

Letter: Protect pond at all costs

Town Crier, Thursday, June 30, 2005

To the editor:

I attended the hearing last Thursday on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and was highly distressed to learn that neither the town nor the consultants had any awareness that the railroad pathway as it now exists is already very popular and multi-use. Thus calling this proposal anything other than a bike path is either highly uninformed or very misleading.

Joggers, walkers, birdwatchers, naturalists, equestrians, dog walkers, teachers and students regularly use this beautiful and sensitive environment. To say nothing of the red fox, deer, muskrats, otters, mink, coyote, beavers, porcupines, raccoons, skunks, martins and other wildlife that live there. The area also supports perhaps the only active great blue heron rookery in Concord. Apparently the only thing missing from this wonderful conservation area are bicycle riders racing by. Forgive my lack of sympathy.

I was equally distressed to learn that neither the town nor the consultants had any understanding of the current fragility of the White Pond area and severe negative impact any additional use would have. To suggest that creating "scenic overlooks" of the water with signs that say "please do not go in the water" will prevent sightseers from going in the water when they can see others already in the water is sheer fantasy! Any bicycle path which is built must circumvent the White Pond area by a wide margin regardless of cost.

So - if I remember my facts correctly - we are talking about spending about \$4 million dollars to cut down trees and flatten natural watershed banks in order to widen railside pathways which are already multi-use in order to lay 1.5 to 3 miles of macadam through one of our town's most eco-sensitive and beautiful areas so a few bicyclists - most of whom live out of town - can ride from Lowell to Framingham. Forgive my lack of enthusiasm. Rather, I would like to invite the rest of our Concord neighbors to come enjoy this wonderful local resource as it now exists.

Priscilla Clark

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