



May 12, 2009

Secretary Ian Bowles
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

RE: Environmental Notification Form (ENF)
First Herring Brook Pedestrian Bridge, Scituate, MA
MEPA # 14405

Dear Mr. Bowles:

WalkBoston is the Commonwealth's leading advocate for pedestrians and safe walking. WalkBoston has worked for over 19 years to promote walking, and in recent years has led the state's movement toward safer paths and sidewalks for pedestrians in all communities.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the ENF for the First Herring Brook Pedestrian Bridge in Scituate. The ENF documents the Town's plan to construct a pedestrian bridge at the site of a former railroad crossing of a tidal stream. The bridge is part of a walking path called the Driftway Trail, a roadside route from Scituate Harbor along Jericho Road, Front Street, and Kent Street/New Kent Street to Driftway/New Driftway Road. The trail will extend to a point across the street from the new location of the Greenbush Station of the MBTA's commuter rail line on New Driftway Road. At that location, the trail turns into the former railroad right-of-way through the tidal marshes to the North River, the border between Scituate and Marshfield.

WalkBoston is heartily in favor of networks of walkways in all municipalities, and applauds Scituate for leading the way with a plan for trails throughout the Town. The trails will undoubtedly encourage more people to walk in Scituate.

We are especially hopeful that the trail system will encourage more children to walk to school and more local people to walk to neighborhood centers like the Greenbush Village served by the commuter rail line. It should assist senior citizens to get regular exercise in an interesting setting. It will be a teaching aid for all who are interested in the tidal marshes that are such a prominent element of many coastal towns. This bridge is a major improvement that will allow walkers into the marshland, much of which is Scituate parkland. The 10-foot tides in First Herring Brook make the site a dramatic place to visit.

It is promising, too that this improvement has the potential of leading toward an ever longer trail system which could be formed by bridging the North River and continuing into a path network in Marshfield.

We wish you well in this proposal. The Conservation Commission reported to us that funding for the Driftway Trail may soon be available, and we hope that comes about. Please let us know if we can do anything to help. You are certainly on the right track!

Sincerely,

Wendy Landman
Executive Director

Robert Sloane
Senior Planner

Cc Mark Stewart, Chairman Scituate Conservation Commission
Mark Fenton, Scituate resident and walking advocate

MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES MORE WALKABLE

Old City Hall | 45 School Street | Boston MA 02108 | T: 617.367.9255 | F: 617.367.9285 | info@walkboston.org | www.walkboston.org