturing replacement parts that are hard to buy or just plain obsolete.

The line is considered a vital and generally reliable link from Mattapan and Milton to the wider T system and downtown Boston, providing 7 day-a-week service along a 2.6 mile route between Ashmont and Mattapan Square with six stops in between. But the aging cars are a constant worry for T repair crews— and despite popular resistance and push-back from elected officials— T officials have begun to sketch out potential alternatives for replacing the cars.

"With this investment, we can be relatively confident this is gonna get us out until maybe the early 2020s," said Jeffrey Gonneville, the MBTA's chief operating officer, "and that gives us enough time to do the due diligence study to really give us the the information we need to make the right decision for what the decision will be for the future of this line."

In the near term, at least, champions of the line hail the MBTA's investment as a victory.

Rep. Dan Cullinane, who testified before the MBTA board on Monday morning in support of the line, emphasized that his constituents want the existing trolley fleet preserved. The trolleys are not only an important link for commuters, he said, but also a cherished link to the city's history that adds "character" to the neighborhoods it serves.

Cullinane noted that other cold-weather cities, including Philadelphia, also manage to keep larger fleets of vintage PCC cars in service over much longer stretches of track.

"If Philly can do it on a line with 50 stops, surely we can do it on an eight-stop line," Rep. Cullinane said. "People emphatically love this trolley."

Cullinane thanked the MBTA board and staff for "hearing" the concerns raised by him and a coalition of other elected city and state officials, who last year pressed T leadership to commit to preserve the trolley line and the existing PCC cars.

Brian Kane, the MBTA's director of operations analysis, told the Reporter this morning that the bulk of \$7.9 million in repairs can actually be done on site at the Mattapan car house where the 10-car fleet is typically serviced. More complex repairs are often done at the MBTA's Everett Shops, the heavy rail maintenance facility near Sullivan Square, where 140 union workers keep more than 600 MBTA rail vehicles in service.

Kane said that some of the initial work and training will be done there, but that the PCC "trucks" will mainly be restored and re-assembled in Mattapan. The work will include assembling kits that will be used to replace key components of the trolley's mechanical systems. The project will expand the number of trolleys available for daily service from 7 to 8.

Meanwhile, a team of consultants from the engineering firm CH2M Hill, Ltd. are currently engaged in a year-long "due diligence" study of the line's current conditions — from tracks and stations to bridges and cables— to assess the MBTA's next moves.

"The PCCs are over 70 years-old and its our duty as stewards to plan for the future," said Kane, adding: "We are very open minded. We don't have a solution in mind that we'll just back into."

Kane said that various options for vehicles will be considered— including keeping the existing PCC cars. Other options specifically mentioned include Bus Rapid Transit, other light rail vehicles, replica trolleys or alternative technologies that are not yet available for mass transit, including all-electric cars.

"The Mattapan line might be a good place to be innovative," said Kane.

Kane says the report specifically instructs CH2M Hill, Ltd. to include "peer bechmarking"— a review of what other cities that use PCCs in cold-weather climates are doing to keep their fleets on track.

The contract awarded to CH2M Hill, Ltd. calls for a report to be in hand by the winter of 2017-2018.

The MBTA will begin a series of public meetings to explain the process to impacted communities in April. The first meeting will be held on April 3 at the Mattapan branch of the BPL on Blue Hill Avenue. A second meeting is scheduled for April 13 at Milton High School; and a final meeting is set for the Lower Mills branch of the BPL on April 24.

The MBTA will post documents related to the Mattapan line at a page on their website: MBTA.com/MattapanHSL.