

**Minutes**  
**Rail Trail Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**December 19, 2019**

**Attendees:**

RTAC Members: Paul McNulty, Charlie Lincicum, Nancy McNulty, Larry Perrault, Mathew Duggan, Lori DuPont, Not in attendance: Scott Bornstein, Mark Jones, Joe Anthony

Others: Sarah Bornstein, Bob Brown, Karen Wagner, T.R. Ramsdell, Tom Smales, Georgia Pendergast, Diane Ludlow, Margaret Bailey,

**New Business**

**No comments from the public**

None, Paul motioned for RTAC to move ahead.

**Current /Recent Business**

**First Day Walk Preparations**

Charlie noted First Day Walk will be @ 11:00am on 1/1/20 and leave from picnic table at the Hobart parking lot. Destination will be weather dependent. Charlie will organize volunteers and inform RTAC of weather updates.

**Who should lead Chocolate Walk event and solicit chocolate donations?**

Nancy will organize event. Diane noted, Eric and Kathy Emerson will donate chocolates. Also, Senior Center can donate hot chocolate - RTAC needs to contact Paula. Tentative date for this event is Saturday February 15.

**Status of northwest extension project**

Georgia and Aaron updated RTAC with an "Overview of the Danvers Rail Trail: The Westward Extension Project." Highlights include:

- Project would likely be completed in three legs
- Town meeting approved \$150k in 2018 to survey the trail. This work has been completed and includes concepts for the leg and 1 and 3, initial work with MA DOT on leg 2 (Rte 95/Rte 1 crossing), and draft concepts of bridges and crossings
- Aaron noted that \$100k has been included in the MA State budget further extension design work.
- Leg 1 (existing trail to Nichols St) was discussed in more detail, covering bridge options at Beaver Brook
- Discussions with MA DOT regarding the Rt 95/Rt 1 area were productive and MA DOT seems supportive of this work.
- Leg 3 has fewer engineering challenges
- Proposed next steps include another public meeting hosted by VHB, more detailed plan development for legs 1 and 3, continue to work with MA DOT on leg 2.

Aaron will continue to update the committee and the public on progress.

**Grant writing focus for 2020**

Paul provided DRT - 2020 Grant Discussion overview /copies for all. The group felt that top priorities were to address flooding (at MM 3.6, 2.3, and 2.1) updating maintenance equipment. Paul noted grant writing focus to entail a specific proposal request that will be construction ready. Georgia noted she has an e-mail from the VHB

regarding helpful tips on writing Grant Proposals. Bob and Charlie to come up with proposal regarding updating our maintenance equipment.

**Friends of Danvers Rail Trail Finance Update.**

**Mile marker fund raising- initial response**

So far, Larry noted reaching out by e-mail has been successful; with 27 renewals for \$4,100 (updated 12/30/19). The RTAC reached out early in December and will send one more e-mail blast before sending by regular mail in January.

**501c3 Finance update**

Larry noted 501c3 operating checking account balance is \$25, 914

Aaron and Georgia will confirm the transfer of SwampWalk funds from the town to SwampWalk maintenance-specific account managed by the Friends of Danvers Rail Trail.

**Approval of minutes from November 21 2019 meeting**

Charlie motioned, Lori second and all approved minutes. Next meeting to be January 23, 2020

## Danvers Rail Trail – 2020 Grant Discussion on 11/19/2019

Our goal today is to agree on the top one or two grant applications projects for 2020.

Its recommended that we apply for a [MassTrails Grant](#) – **due 2/1/2020** for work to be completed by June 30 2021. MassTrails has funded many projects in the past similar scope to what we need. Past grants range from \$10,000 to \$300,000 with most in the \$20,000 to \$50,000 range. All grants require some level of matching funds.

The below suggestions are focused on the current trail, as the extension plans are still in progress. Each suggestion includes related examples of 2018 and 2019 MassTrail grants.

Writing these grant applications would be a combined RTAC/Town effort.

- Less rough and more accessible access at street crossings including paving or stabilized stone dust to eliminate washouts, standardize surface at each crossing (i.e. [tactile dimple ramps](#)), and appropriate road markings. See [2019 Grants MT19040 and MT19055](#) and [2018 Grants RTP18120, RTP1812, RTP1870](#) for approved examples. Top priority crossings are Prince St, Collins St, Holten St, Pickering St, Poplar St (dentist office parking area).
  - Earlier quotes suggest could be in the range of about \$25,000 to \$35,000 for five crossings, both sides (asphalt aprons and replace stone dust)
- Trail base and runoff improvements at flooding prone areas at MM 3.3 (1,000 feet north of DHS) and MM 3.6 (500 feet north of Wenham St). See [2019 Grants MT19034 and MT19108](#) and [2018 Grants RTP1885, RTP1805](#) for examples. Second tier issue areas are between Oak St and Poplar St, and between Charter St and Maple St.
- Grooming equipment purchases for current trail and possible extension (larger mower, leaf disposal, small backhoe and shed for storage). See [2019 Grants MT19013, MT19014, MT19016, MT 19040, MT19019, MT19063 and MT19119](#) for examples. Grants range from \$20k to \$60k.
- Improved access to the trail at Danvers High School (MM 3.1). Currently access from the high school is quite steep. This project would encompass reducing the pitch, paving or adding stabilized stone dust to the surface, possible switchbacks, and landscaping. See [2019 Grants MT19021](#) for example.
  - Earlier design work suggested cost could be as high as \$150,000 for wheelchair accessible access.
- Improved access at Coolidge Rd. This access point is used by nearby residents to access the trail. Its quite steep. Project would include reducing the pitch, adding stabilized stone dust to the surface, and landscape improvements. See [2019 Grants MT19021](#) for example.

Much more info is available here: [2020 MASSTRAILS GRANTS PROGRAM, Grant Guidelines and Application Information](#).

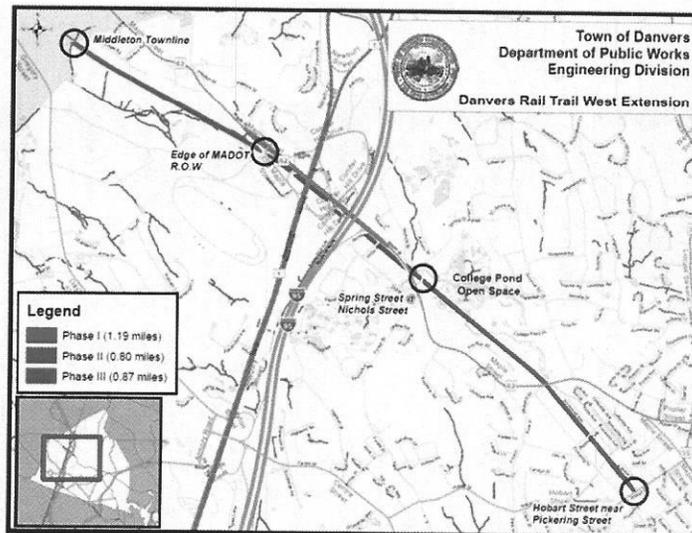
Online Grant Form: <https://www.mass.gov/forms/masstrails-grant-application>

December 19, 2019

# The Danvers Rail Trail: The Westward Extension

## Overview

- 2018 Annual Town Meeting:
  - \$150,000 for conceptual plans
- Leg 1:
  - Existing Trail to Nichols
- Leg 2:
  - Nichols to Old Maple
  - State-controlled ROW
- Leg 3:
  - Old Maple to townline



FY 2019  
&  
FY 2020  
Activities

Contracted VHB (\$100,000) in October 2018 to:

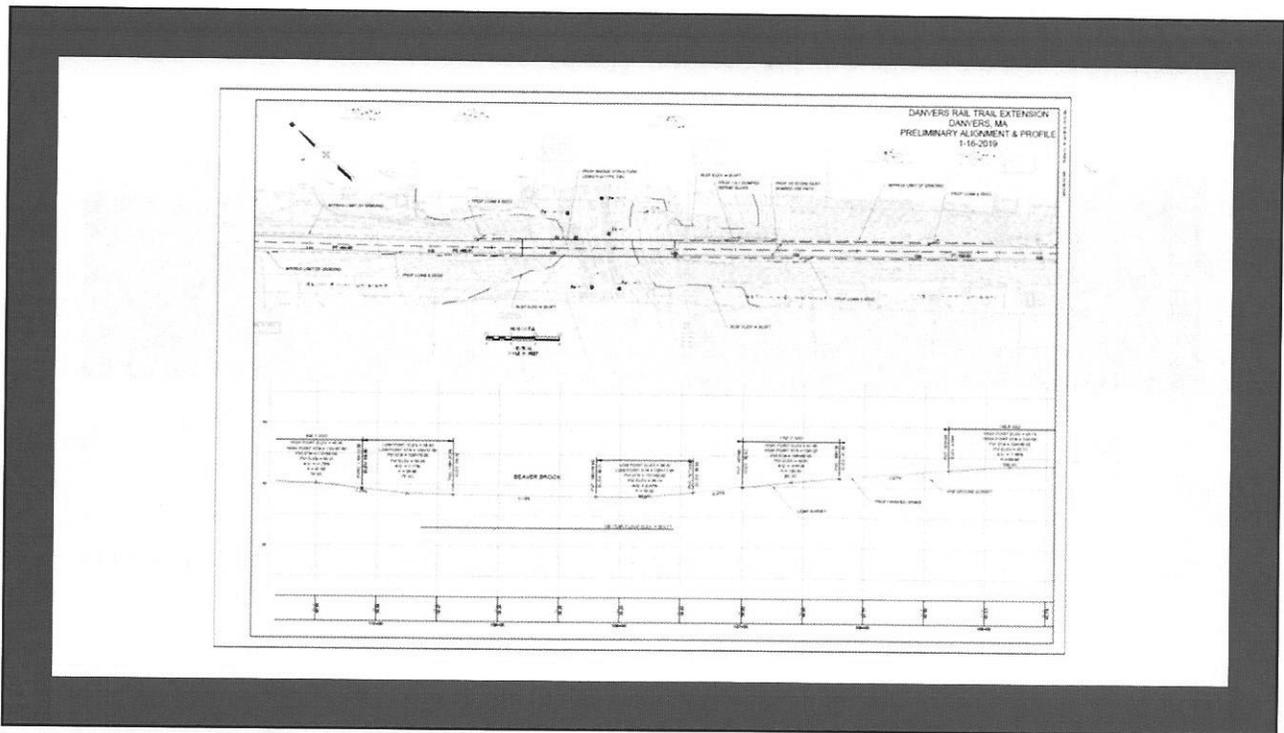
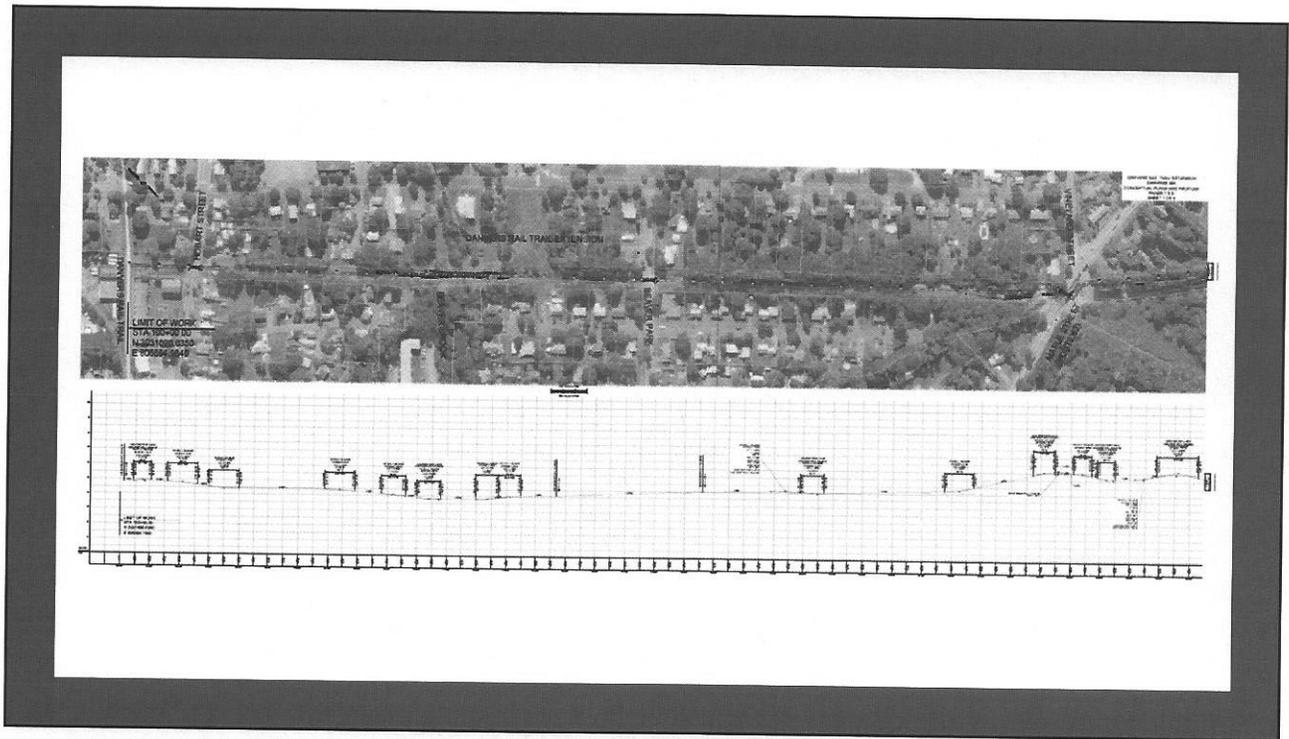
- Survey
- Right of way and utility research
- Conceptual plan for Legs 1 and 3
- Meet with MA DOT regarding the treatment of Leg 2
- Draft concepts for Beaver Brook and Maple St crossings
  - Field investigations
  - Three bridge options
    - Preliminary structural analysis
    - Comparative cost analysis

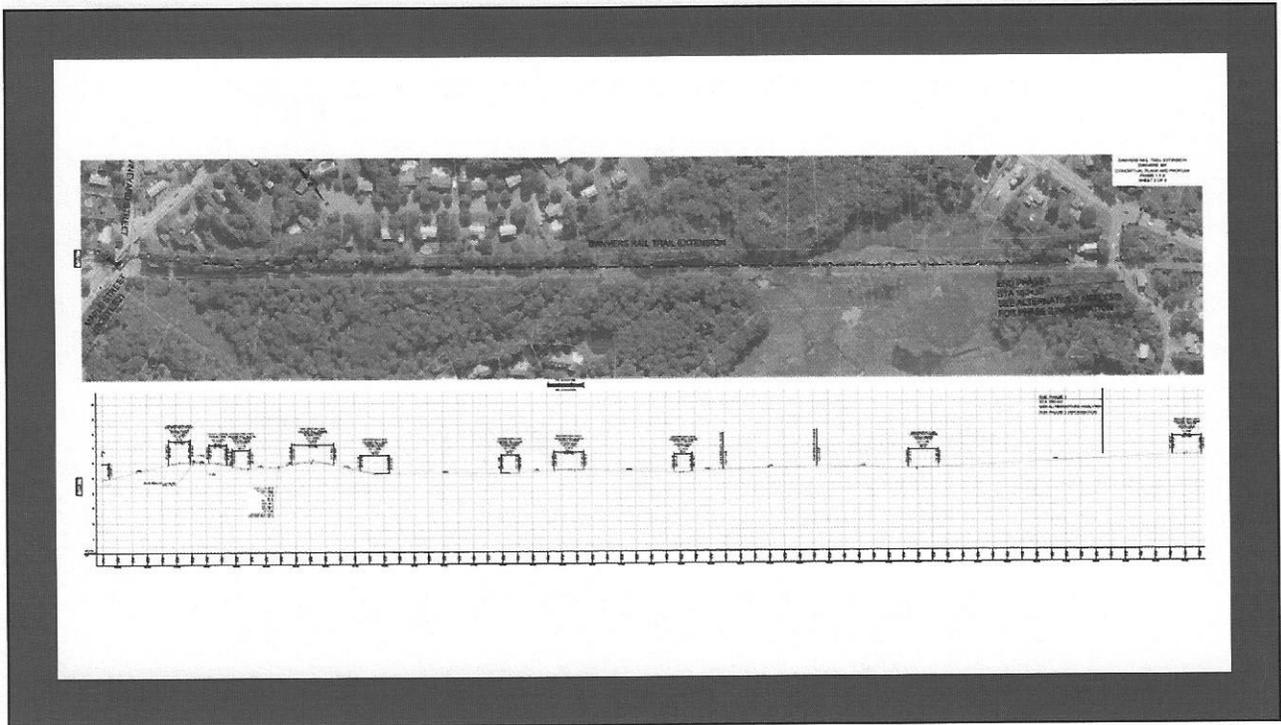
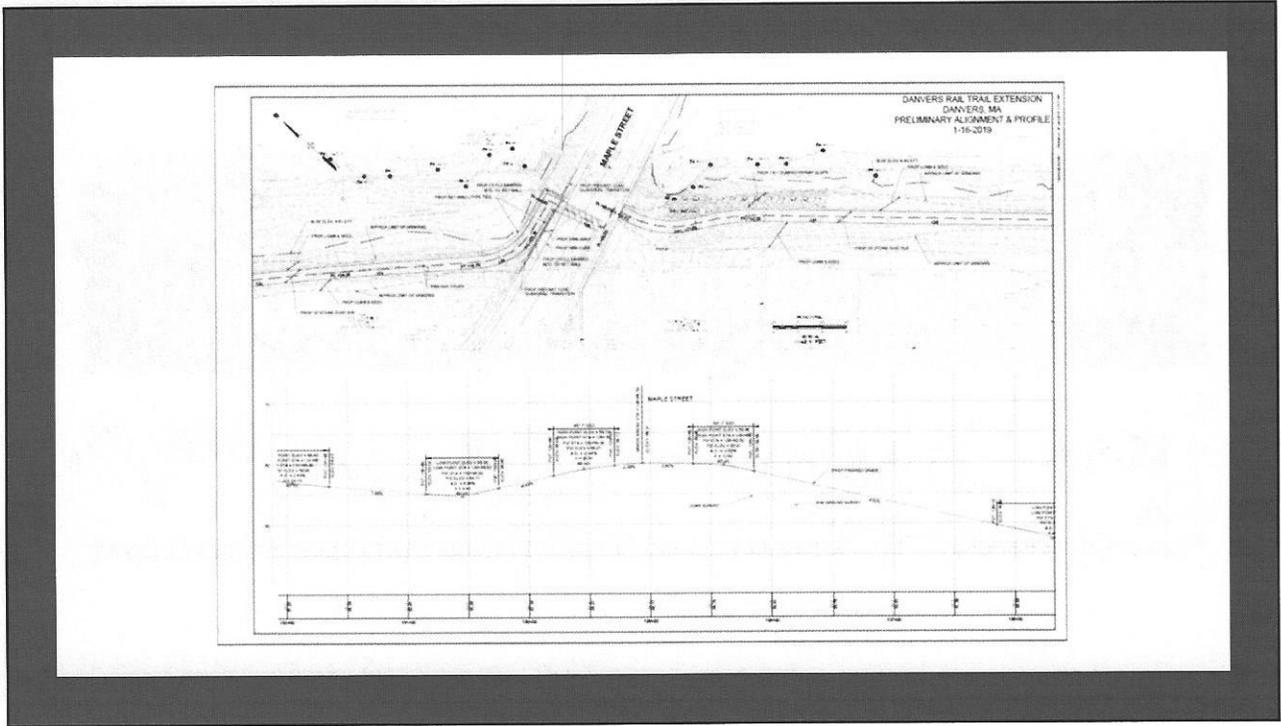
2019 ATM appropriated additional \$10,000

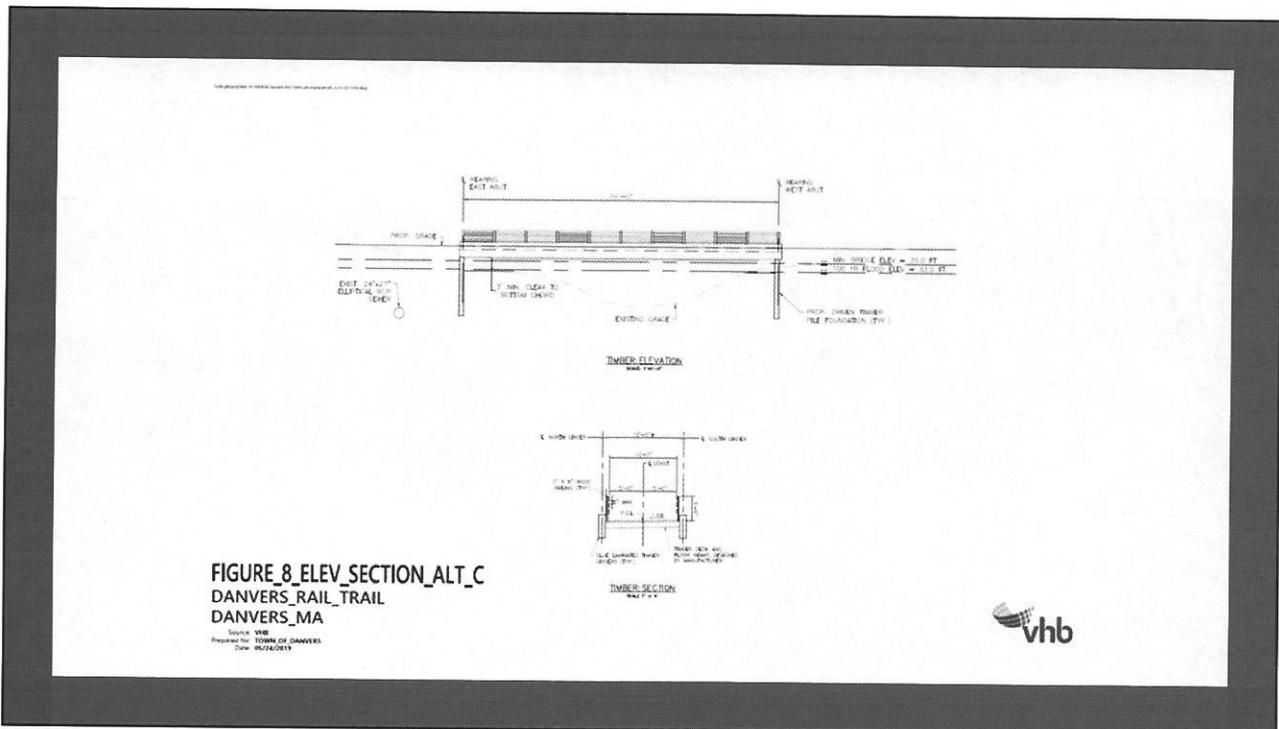
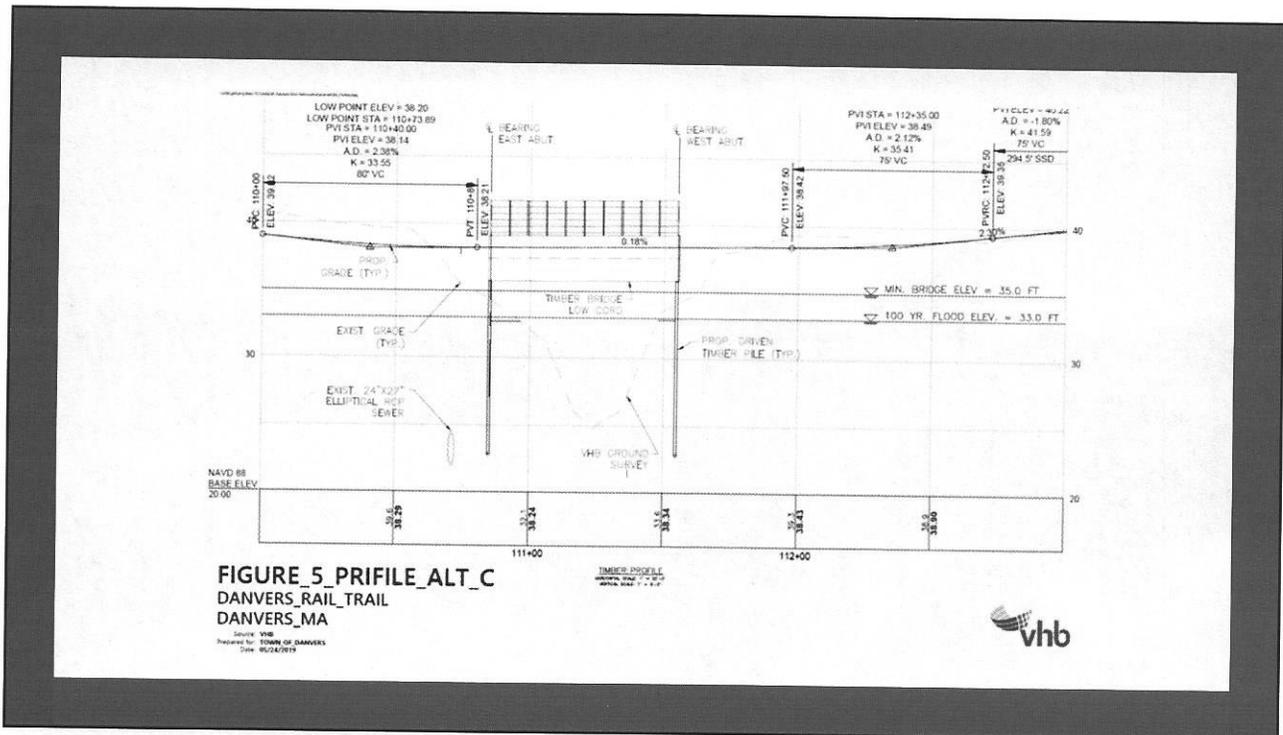
- To enable maximum local match (Trails Grant application)
- Applied in January; Notified in July: unsuccessful

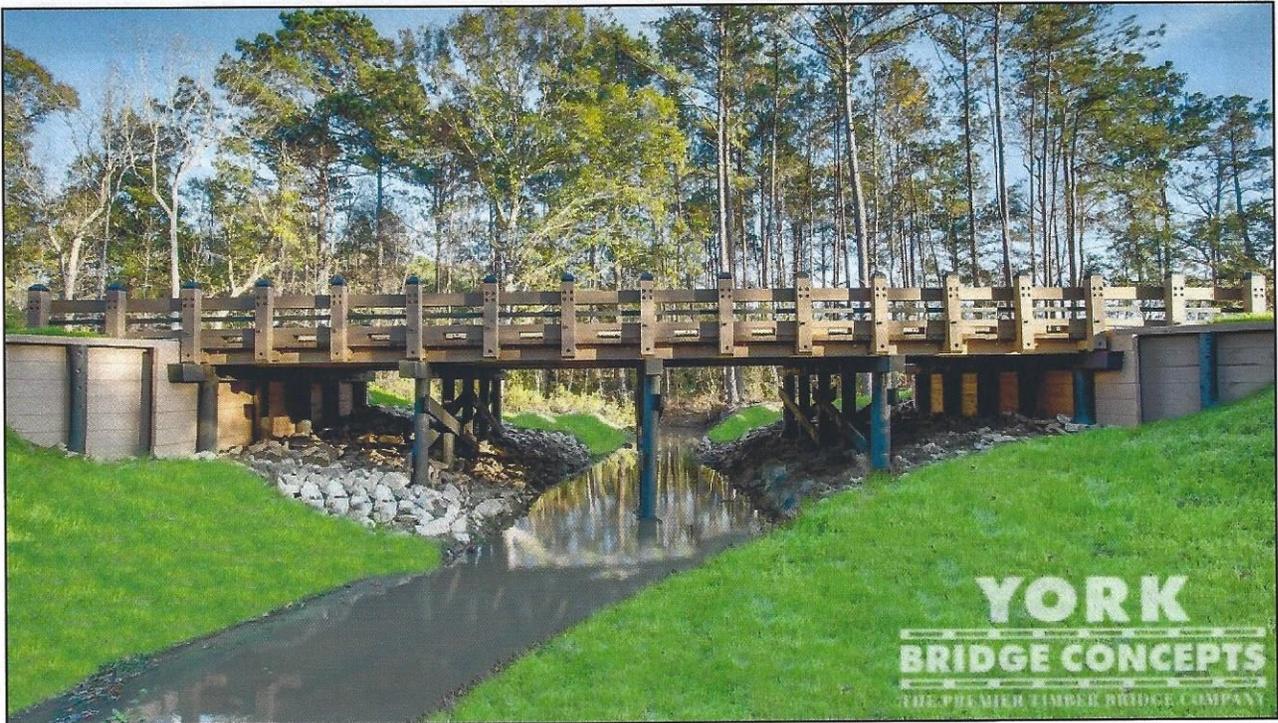
2020 state budget included \$100,000 for design

Leg 1: Rail Trail to Nichols











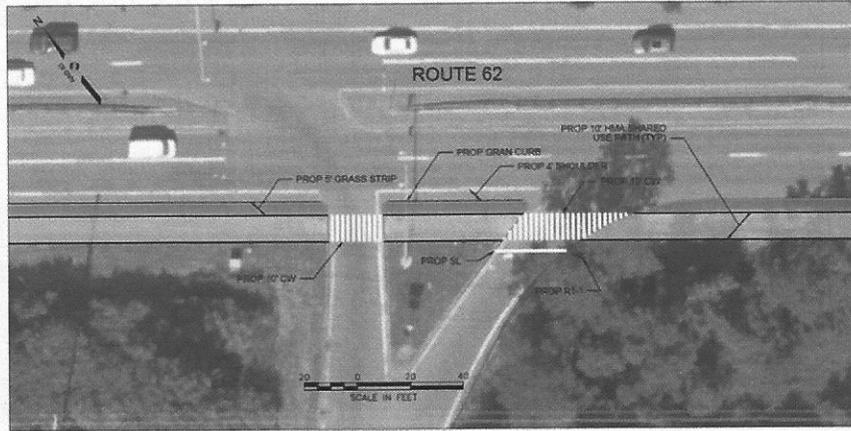


FIGURE 3  
I-95 NB OFF-RAMP  
DANVERS RAIL TRAIL EXT.  
DANVERS, MA

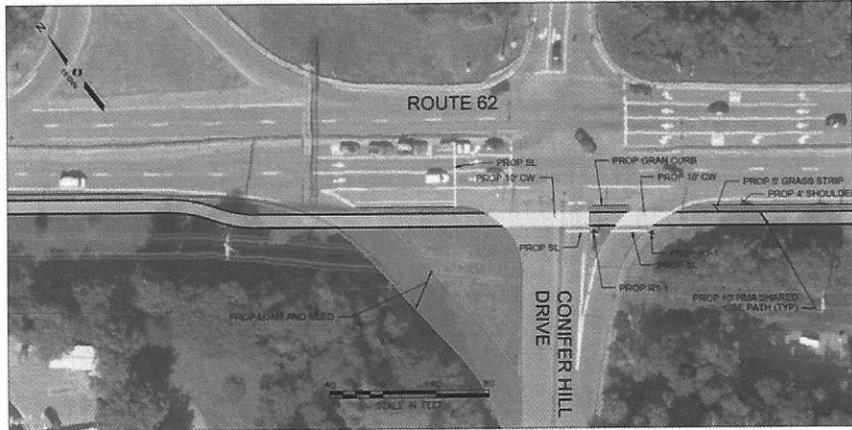
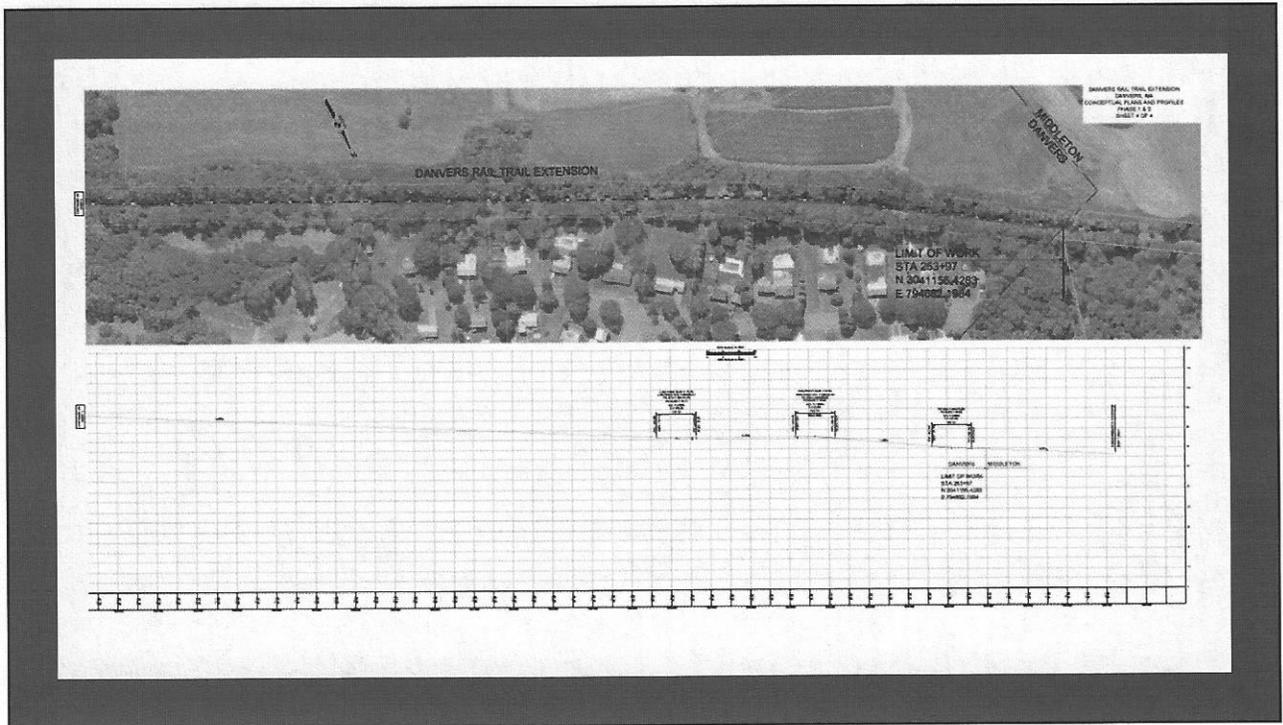
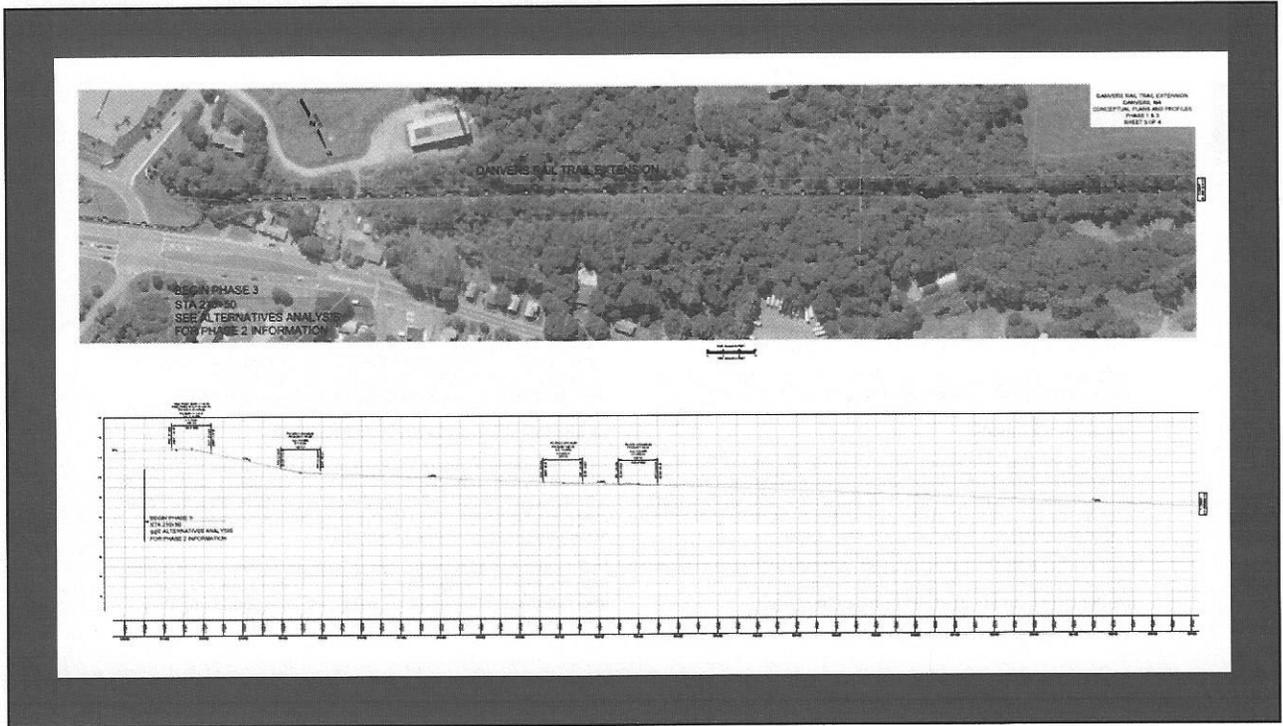


FIGURE 4  
CONIFER HILL DRIVE  
DANVERS RAIL TRAIL EXT.  
DANVERS, MA

## MA DOT Meeting: Design Considerations

- A discussion was held about a potential road diet on Route 62 to reduce to a single travel lane in order to better fit the cross section under the bridges (especially the Route 1 bridges). It was agreed that updated traffic counts and a traffic analysis would be required to determine the feasibility of this proposal.
- DOT showed the group an example of a similar project that has been constructed in Milford at Rt 85 under 495. In that location they elevated the path under the bridge and used a fence along the edge of the path.
- A discussion was held about potentially signalizing the Nichols Street intersection. DOT mentioned they wouldn't approve of any unsignalized crossing – either a full signal or a HAWK could work (not an RRFB). If Nichols Street could benefit from a signal from a traffic perspective it may make the most sense.
- DOT prefers perpendicular crossings at ramps and were in favor of the sweeping turns in the path to accommodate the perpendicular crossings at the ramps/interchanges.
- VHB brought up the potential to reconfigure the Conifer Hill intersection to mirror the intersection across Rt 62 – eliminating the slip lanes and condensing things to make a shorter crossing. DOT thought it seemed like a reasonable approach.
- A discussion was held about the need to include sidewalks on the north side of Rt 62 as part of the project, as well as including a crossing at Conifer Hill Rd to connect the path to the neighborhoods in that direction. The Town mentioned that housing developments were recently constructed on Conifer Hill Rd and that there is a desire for connectivity.
- DOT mentioned if the traffic study shows that no lanes can be eliminated, they may consider allowing 1' shoulders under the Rt 1 bridge to allow for a wider path in this location. MassDOT also mentioned the wood rail + guardrail combination is an acceptable/preferred design approach.
- DOT mentioned they would like to have an internal conversation with the highway design group to check if there are any plans to improve these interchanges – and if not if it is something they would want to incorporate as part of this project.

## Leg 3: Hathorne



Proposed  
FY 2021  
Activities

Complete Contract with VHB:

- Public Meeting (venue and format TBD)
- Request FY 2021 Appropriation for span (unlikely)

Continue plan development (state \$)

- Bring plans for Legs 1 and 3 to 75-100% design
- Pursue project initiation with DOT for Leg 2

Hold the balance of TM appropriation

- Explore funding options in Fall/Winter of 2020

