

June 2013 - Vol 2, Issue 1

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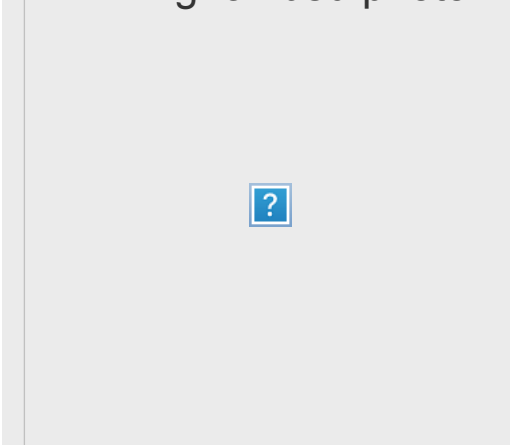
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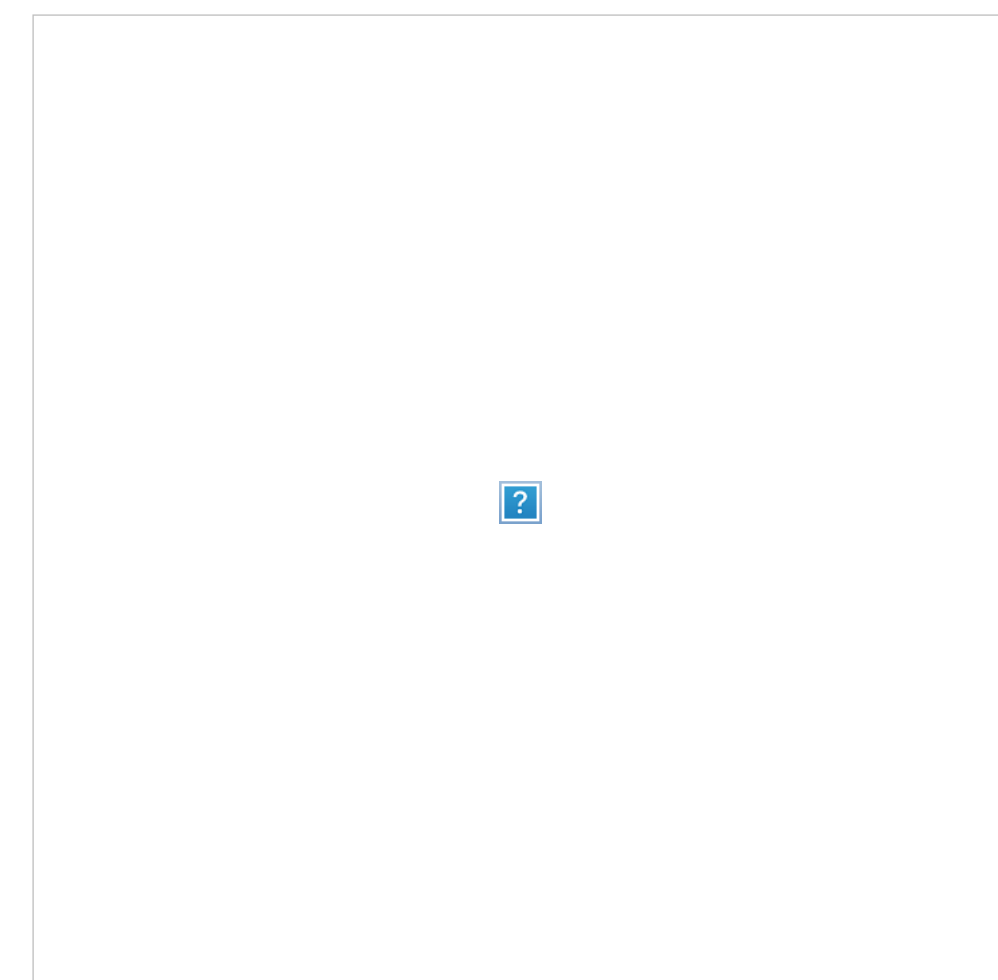
Kim King rail bed photo



The existing MBTA rail bed (photo courtesy of Kim King)

Squannacook Greenways wins \$18,000 grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts

Squannacook Greenways is proud to announce that we have been awarded an \$18,000 grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts to kickstart a fundraising drive for the construction of the Squannacook River Rail Trail.



The planned Squannacook River Rail Trail will be a 3.7 mile stone dust rail trail on the existing MBTA rail bed, with a western end in Townsend center. It will travel east just south of Route 119, passing behind the Harbor Village Shopping Center, where it will parallel Townsend Road in Groton until it reaches the Bertozzi Wildlife area.

Unlike other rail trails in Massachusetts, the Squannacook River Rail Trail is not being built by a town or the state. The trail is instead being built by our local non-profit, Squannacook Greenways. All the money needed to build this trail will be raised by Squannacook Greenways.

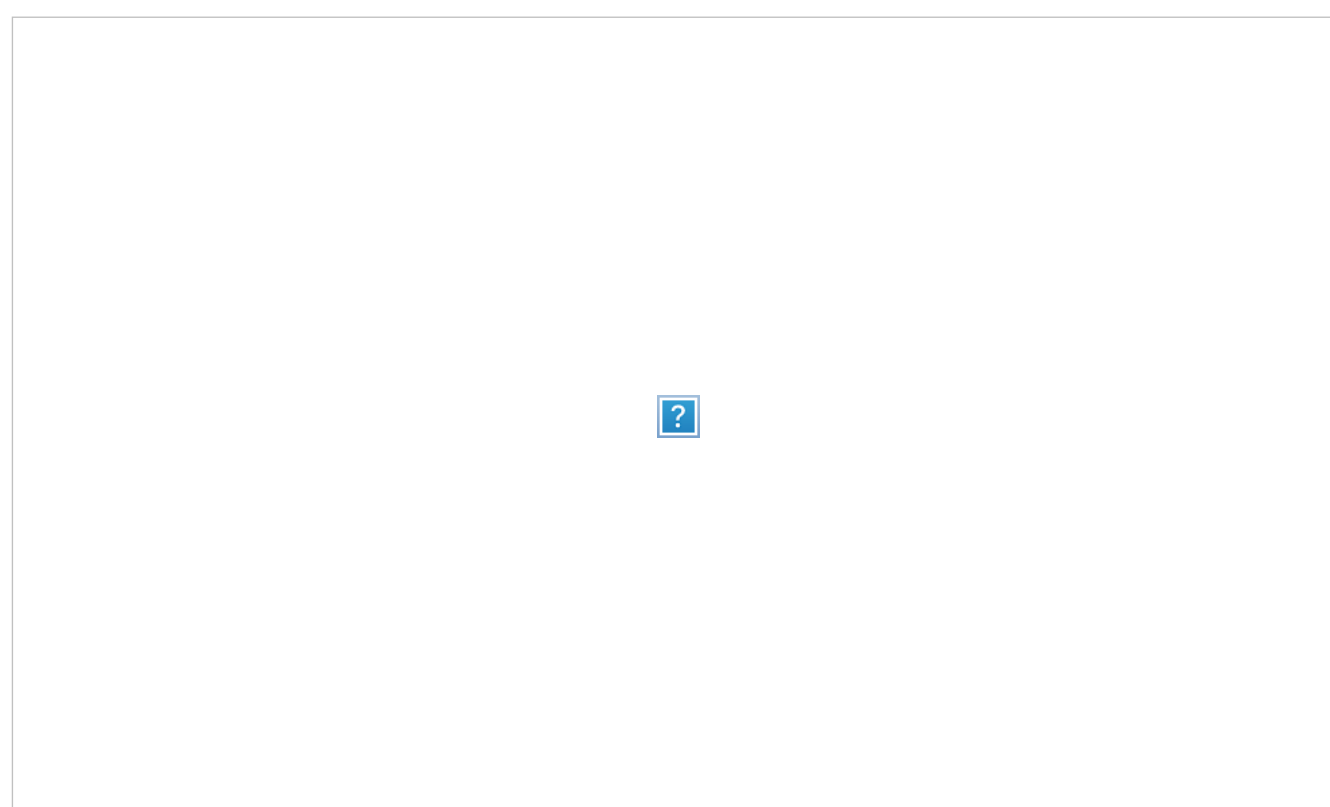
This is possible because we are building a stone dust rail trail, which is much less expensive to build and maintain than a paved trail. Our total budget for the 3.7 mile trail is between \$150,000 and \$200,000. For comparison, a paved trail in Massachusetts is estimated to cost about one million dollars a mile. Our trail will cost 1/20th of that per mile.

With this generous grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts, along with money given directly by our board, we are already at 15% of our goal, before we have even started external fundraising.

One of the motivations for building the Squannacook River Rail Trail is to provide a safe alternative to busy roads such as Route 119 for pedestrians and bicyclists, especially the youth of our community. With this grant as the foundation of our fundraising campaign, we hope that the day will come much sooner when there is a safe route for everyone wanting to ride or walk from one part of our towns to another.

The new off road ambulance

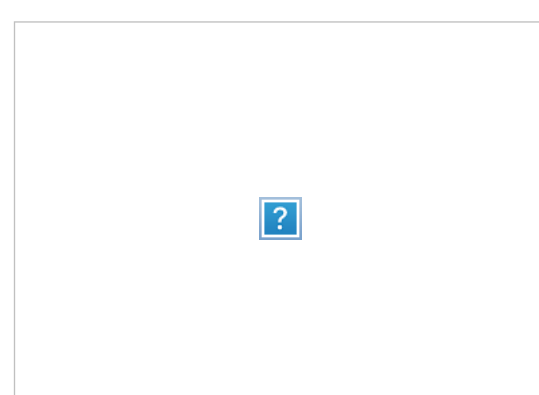
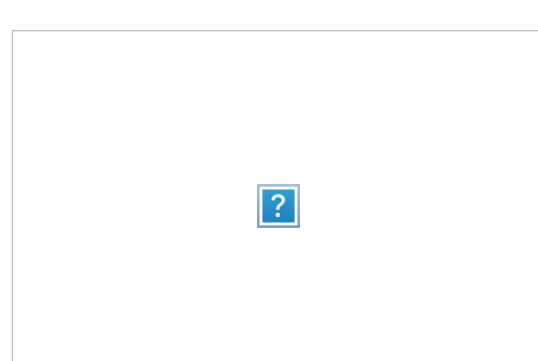
The direct grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts was not the only way they have assisted the Squannacook River Rail Trail. Last year, Townsend was awarded one of their grants to purchase an off-road ambulance. The grant had been applied for by Fire Chief Don Klein. This off-road ambulance can be used either in winter, when it is outfitted with skis and pulled by a snowmobile, or in the summer, when it is fitted with wheels and pulled by an ATV. It's value was demonstrated this past winter when it was used to transport an injured snowmobiler from the Harbor Pond area. This off-road ambulance will make rescues possible any time of year along local trails, including the Squannacook River Rail Trail.



The new off road ambulance ready for winter.

The acquisition of the off-road ambulance reflects Chief Klein's appreciation of how Townsend's environmental resources and recreational opportunities are part of our Town's character. Squannacook Greenways recognized and valued the Chief's prospective and invited him to become a member of our board of directors. We're thrilled to announce he accepted. Chief Klein is a dedicated public servant who understands Townsend and brings years of public safety experience. His addition to the board brings a public safety expertise that will help ensure the Squannacook River Rail Trail becomes the enjoyable and safe recreational facility we envision. Welcome Chief Klein!

MBTA demolishes dilapidated storage shed off Depot St in Townsend



In March of 2013, the MBTA demolished the long-decaying storage shed along Depot Street in Townsend. This will help make way for a larger parking area for the trail's terminus in Townsend.

Coming in the next issue...

Hargraves



In our next issue we will be discussing our recently completed successful negotiations for a partnership with the Department of Conservation and Recreation. We will also discuss the next steps and our proposed timetable. Stay tuned!