

2000-2001 Rail to Trail Bulletins

Rail To Trail Bulletin No. 1 - June 20, 2000

Letter to Neighbors: What are those big pipes doing there, anyhow?!
(Rail to Trail Bulletin #1)

It's begun! For many months I've felt, as convenor of the DMNA rail-to-trail committee, like a farmer getting his planting equipment ready at Christmas -- way ahead of the seasons.

Now, quite suddenly, we're behind! In what resembled a Blitzkrieg in its effects as well as its speed, MG&E carried out their cutting/mowing operations, and have the path rough-graded as far as the Sheldon/Virginia Terrace crossing. I apologize to neighbors for the lack of any warning from me. But I note, in a defensive mode, that MG&E itself expected that work to be taking place 2 weeks later.

I recommend all to take a look. The path is easy walking west from Sheldon/Virginia Terrace to Glenway and beyond. Closer to Odana you will see the pipe being welded into long lengths on the side of the path, ready to be buried.

Let me know what you think. Some think it is the worst "clear cut" since the Wisconsin pineries were done in the last century. Until the "bodies" of myriad small trees were cleaned up, that's indeed what it looked like. On the other hand, as the grading is completed you begin to see a little what our path will look like. My personal opinion? It's going to be beautiful. But that's just what I think.

MG&E is VERY anxious that we be as happy as possible about their work. They hope, probably vainly, to lay to rest the infamy of long-past tree-cutting operations, bad memories that occupy a central place in the DMNA collective psyche. If you have ANY problems, complaints, or just questions, PLEASE call or email Bob Stoffs (252

7906, rstoffs@mge.com). Bob cannot put cut trees back, but he will be very willing to help deal with particular cleanup requests, or damage to homeowners' property (e.g., we heard that one window pane was knocked out by a felled tree). But Bob, and MG&E, cannot do much if we do not take our complaints (if any) to him.

What's coming now? InterCon Construction -- MG&E's contractor -- will dig a trench under the center line of the final paved path and bury the pipe so that it will be 3 feet under the FINAL paved path. In many places the path plans (by EarthTech) call for either grading or filling. InterCon will probably leave most of this for the contractor who does the construction of the path itself. In the meantime, InterCon is being as careful as possible not to contribute to the spread of the tall, bamboo like plant known as Japanese knotweed. This noxious weed, an exotic originally from Japan, has taken over large areas on the north side of the path between Glenway and Sheldon/Virginia Terrace. The extent this plant has taken over is more obvious now that the edges of the railbed are cleared.

Laying the pipe depends in part on dry days and goes slower than the clearing and grading. Don't hold me to this, but it will probably be a week or two from now (6/16) when the pipe laying reaches Glenway/Virginia Terrace.

At the old underpass between Fox and Hillington Green (originally a "cow pass" under the railroad) the pipe will be slanted down past Kurt Kiefer's home and out to Fox Avenue, and be taken thence to Commonwealth and Allen Street. This morning InterCon and MG&E met with Kurt and other neighbors and agreed amicably on trees that will be removed to give the machinery access. The historic "cow pass" will be preserved. We expect that once path construction is complete the pedestrian access at that point will be improved by DMNA with some financial assistance from MG&E.

InterCon/MG&E hope to finish their work so that construction of the path itself will not be delayed.

AND -- I hear that a contractor for the main job has been selected by the City. But I have been unable to confirm that and get information as I write this update. So, more next week -- please stay tuned.

Also, I'll organize a meeting of our reconstituted committee ASAP - watch for notices!

Best regards to all,

Paul Beckett Convenor, DMNA Rail to Trail Committee

P.S. Paul Beckett maintains an email list of DMNA residents interested in the project. If you want to be on this list, let Paul know at : pbeckett@facstaff.wisc.edu

Rail To Trail Bulletin No. 2 - June 21, 2000

Dear Neighbors,

Walkers on the corridor will have noted that lengths of one-foot diameter pipe have been dropped all the way to the crossing at Virginia Terrace to Sheldon/Fox. The pipe is now buried most of the way between Odana and Glenway. Between Glenway and Virginia Terrace the pipe lengths are being welded at the side of the path and will be dragged over and dropped into the trench. Between Odana and Commonwealth there are two major sections where the original rail level will be graded down as much as two feet. The trenches for the rail now being dug are to be dug to a depth so that the top of the gas pipe will be 3 feet under the finished surface.

I wondered how the very long (hundreds of feet?) welded lengths of pipe could be moved (some *bending* would be inevitable) into the trench without breaking the welds. The answer is that the welds are supposed to be as strong as the pipe. The welds will be tested under high pressure after the laying is complete.

The rainy weather has cost the contractor, InterCon, some time. Some unexpected rock has been encountered, I believe between Midvale and Odana. Overall, however, the pipe-laying is proceeding at a good pace. The company hopes to be done, with most of the work, by July 4.

It is my understanding that the company plans to complete cleanup after the pipe is underground. If neighbors have particular cleanup requests to make I suggest contacting Bob Stoffs of MG&E at rstoffs@mge.com or 252 7906. The next week or two will be our last chance, at least till the main contractor for path construction begins.

FAQs:

How will the pipe be laid under Midvale, Odana and Glenway? It will be bored underneath (as a hole was bored under the beltline for the pipe).

What are the piles of tires at street intersections for? To provide some protection for sidewalks and curbs as heavy machinery passes into the corridor. (This even though these sidewalks and curbs will soon be taken out anyway, as the path is put in.)

And, why did white gravel appear at the near the street intersections? To keep trucks and workers from tracking mud on to the streets in the wet weather. Hey, these InterCon folks are really nice guys!

Final note: The contractor for the main project has now been selected. It is the contractor that did the Wingra Creek path which seems to this writer to have been very nicely done. City Engineering expects a start date of late July or early August. Why do I think I'm going to be biking the streets till next summer?

That's all for now. If you find these updates of interest, pass the word to friends and neighbors. We would like our www.dmna.org homepage to be a less well-kept secret.

And if you are interested in the DMNA Rail to Trail Committee, and in receiving periodic email messages about the path, let me know.

Paul pbeckett@facstaff.wisc.edu

Rail To Trail Bulletin No. 3

IMPORTANT NOTE TO RESIDENTS
(especially those bordering the path corridor)
July 3, 2000

At the meeting of the DMNA Rail to Trail Committee Joann Kelley represented MG&E and provided an update on the gas pipe project. She reported that the pipe is mainly underground from south of the beltline to the trestle between Hillington Green and Fox Avenue. The whole section bordering DMNA (as far as the trestle) will be completely done by the week of July 4.

The week following July 4 MG&E's subcontractor (InterCon) will send through crews to do cleanup; in particular to pick up waste from trees and brush, and neaten the cuts done with the "grubber" machine. Residents who have particular concerns, suggestions or requests regarding cleanup should make them known IMMEDIATELY to Joann Kelley (252-7097; jkelly@mge.com) or Bob Stoffs (252-7906; rstoﬀs@mge.com). Kelley or Stoffs will be happy to pass requests or concerns on to InterCon during the week following July 4. After that, InterCon will be done and gone.

Please help communicate this information to neighbors or friends who might want to contact Joann or Bob.

Paul Beckett pbeckett@facstaff.wisc.edu

Rail To Trail Bulletin No. 4 - August 8, 2000

by Paul Beckett and Kurt Kiefer

Dear Neighbors,

It's underway! A \$1.7 million contract to construct the Southwest bike and pedestrian path (forming Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood's northern border) was signed by the governor at the beginning of August. Construction will begin August 7. The main contractor will be Henshue Construction of Madison. The State Department of Transportation will oversee the project, while day-to-day supervision and management will be provided by the engineering firm Graef, Anhalt, Schloemer and Associates (acronymed GAS).

At a preconstruction meeting we attended on behalf of the DMNA Rail to Trail Committee, Henshue Construction laid out their schedule. Work will begin at the southwest terminus of our path, where it will connect to the newly-completed Capital City Trail. The sequence will be: surveying/staking; installation of construction zone erosion control where needed; clearing of trees and brush; grading and earthmoving; installation of stone and gravel base course; asphalt paving; and final finishing (stripes, permanent erosion control, signage, etc.).

Henshue managers indicated they would love to finish through the paving stage this year, but may not be able to do so. The amount of fall rain will be the principal determining variable. If necessary, paving will be postponed until spring 2001.

Staking and clearing is likely to reach our neighborhood's section (Odana to Breeze Terrace) by mid-August.

Henshue and GAS welcomes our Rail-to-Trail Committee's participation. As representatives of the committee, we will attend weekly construction meetings and report to neighbors through this website, and through a system of person to person communication that Kurt Kiefer and Char Thompson are organizing to link up abutting neighbors..

Henshue particularly welcomes our help in informing neighbors prior to clearing of trees and brush. As soon as the limits of the construction zone are surveyed and staked we will inform neighbors, and will organize evening or weekend meetings to explain the limits of the clearing. At a number of points, this will go beyond the clearing operation recently carried out by MG&E as they laid their gas line. The two of us, and Char Thompson and Tony Fernandez (Cross Street), have copies of the detailed engineering plans. We will be happy to show these to neighbors. They detail the "slope intercepts" that mark the expected limit of clearing.

Henshue, and city authorities, warn us that there is little to no flexibility about removal of trees and other vegetation between the plan's slope intercepts. But they will be happy to consider neighbors' views, especially in "borderline" cases, or trees outside the intercept lines which neighbors might want to recommend for removal. The City Forester will survey the corridor and make final decisions.

Henshue and GAS are aware of the problem of the invasive weed Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) which is strongly established along the corridor, mainly on the Forest Hills Cemetery side. As called for in the engineering plans, they will do their best not to spread the roots to the other side of the corridor, or to areas where it is not now established. Members of our committee will brief the construction crews on the location of knotweed stands prior to grading and earthmoving.

Neighbors are invited to contact either of us with particular questions. We prefer email (pbeckett@facstaff.wisc.edu, or kkiefer@madison.k12.wi.us) but if that doesn't work for you, feel free to call (Paul, 238 2580; Kurt, 233 8661).

Please let others who are interested in the project know about these website updates. Thanks!

Paul Beckett and Kurt Kiefer

Rail To Trail Bulletin No. 5 - August 13, 2000

by Paul Beckett and Kurt Kiefer

Dear Neighbors,

On Thursday August 10 we attended the first of the weekly construction meetings of the Henshue Construction company, and the overseeing engineering company GAS (see last week's bulletin).

Guess what? Construction did NOT begin on August 7, as had been planned, but was expected to begin (for sure) on Friday, August 11. It will begin at the southwest terminus (the crossing over the Capital City Trail) with tree clearing and brush clearing. The clearing operation should reach our area (Odana to Breeze Terrace) by (we're guessing) mid-August. What that will mean for our neighborhood is suggested in the summary by Tony Fernandez which is quoted later in this bulletin.

Other items from the construction meeting:

- Grading and earth moving (where required by the plans) will follow the clearing, operation, and stone laying will follow that. Henshue expects to work sequentially from southwest to northeast, not "jumping around."
- But, construction of retaining walls where required WILL jump ahead, and may commence soon.
- The construction/personnel know what Japanese Knotweed looks like; they have its location coordinates, and they will do their utmost (as required by the contract) not to spread it.
- Henshue, GAS, and State DOT request our neighbors' cooperation. **PLEASE DO NOT USE THE CORRIDOR WHERE CONSTRUCTION IS IN PROGRESS!** This is required by insurance/liability agreements - and will help us get through this unpleasant stage of construction faster. We thank you all for your cooperation!

Since construction had not begun, it was a short construction meeting. Watch for the next bulletin.

Remember, it is easy to get information about the process if you want it, or to ask about particular issues. In addition to this site (please tell others about it) you may email (preferred) Paul at pbeckett@facstaff.wisc.edu, Kurt at kkiefer@madison.k12.wi.us, or Char Thompson at chart@tds.net --or call. We have copies of the detailed plans which you are welcome to consult. We will be happy to contact the supervising engineer, Aaron Palmer of GAS and, if needed, arrange a personal meeting for you.

Quite reasonably, Henshue and GAS request that as much as possible neighbors make contact with us (Paul and Kurt) first, so that questions and concerns can be aggregated. However, if you cannot reach us, and feel a question is urgent, you may contact Aaron Palmer by calling 218 1517 (phone at his office, with a message machine) or 209 6447 (mobile). Aaron's email is aaron.palmer@gasai.com

Kindly do NOT debrief construction crew members you happen to see. Time and again this has resulted in alarming misinformation which is hard to correct in the neighborhood later. As indicated, it will be easy to get authoritative information. Thanks!

Now, while construction has just begun, the surveying is done. It is not easy to look at the stakes and know what they mean. This is true even if you have managed to identify and ignore the stakes left over from the MG&E operation. Kurt and Char will be organizing meetings in the evening on the corridor to explain to neighbors in each major section what to expect. These meetings will cover Odana to Glenway; Glenway to Commonwealth; and Commonwealth to Breeze Terrace. Try to attend. We think neighbors will want to know exactly what is going to happen as early as possible in the process.

In the meantime, our expert neighbor Tony Fernandez has summarized the stakes and their meaning as follows:

1. The "slope intercept" is the theoretical point where the proposed grading meets the existing ground. The contract Special Provisions allow the contractor to grade 2 ft. beyond this line in order to blend in to the existing ground. The slope intercept lines are shown on the plans with a short dash line, which is labeled on each sheet as "Slope Intercepts".
2. The stakes are typically 4 ft. outside the theoretical intercepts, (or 2' outside the permitted grading limits). Some of the stakes, as you noted, are only 2' outside the intercepts (or at the permitted grading limits) and those stakes are marked 2' O/S.
3. The slope intercepts were established based on survey every 100' and may not exactly represent the conditions between 100' "stations". There is inevitably some adjustment of this line to match the actual terrain conditions as the construction proceeds. The actual grading could be a little wider, or in some locations, narrower than shown on the plans.
4. The contractor and the Resident Engineer (Aaron Palmer) have been requested to preserve trees at the fringes of the grading limits where possible. In general, people should expect the ground to be completely cleared of vegetation between the grading limits. Ultimately all disturbed areas will be covered with topsoil and seeded with grass.

That's all for this bulletin. Paul will be away from August 14 to September 1. In the meantime, contact Kurt as necessary.

Yours,

Paul and Kurt

Rail To Trail Bulletin No. 6 - August 29, 2000

Greetings neighbors and other interested persons!

Progress continues on the path project. For those of you who live nearby or have passed the project you will see that significant work has been accomplished at the Midvale Boulevard area. A major

drainage improvement effort is underway. Elsewhere tree and brush clearing continues. Some areas will soon see retaining walls appear and earth being moved for leveling purposes. Read the details below.

Tree/Brush Removal

The tree and brush removal subcontractor should be across Midvale Boulevard by Wednesday, August 30. They should be working between Odana Road and Glenway the week of Labor Day. While an attempt is being made to move in succession along the path from south to north, certain project needs may require some clearing at spots further north (e.g., to clear around areas where retaining walls are needed.) The tree removal subcontractor may work on Saturdays (as well as M-F). All clearing should be done no later than the end of September.

City Forester Mike Martinelli walked the path with resident engineer Aaron Palmer to identify trees outside of the anticipated grading area that for safety and health reasons should be removed. Many of these trees are dead. Homeowners with specific questions about these trees should contact Martinelli in the Forester's Office.

SAFETY NOTE: The loud equipment makes it difficult to monitor approaching pedestrians. Neighbors are asked to remain as far away from the contractor as possible to avoid serious injury.

Retaining Walls

The path requires retaining walls for reinforcement and access points at several locations along its entire length. Specific spots include the Prospect Street crossing, Virginia Terrace, Harrison Street, and Breese Terrace. Work on these walls will begin during the second week of September. As was stated earlier, some limited tree and brush removal may precede any construction activity on these walls.

Approved Change Orders

The following change orders have been approved by the WisDOT office:

Commonwealth crossing - The turning radius at this crossing will be reduced resulting in less severe extensions into the right of way space. A meeting was held between the project staff and neighbors on August 17 at which this change was discussed.

Prospect Street crossing retaining walls - The walls have been redesigned to save a large tree on the south side of the crossing.

Lyndale berm - At the request of adjacent neighbors, an additional berm will be added to match one on the other side.

Street Reconstructions

Street reconstruction at Midvale, Odana, Glenway, and Commonwealth is about a month away. These tasks must be completed prior to the end of the construction season as part of the contract between the WisDot and the contractor.

Archeology Concerns

A state-approved archeologist will be contacted shortly, prior to construction, to identify mounds or other areas of historical concern.

General Construction Notes

Trucks delivering gravel to the path will begin their work south of the Beltline after Labor Day. Gravel is needed in some areas to provide a stable surface for other vehicles that must enter the construction area.

Some grading will begin in the Glenway area as early as the third week of September. This material will be taken to fill other low areas of the path further to the south. The project calls for as little removal of soil as possible along the entire path.

All construction work will be conducted Monday through Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

ADDITIONAL SAFETY NOTE: The project engineer and the construction team are asking all neighbor's cooperation in avoiding areas where work is in progress. The heavy equipment is loud and makes it very difficult to hear persons who may be approaching those vehicles. The crews' focus is on their task which make sit difficult to be on the lookout for walkers, joggers or bikers. If you have questions or concerns telephone or e-mail one of the contact persons listed below.

Questions

If you have specific concerns or questions please attempt to contact one of the two neighborhood contact persons:

Paul Beckett 238-2580 pbeckett@facstaff.wisc.edu

Kurt Kiefer 233-8661 kkiefer@madison.k12.wi.us

If you want to contact the project's resident on-site engineer please call him at the project trailer telephone number listed below or e-mail him:

Aaron Palmer 218-1517 aaron.palmer@gasai.com

The success of the project is in part a function of how we as neighbors communicate with each other about the progress being made.

Informed neighbors are (generally) happy neighbors. If you know of others who wish to be added to our path e-mailing list please let us know!

Addendum to Bulletin No. 6 - September 1, 2000

Thursday afternoon we attended the weekly construction meeting. Three items affecting our neighborhood:

- Tree/brush clearing may start in the Odana to Glenway section today (Friday, Sept. 1). If not, it will be early next week.
- Grading and earth moving may begin in that section as early as next Wednesday (Sept. 6).
- Neighbors whose properties adjoin the stand of arbor vitae on the SOUTH (not north!) side of the tracks just east of Commonwealth have agreed that the trees (large, and very close to the former tracks) should come out. Those concerned with the project appreciate the neighbors' cooperative attitude.

Rail To Trail Bulletin No. 7 - September 12, 2000

By Paul Beckett and Kurt Kiefer

We attended the latest construction meeting for the Rail to Trail project on September 7, 2000. There was not too much that is new, so we will keep this update short.

- Henshue Construction and GAS (the supervising engineering firm) feel that progress is satisfactory. Stone/gravel work has begun south of the Beltline; grading and earth moving is well advanced to Midvale and from Midvale to Odana; clearing and brushing has reached Commonwealth Avenue.
- We can expect grading and earthmoving to begin any time in our neighborhood (i.e., north and east of Odana). Henshue may "jump around" and will not necessarily continue to work sequentially south to north.
- Aaron Palmer of GAS has responded to quite a number of queries, requests or complaints from property owners along the corridor. In many cases, slight alterations in the plans have made it possible to save trees or otherwise lessen the impact on abutting neighbors. In a few cases, such adjustments have NOT been possible, and in those cases he has found the neighbors understanding. We (Paul and Kurt) wish to confirm from our perspective that Aaron has worked VERY hard to respond to our neighbors and has been as accommodating as is possible. We very much appreciate this, as does, we think, the neighborhood as a whole!

- An interesting tidbit: Henshue Construction is bound by the contract to finish the job in 90 days of work. If they don't they will need to pay a fine.
- Erosion and drainage control at the crossing from Virginia Terrace to Sheldon/Fox have been significant problems for many years. It is expected that the construction of the ramps there, re-engineering of the south bank, and pipes and ditching in the plans, will allay these problems. Drainage into yards south of the tracks should be much less of a problem.
- Aaron will consult with Tony Fernandez (now with City Engineering) about several specific erosion control situations (including a displaced retaining wall at 2926 Gregory Street). They will deal with these cases on an individual basis in close consultation with neighbors whose yards abut the right of way.
- Henshue and GAS will move soon to plan and begin the work of reconstruction of the underpass (the "cowpass") between Hillington Green and Fox Avenue.

Rail To Trail Bulletin No. 8 - September 22, 2000

By Paul Beckett and Kurt Kiefer

Greetings!

The contractors are planning to have much activity take place in the neighborhood in the next few weeks. Much of the area has been rough graded at this point. It's actually beginning to take shape!

Retaining wall construction begins next week (9/25) near the Capital City Trail connection. After they finish there the next location to see wall construction will be Harrison Street, followed by Virginia Terrace/Sheldon/Fox. The latter two projects will probably be finished by mid-October if the weather cooperates.

The underpass between Hillington Green and Fox Avenue should be see work soon. The old reinforcing ties (no longer needed for support) will be removed, exposing the original sandstone abutments. The steel

girders and remaining ties will be replaced with a new concrete deck and railings.

As for asphalt, it looks like the goal now is to complete the section from the Capitol City Trail at the south to Odana Road before the "winter" season arrives. As for the remaining section, all gravel should be laid, but, alas, no paving before winter. Apparently, the asphalt contractors don't work after October 15th.

Before the finished grading and paving can begin there is much work yet to do near Midvale Boulevard. A very large stormwater pipe must be buried there. The contractor has been waiting for MG&E to complete movement of some utility poles before they can start excavating. They hope to arrive at that spot the week of October 2nd. The contractor intends to have the road rebuilt at that crossing then, too.

Many concerns were recently raised about erosion on steep slope areas along the path. The project engineer and city engineering have explored various options and have selected some for use along this path. They are working closely with affected homeowners to explain these solutions. The end result will be saving vegetation on the slopes.

A note about railroad ties: The state is sending the folks who took the ties out last year back in to clean up things. Apparently many ties were left behind. The clean-up crew probably will only make one run through so if you can make the ties visible for them it will help. Turn the ties up, flag or mark them, whatever works. From an ecological perspective it makes much sense to have these ties removed. Now's the time.

An additional safety reminder: As much as the trail is enticing to use now, it remains a bad idea to pass through when crews are working. Heavy equipment operators can't hear you when they are running the machines and are very focused on the task at hand. Help 'em out - try to avoid them if at all possible.

Please pass this information along to your neighbors. An informed neighborhood is generally a happier neighborhood!

Paul and Kurt

Rail To Trail Bulletin No. 9 - October 22, 2000

By Paul Beckett and Kurt Kiefer

The construction meeting of Thursday afternoon, October 19, was a subdued one, and a certain downscaling of ambitions with regard to the project completion schedule seemed to be in the air. While no major problems have been encountered (and the fall weather has been wonderful) Henshue Construction no longer expects to have the path paved as far as Odana before winter (as we reported earlier). It is not even certain, we gathered, that Henshue will complete the grading and gravel work before winter. The main reason for this seems to be construction capacity: the work at the major street intersections (which includes large-scale new drainage systems) consumes most of Henshue's labor and machinery resources, as well as other projects the company is working.

Meanwhile, the retaining wall construction that was set in motion by a subcontractor, beginning at Harrison Street and working westward/southward seems to have come to a complete halt. Everyone is working on many other jobs in addition to this one, we were told. We got the impression that, paradoxically, progress might have been better had the weather been worse.

We were disappointed on behalf of our neighbors and our neighborhood, but since the project is closely supervised by the State DOT, and their representative seems to be satisfied with the rate of progress, there seems to be nothing to do.

At the construction meeting we urged in particular that the retaining wall at Prospect be finished before winter so that removed soil can be

backfilled to protect the roots of the large white pines (the preservation of which was a main consideration in the design of the wall in the first place). We also note the several places along the Path where special erosion control measures are necessary. Unfortunately (we were told) these erosion control measures will be among the final stages of completion, and so will almost certainly have to wait until next spring or summer. Silt fencing will remain as the sole basis for erosion control until then.

More specific news: the Midvale crossing is going well. The east side of the street will be completed this coming week, and attention will shift to the Odana crossing, where a new street island will be constructed. It will probably be necessary to handle traffic with a single lane and flag persons for a period at Odana.

Henshue also expects to get back to grading and finishing the earthen base soon (next two or three weeks), and will begin laying the gravel base from the southwest end of the Path. We were told that gravel can be laid even in cold weather and that their goal is to have that material in place to Glenway yet this fall.

We're sorry to communicate what is somewhat bad news on the schedule, news which must seem especially annoying to the many neighbors whose properties directly adjoin the construction zone. We had hoped that their discomfort would be largely over by the beginning of winter.

On a somewhat more positive note we mention again that no major problems have come up so far; and note that one can begin to see that the Path - when it is finally done - is going to be VERY nice.

Paul and Kurt

Rail To Trail Bulletin No. 10 - November 12, 2000

By Paul Beckett

INTRO. NOTE: This is likely to be the last "bulletin" of this construction season. If you would like these informational bulletins to be resumed when construction resumes next spring, send an email to that effect to me at pbeckett@facstaff.wisc.edu. Thanks!

Since the last bulletin (No. 9) by Kurt Kiefer and me, slightly depressed in tone, there has been better progress, and while Wisconsin weather will (of course) have the final say, it looks like the fall's construction goals will be achieved before the heavy machinery goes into winter storage.

Our neighborhood has been very fortunate to have an extremely cooperative relationship with the Path construction supervising engineer, Aaron Palmer. Aaron has talked with many residents individually, and has been able to help with a number of concerns. He has been constantly forthcoming and frank with updates on the construction process, and on possible problems or delays. Aaron met on November 1 with the DMNA Rail to Trail committee and provided a very complete update on the Path. And in lieu of a construction meeting on November 9 Aaron wrote a similarly illuminating summary. The rest of this bulletin is drawn mainly from Aaron's reports, with only minor editing and shortening.

- The contractor has laid base course from the Capitol City trail all the way up to Glenway. This first layer that went in last Thursday and Friday was only about 4" thick. The next step is for the surveyors to pound a stake every 100' over this layer to the desired base course elevation. This is called "red tops", as opposed to "blue tops" for subgrade elevation. The next step will be for Wingra, the base course subcontractor, to bring in more gravel and finish grade the trail to the appropriate elevations and grade. This has occurred from the Capital City trail to the Beltline and is about 90% complete from Midvale to Odana.
- Recycled asphalt has been used for the base course on the first lift that went in. Subsequently, 3/4" crushed limestone (what is typically thought of as gravel) has been laid on top as the finish

grading. This is easily identifiable by the difference in color between the two.

- The next step for south of the Beltline, from the junction with the Capital City Bike Trail to the Beltline bridge, is paving. This time of year everyone is scrambling to get things paved and thus the subcontractor for paving, Payne and Dolan, is extremely busy. Henshue Company says that Payne and Dolan will begin laying the asphalt paving as soon as they free up a crew.
- The Midvale crossing, which involved large-scale new drainage works, has been very time consuming. But work on Midvale is nearing completion. One lane has now been paved. The median now must be cleaned and landscaped, and the sidewalks must be constructed. At a minimum, traffic will be restored to normal by close of business, Friday the 17th of November.
- Closer to home, Odana is in about the same status as Midvale. Remington Electric must place electrical conduit across the road. The outside curbs and gutters and sidewalks must be constructed. We will have to let the concrete work sit about a week before we can mill (grind) off some of the asphalt and lay new asphalt back on it to match the curb and gutter.
- The Henshue Company (the main contractor) has started lowering the water main at the Virginia Terrace to Sheldon-Fox crossing. They need one good day of weather to finish. Since construction has begun, it has become apparent that a new addition to the drainage plan will be required in the area between the Virginia Terrace to Sheldon-Fox crossing and the underpass at Hillington. Neighbors there have noted increased washing of mud. A new pipe and inlet will be placed and connected to the existing storm sewer at Fox Avenue near the underpass. It will basically parallel the path of the gas main that was installed last summer. Tony Fernandez of City Engineering has scheduled a meeting with the neighbors in this area to explain the plan. Henshue will put this in as soon as they complete the water main work.
- Henshue still plans on getting a layer of base course down the entire path this year. That may not happen until things freeze up. The base course can be laid on frozen ground if necessary. Also,

the paving south of the Beltline will be done even if the trail freezes first.

- Henshue has received the materials for reconstruction of the underpass bridge between Hillington Green and Fox Avenue. Construction is expected to begin soon. Once it starts, it will be necessary to close the underpass for at least a month. WE ASK NEIGHBORS' COOPERATION IN RESPECTING THIS CLOSURE, WHICH IS NECESSARY TO GET THE JOB DONE.
- It is expected that the several retaining walls required WILL be done this fall, but the schedule is uncertain. Aaron is checking with the subcontractor for these walls.
- Remington Electric is laying the electrical conduit along the path. As residents will recall, nighttime lighting will NOT be provided along our neighborhood, except as required at street intersections. However, it was agreed that conduit should be laid for possible future use.

Aaron Palmer may be contacted by email at Graef, Anhalt, Schloemer & Associates at aaron.palmer@gasai.com . Neighbors who have problems or questions can also phone him at the Odana Street field office at 218 1517.

As always, neighbors who wish to discuss special problems or questions can email (preferred) or phone Paul Beckett (pbeckett@facstaff.wisc.edu) or Kurt Kiefer (kkiefer@madison.k12.wi.us).

Rail To Trail Bulletin No. 11 - April 18, 2001

By Paul Beckett, Chair, DMNA Rail to Trail Committee

Spring is here, and raccoons and heavy machinery come out of hibernation. Monday, April 16 marked the official recommencement of construction work on the new bicycle-pedestrian Path by the Henshue company. Actually, work rarely came to a complete halt during the winter. Aaron Palmer often maintained his vigil in his little command

center at the entrance from Odana, and work (finally?) began on the access ramps in the midst of snow and ice.

But now, the work begins in earnest. What should we expect? First, lots of smaller stuff: finishing storm sewers, re-doing curbs at street crossings, finishing walls at the accesses. Some special drainage work has been added to the project between the Sheldon green space and the underpass, and this will commence soon. The historic underpass ("cow pass") between Hillington Green and Fox Avenue will be rebuilt. It has two structures now: an original one of local sandstone, and one added sometime later of treated beams. The beams will be taken out leaving the sandstone supports, which will be bridged across with a concrete slab.

Meanwhile, the grading and laying of gravel will continue from Odana onward.

At Spooner, as part of a separate construction contract, the bridge over the Path will be completely reconstructed. Demolition of the old structure has already begun.

Sometime in May or June, paving will begin, working from the southwest terminus at the crossing with the Capital City Trail. When the paving is down, top soil will be laid along the shoulder and seeding will be done.

Much of the work on most of the Path should be done by about the first of July. An unknown is the schedule for the Spooner Bridge. We hope that it will be done by the end of July, or thereabouts.

As in the past, stay in touch with our postings at www.dmna.org. If you have particular questions or concerns don't hesitate to contact me. I prefer email (pbeckett@facstaff.wisc.edu) but if that doesn't work for you, call me (238 2580). Aaron Palmer, the supervising engineer for the project is easy to reach at his cell phone number (209 6447). Aaron's email is aaron.palmer@gasai.com.

We are creating a new inter-neighborhood "Friends of the Path" organization which, once the construction season is done, will supplant our DMNA path committee. We see the Friends organization as one that will help to support and beautify the Path, help ensure its safe and enjoyable use by a wide variety of user groups, and help to create a sense of community around the Path and its use. If you read this bulletin before April 25, please consider coming to the inaugural meeting of the "Friends": Wednesday, April 25, 7-9 p.m. at the Cherokee Heights Middle School (near the intersection of Cherokee and Midvale). The meeting will be in the cafeteria. If you see this too late to attend but are interested in joining, email me. We'd love to have you.

And keep your bikes tuned and ready, or your walking shoes handy. This thing really will be done before too long!