**Introduction to Fact Sheets on Alternatives**

**Upper Charles Trail in Hopkinton**

**Peter LaGoy/Hopkinton Trails Club**

The Hopkinton Trails Club proposes **a Recreation-Focused Stone Dust Class 5 Shared Use Path (SUP)** for the portion of the Upper Charles Trail connecting the Milford Rail Trail to Hopkinton’s Center Trail. The club supports an **Alternative route** to the Upper Charles Trail Committee’s (UCTC’s) conceptual route.

The Trails Club Alternative is:

1. **Consistent** with Hopkinton’s existing trails and public opinion about Hopkinton trails,
2. **Cheaper** to build - $200,000 per mile v. $2 million per mile,
3. **Faster** to build – 2022 v. 2027, and
4. **Safer,** in a wooded area away from major roads and crossings.

Five Fact Sheets are provided.

(1) Frequently Asked Questions about Trails Club Alternative (previously available)

(2) Cost Analysis of Stone Dust SUP v. DOT-preferred Asphalt SUP

(3) Comparison of Trails Types for Trail Uses – Recreational v. Commuter

(4) Hopkinton’s Best SUP Option Based on Costs, Use, and Timing

(5) Benefits of the Trails Club Alternative route

Three Maps are also provided.

(1) Map showing the UCTC conceptual route and the Trails Club’s Alternative

Route (previously available)

(2) Map showing details of Alternatives near Daniel Road

(3) Map Showing Alternative for Campus Connector Spur

The Hopkinton Trails Club, and many residents, feel that the best option for Hopkinton’s portion of the UCT is a stone dust, recreational use-focused, Class 5, Shared Use Path because such a trail is **better** for Hopkinton’s recreational uses, much **cheaper**, and can be built **faster**.

**FACT SHEET 1**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Regarding the Trails Club Alternative**

**Why is the Hopkinton Trails Club proposing this wooded route around Charlesview now?**

* Upper Charles Trail Committee (UCTC) and their consultant VHB recently released their proposed route for the Upper Charles Trail (UCT) (SEE MAP ATTACHED – UCTC YELLOW ROUTE)
* While we appreciate the UCTC member’s efforts, the plan shows major concerns, including:

- A half mile of “Trail” along Hayden Rowe Street (Route 85)

**- Three** crossings of Route 85, including at (1) Granite Street, (2) near Hughes Farm Trail or near 147 Hayden Rowe (depending on what side the trail travels on Hayden Rowe), and (3) at McDermott Path

**-** Crossing of either Chestnut Street at the light or Teresa Road

**-** Crossings at multiple driveways.

**-** All on Hayden Rowe where a woman pushing a stroller was hit by a car and a child on a bike was hit by a car and killed.

* An alternative woods route is a more desirable, sensible and much safer option for Hopkinton.

**What is the route proposed by the Hopkinton Trails Club?**

* The proposed alternative route extends from Center Trail around the western and southern sides of the Charlesview neighborhood to connect with the Hughes Farm Trail. (SEE MAP ATTACHED – TRAILS CLUB PROPOSAL IN BLUE)
* The route would extend south across Granite Street to existing Echo Trail and south to Rt 85.
* The trail would run south along Rt 85 for a short distance before going up and over Rt 85 on a future ramp and bridge to a ledge on the east side.

**What are the issues in trying to build a trail around Charlesview?**

* First, any trail would need to pass through land owned by three private landowners and purchase or easements would be needed.
* Second, the land is a mix of wetlands and hills, and these features would need to be addressed.
* Finally, in conjunction with topography, the trail would need to be constructed in a manner to minimize potential effects on both owners and neighbors.

**Would trail users park in the Charlesview neighborhood to use the trail?**

* Not likely. Experience on the Holliston and Milford portions of the Upper Charles Trail shows that most people who come from other areas park in trail head parking lots.
* Parking is readily available at the Loop Road and the Hughes Farm Trail on Hayden Rowe, as well as at the Milford trail head on Hayden Rowe.
* Most users accessing the trail from midpoints would be Charlesview residents.

**What does the Trail Club recommend for the surface of the trail?**

* The Trails Club recommends that the trail be a Class 5 stone dust trail like Holliston’s UCT.
* The UCTC is recommending that the trail be asphalt, similar to the Milford UCT.
* The cost of a stone dust trail is about a tenth of the cost of asphalt.

Further questions please contact Peter LaGoy at [peter\_lagoy@msn.com](mailto:peter_lagoy@msn.com).

**FACT SHEET 2**

**Cost Analysis for Stone Dust vs. Asphalt Paved SUPs**

**Upper Charles Trail in Hopkinton**

**Peter LaGoy/Hopkinton Trails Club**

**Summary: Stone dust Class 5 SUP costs one tenth of a DOT-preferred asphalt Class 5 SUP**

**Two quotes paraphrased:**

“Stone dust trails typically cost one tenth the cost of asphalt trails.”

Robert Weidknecht, Trail Expert formerly of Beals & Thomas

“The cost of the surface doesn’t have a major effect on trail costs”

VHB Engineers

The issue: We’ve been arguing which is correct, when both are correct.

**Actual Costs for Completed Hopkinton Stone Dust Shared Use Paths (SUPs)**

**Trail Length Cost Cost per mile**

Center Trail 0.6 mi $95,000 $158,000

Cntr Tr Ph 2 0.2 mi $40,000 $200,000

Echo Tr 0.6 mi $65,000 $108,000

Hughes Tr 0.45 mi $80,000 $178,000

Mdl Sch XC 0.4 $63,000\* $158,000

**Total 2.25 mi $343,000 $152,000**

\*Cost to complete; not final at this time

**Costs for Engineered Stone Dust SUP**

Hopkinton 2.25 mi $152,000

Holliston 6.4 mi $50,000

Medfield 1.3 mi $181,000

**Summary of Costs for Stone Dust SUP: <$200,000 per mile as estimate**

**Costs for DOT Preferred/Asphalt Paved Shared Use Path (SUP)**

B&T and VHB engineering estimate: $2,000,000 per mile as estimate

Typical Road cost estimate: $5,000,000 per mile as estimate

DOT Preferred SUP is < half road width, without shoulder, curbing, and extensive drainage

**Summary of Costs for DOT Preferred/Asphalt Paved: $2,000,000 per mile as estimate**

**(Fact sheet 2, page 2)**

**Trail Cost Differences**

Stone Dust SUP: $200,000 per mile as estimate

Asphalt Paved SUP: $2,000,000 per mile as estimate

**Basis for Difference**

Stone dust SUP

Follows state guidelines but only needs to meet town expectations:

Limited, if any, survey (Lidar based)

Wetlands mapping only as necessary

Minimal plans

No ENF

Requires design/build approach

DOT Preferred Asphalt SUP

Bureaucratic Public Works Project (mini-road); DOT engineers expect to see:

Survey

Wetlands mapping

ENF (only required for asphalt paved)

Detailed Plans (e.g., 10%, 25%, 75%, 100% design)

Bid release (Typically separate engineer/constructor)

Stormwater management

Fencing/guardrails

Extensive signage

Surface material (typically asphalt)

Numerous other items

**Summary: Stone dust Class 5 SUP costs one tenth of a DOT-preferred asphalt Class 5 SUP, AND the surface material for a DOT-preferred SUP is only a small factor in cost**

**FACT SHEET 3**

**Trail Types for Different Primary Trail Uses**

**Upper Charles Trail in Hopkinton**

**Peter LaGoy/Hopkinton Trails Club**

**Summary: Stone Dust Class 5 Trails and DOT-preferred Class 5 Trails (typically asphalt) are both Shared Use Paths but with different focuses.**

Issue: Department of Transportation preferred SUPs are commuter first, recreation second paths, while Stone dust SUPs are recreation first/commuter second paths.

**Primary Purpose: Bike Commuter Trail versus Recreation Use Path**

Recreation-focused Stone Dust SUP:

Primary Uses:

Pedestrian Travel (Walking, Running, Dog walking)

Leisure Biking

Wheelchair/Stroller Use

Equestrian Use

Secondary Uses (not ideal for these purposes):

Bike Commuters

Race Wheelchairs

Roller blades

Examples: Hopkinton/Holliston; (Milford)

DOT-Preferred Asphalt Paved SUP:

Primary Uses:

Bike Commuters

Race Wheelchairs

Roller blades

Secondary Uses:

Walking

Leisure Biking

Wheelchair/Stroller Use

Secondary Uses (not ideal for these purposes):

Running

Dog walking

Equestrian Use

Examples: Minuteman Trail in Lexington/Urban Rail Trails

**FACT SHEET 4**

**Hopkinton’s Best Shared Use Path Option Considering**

**Costs, Use, and Timing**

**Upper Charles Trail in Hopkinton**

**Peter LaGoy/Hopkinton Trails Club**

**Summary and Conclusion: For Hopkinton, a Recreation-Focused Stone Dust Class 5 SUP is More Appropriate; Cheaper; and Faster to Build**

**Costs to Residents: Stone Dust SUP versus DOT-Preferred Asphalt/Stone dust SUP**

Stone Dust Recreation-focused SUP: $200,000 per mile

DOT/Public Works Asphalt SUP: $2,000,000 per mile

Engineering Costs: 10-25% of total (10% = $200,000)

Construction Costs: $1,800,000

Town costs: Engineering (10%) plus 10% construction

$200,000 + $180,000 = $380,000 per mile\*

\*Town pays overruns plus state tax share

Maintenance costs are typically lower for stone dust; replacement costs for asphalt paths can be high

**Expected Trail Use:**

Hopkinton/Holliston/Milford-type Use (Recreation first) versus Minuteman/Urban rail trail use

Recreational Use for Walk/Run Community

**Timing:**

Recreational-focused SUP: Construction start in 2022

DOT-funded combined asphalt/stone dust SUP: Construction start TBD; 2027 earliest???

**Hopkinton-Specific Factors**

Many in Hopkinton have expressed a desire to continue our history of stone dust SUPs

Hopkinton has history of Volunteerism on Major Projects

Stone Dust SUPs

Plantings on West Main

Gazebo

Fountain

**FACT SHEET 5**

**Trail Club Alternative Routes and Benefits**

**Upper Charles Trail in Hopkinton**

**Peter LaGoy/Hopkinton Trails Club**

**Attached Map 1 shows Route**

**(**Hughes Trail to Echo Trail consistent with UCTC Concept)

North Section: Center Trail to Hughes Trail runs west of Charlesview neighborhood

South Section: Hughes Trail to Milford Trail Parking using Echo Trail

**Trails Club Alternative is a wooded trail, away from busy roadway, and is safer**

**North Section of Trails Club Alternative: Issues and Benefits**

* Easement or purchase of land owned by Colella family
* Easement or purchase of land owned by Chirco
* Easement or purchase of land owned by Gorman (Chap 61) or Alternative B (**Map 2**)
* Wetland and topographical issues
* Crossing of new Chamberlain Extension Road
* Avoids two crossings of Hayden Rowe St
* Avoids possible crossing of Chestnut Street
* Avoids need for costly safety signals and lights
* Avoids long section along Hayden Rowe and numerous easements
* Avoids area of new potential elementary school site
* Avoids wetland near McDermott Way
* Avoids two crossings of Loop Road

**South Section of Trails Club Alternative: Issues and benefits**

* Easement or purchase of property at south end of Echo Trail
* Trail needed along Hayden Rowe in front of two houses and three driveways
* Pedestrian bridge needed over Rt 85
* Incorporates existing Echo Trail
* Avoids crossing of Hayden Rowe St at Granite Street
* Avoids field along Hayden Rowe with potential wetland issues
* Avoids easement required for Cornell parcel
* Avoids easement for portion in new proposed subdivision
* Avoids complicated construction with wetlands and bedrock issues in College Rock
* Avoids over 100 foot wide stretch of ponded water near Milford line

**FACT SHEET 6**

**Alternative Route – UCTC Segments 5 and 6**

**Upper Charles Trail in Hopkinton**

**Peter LaGoy/Hopkinton Trails Club**

**The Trails Club Alternative would be a spur trail to replace UCTC Segments 5 and 6**

Building on the main UCT extending to the west around Charlesview, the Trails Club’s Alternative for UCTC’s Segment 5 and 6 would be a spur trail using only Segment 5 of the so-called Campus Connector. The spur builds on the work already done by the UCTC. Starting at Hayden Rowe and using the existing stone dust path, the trail would then narrow to a 4-5 foot wide boardwalk (sufficient for pedestrians) through the wetlands, continue to a standard 10 foot wide stone dust path to cross the Loop Road and continue along the former railbed. The trail would bear right at the intersection to parking lot J, and extend through the woods, crossing the stream on a farmer’s bridge and crossing the Loop Road just west of Parking Lot H. The trail would then extend west along the Middle School cross country course to intersect with Center Trail and the main UCT.

**Spur trail through school campus (Map 3): Issues and benefits**

* Uses existing farmer’s bridge to cross wetland stream
* Crosses Loop Road between speed bumps and on straightaway
* Uses existing path along Loop Road to reach Center Trail
* Minimizes effects on neighbors on McDermott Way
* Avoids crossing Loop Road on curve
* Minimizes impacts to wetlands west of McDermott Way
* Avoids bike route crossing of Hayden Rowe
* Avoids concerns regarding major trail by elementary schools