



The Crescent

THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

FALL 2012

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CCCT Annual Meeting – June 11, 2012

by Ron Tripp, Chair, CCCT

Along with a variety of Coalition members and guests, the board of the Coalition for The Capital Crescent Trail met for our annual meeting on June 11th in Elm Street Park in Bethesda. Although the weather forecast was less than favorable, it turned out to be a wonderful June evening for the annual gathering. The predicted rains started well after the meeting broke up. Joining us were several representatives of Montgomery County Parks, including Parks Director Mary Bradford, the Parks Manager for the region covering the trail, Jeff Devlin, David Tobin, Manager for Community Partnerships, and several officers of the Montgomery County Park Police. We were honored to have County Council Members Floreen and Berliner join us as well.

Greg Drury, the chair of our subcommittee on Light Rail issues briefed on the status of The Purple Line and the impact on the Bethesda tunnel. It was noted that funding for this project remains in question, as does having the trail inside the tunnel, although the board is not prepared to give up on keeping the trail within the tunnel. The Board and subcommittee continue to follow these issues.

Peter Gray reported on a project we have been working on for years, The River Road Plaza. Peter was able to announce positive news on necessary approvals and we can now look forward to a ground breaking (more on The River Road Plaza elsewhere in this newsletter). We also presented Peter with a 'gold' shovel for the ground breaking.

CCCT continues to hold Bells-n-Whistles giveaways about once a month as personal schedules allow. Watch the website for details. These giveaways take place on a weekend. Watch the website for dates, times, and location.

What has been known as 'Lot-31' in downtown Bethesda has been closed. This is the parking lot on the opposite side of the trail from the car dealership. At this writing there is a temporary trail taking users from the Bethesda Rest Plaza to Bethesda Avenue. The developer should soon rebuild that section of the trail, along with a protective construction site covering that will remain in place for most of two years during construction. This project is the reason for the utility work that closed the Bethesda Avenue crosswalk and caused our water fountain at the Bethesda Plaza to be dry much of the summer. Hopefully, both situations have changed by the time you read this.

The existing board members expressed their interest in continuing on the board. As a board, we offered no other candidates, but the membership nominated two additional candidates for the board. The following people were thus nominated to serve on the board for the coming year: Peter Gray, Jenny Sue Dunner, Tony Marra, Wayne Phyllaier, Charlie Wellander, Jennifer Longsworth, Greg Drury, John Dugger, Ron Tripp, Scott Snyder and Erica Kane. The board was elected by acclamation. At the July meeting, the Board elected the following officers for the next year: Ron Tripp, Chair, Tony Marra, Vice Chair; Wayne Phyllaier, Treasurer; Jennifer Longsworth, Secretary.





THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

- Board Members 2012-13
 Ron Tripp, Chair
 Tony Marra, Vice Chair
 Jennifer Longsworth, Secretary
 Wayne Phyllaier, Treasurer
 Greg Drury
 John Dugger
 Jenny Sue Dunner
 Peter Gray
 Erica Kane
 Scott Snyder
 Charlie Wellander

The Crescent is published three times a Board year (June-June) by the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail (CCCT), P.O. Box 30703, Bethesda, MD 20824 phone: (202) 234-4874.

CCCT is a non-profit citizens' group promoting a first class development of the 11.2 mile rail-to-Trail conversion from Georgetown, D.C. to Silver Spring, MD for multi-purpose, recreational use.

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We request that all submissions for *The Crescent* be sent to the post office box or e-mail noted below.

CONTACT THE CCCT:
 contact@cctrail.org
 P.O. Box 30703
 Bethesda, MD 20824
 202-234-4874

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
 www.cctrail.org
 for Trail updates and events!

Welcome New Board Members

SCOTT SNYDER

I am an attorney employed by Travelers Insurance and have been a resident of Bethesda for just over 10 years.

I joined the Board as I am an avid user of the Trail. I occasionally bike on the Trail, but principally I am on the Trail as a runner, three or four days a week. I hope to participate in the established tradition of the Board's mission of maintaining, protecting and improving the trail for all users.

ERICA KANE

I am business owner and mother of two children. I have been in the DC area since childhood and live close to the trail.

I started biking seriously 5 years ago and the first place I went was the Capital Crescent Trail. I still bike the trail quite often and walk there as well. We are very fortunate to have such a beautiful resource. I joined the Board to help keep the trail in good condition and available for everyone to enjoy.

CCCT

TRESTLE OVER ROCK CREEK PARK
 Opened in May 2003, making the connection into Silver Spring possible without dipping down to Creek level. Following an intensive campaign by the Coalition, the Montgomery County Council voted \$1.3 million to rebuild the trestle. The Coalition paid \$75,000 of the additional funds needed to help build observation decks.

TUNNEL UNDER WISCONSIN AVENUE
 Opened in 1998 following a campaign by the Coalition for the County Council to fund the \$900,000 needed for a trail in the tunnel. The Coalition spent \$45,000 for better trail lighting and routing.

HISTORY SURROUNDS THE TRAIL
 A guide to points of interest along the Trail can be found on the Coalition website. www.cctrail.org

THE "GEORGETOWN BRANCH TRAIL" IS THE TEMPORARY NAME FOR THE FUTURE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL, AND HAS THIS NAME ONLY UNTIL A DECISION IS MADE AS TO WHETHER OR NOT A TRANSITWAY WILL BE BUILT ON THAT SEGMENT.

For a detailed four-color map of the Capital Crescent Trail with the historical perspectives, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to
 CCCT, Box 30703
 Bethesda, MD 20824

For a more detailed map see the website: www.cctrail.org

CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL
 District of Columbia & Montgomery County, Md.

COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

River Road Plaza *By Peter Gray*

It was an exciting 17th day of May when the Montgomery County Planning Board met to officially take up CCCT's proposed plan for a Plaza and rest area at the intersection of the Trail and River Road. Countless hours spent by CCCT board members in meetings with County officials, area business persons and our landscape architects, Iris Miller and Lila Fendrick, over a three year period finally were coming to fruition. Without any objection, the Planning Board approved the Coalition's plan for the Plaza, including two seating walls, a Pergola (an architectural feature with vertical posts or pillars that usually support cross-beams), a water fountain, map kiosk, wavy path parallel to the current driveway, benches along the wavy path, two 'turtle' mounds, LED lighting along the path, bike racks and more. The Coalition is especially grateful to Whole Foods and Security Public Storage for committing to a few years of funding to take care of certain maintenance issues that the new park will create. The Coalition also is making a comparable commitment financially to cover those additional maintenance costs. In the next few months, there are yet more procedural obstacles to overcome as well as a crucial fund raising effort to help pay for the Plaza plan itself. While our bank account can currently cover most of those costs, CCCT hopes to raise money from surrounding businesses and organizations as well as from users of the Trail. We will be reaching out to members and other users to help cover the construction costs in order to shore up Coalition finances so that we can continue to fund our usual work, the upcoming maintenance costs of the Plaza, and to have reserves to serve Trail users needs in the future. Predictions about when construction will actually

begin are risky, but the Coalition hopes the project will be completed sometime next year, or in 2014 at the latest. Look at our web site for artistic renderings of the Plaza and we hope you will respond generously when we ask for your support of the Plaza. We feel strongly that the Plaza will enhance use of the Trail by providing another, more elaborate place along the Trail, to stop, get a drink of water, and enjoy the amenities the Plaza will provide.

**Support the River Road Plaza
to help enhance the
Capital Crescent Trail!**

Thank you
Wholefoods and Lulu Lemon
for getting us started!

Your donation can be memorialized with
a personal paver placed within the plaza.
Contact Peter at contact@cctrail.org
for more information.



\$150,000
\$140,000
\$130,000
\$120,000
\$110,000
\$100,000
\$90,000
\$80,000
\$70,000
\$60,000
\$50,000
\$40,000
\$30,000
\$20,000
\$10,000

Did You Know? *By Wayne Phyllaier*

Did you know there are 22 mileposts along the trail?

The first mile marker, at 0.0, is at "Georgetown Junction" where the Georgetown Branch meets the Metropolitan Branch of the historic Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. This is at Talbot Avenue in Lyttonsville. The next mile marker is along the Georgetown Branch corridor where the off-road Interim CCT begins at Stewart Avenue, at mile 0.31. There are milemarkers every ½ mile from Georgetown Junction to the last, mile 10.0, near the southern end of the trail at Georgetown.

The CCCT donated and installed the milemarkers as each section of the trail was built. The posts are railroad ties salvaged from the old railbed. There are mile signs on two sides of each post. The first signs are of "breadboard" construction, where several boards are held together by screws. The trail is no longer new, and many of the mile signs and several of the posts are starting to fail. You may have noticed that CCCT has been replacing the failing mile signs.



The Silver Spring Transit Center. The Red Line Metro entrance is on the right. The ramp up to the Metropolitan Branch Trail can be seen under construction at the center.

The new signs look much like the old ones but are made of solid cedar, to better resist rot and the occasional attack by a kamikaze grass mower. CCCT began replacing the signs in 2009 and 25 of the 46 mile signs have been replaced so far. CCCT volunteers plan to replace another 12 this year.

Connecting to the Trail *By Wayne Phyllaier*

Plans are moving forward for two important connections to the Capital Crescent Trail – one at Bethesda and the other in Silver Spring.

Pearl Street in Bethesda:

Montgomery County is considering a proposal to provide a safe temporary access to the Georgetown Branch Trail from the southern terminus of Pearl Street, by constructing a 6-foot wide ramp and stair structure. Pearl Street ends just short of the north side of the Georgetown Branch Trail near the east end of the Bethesda Tunnel. This project will serve as an interim connection until the Purple Line Light Rail is constructed. An easement across one private property will be required. The estimated cost is \$180K, with \$130K of this sum provided by an adjacent developer and \$50K from county funds.



The furnished 'volunteer' pathway up the bank at the end of Pearl Street. The sofa has since been removed.

A public hearing was held on May 16, 2012 to assist the County Executive in determining whether to authorize construction of the project. CCCT Board Member Wayne Phyllaier presented written and oral testimony supporting this trail connection. Pearl Street passes by the B-CC High School and connects the Georgetown Branch trail via Cheltenham Drive to the Bethesda Trolley Trail. Many people are now accessing the trail from the end of Pearl Street by using a volunteer pathway down a steep, eroded bank where exposed tree roots serve as improvised steps. It is not just nimble students from B-CC High School who use this very hazardous path to get to the trail. We have been very fortunate no one has been hurt there yet.

The Town of Chevy Chase and several cycling advocates also gave testimony in support of this connection, and there was no testimony against. The Hearing Examiner, former councilmember Mike Subin, appeared to understand the large

public benefit this connection can provide. A favorable finding will meet a legal requirement to enable the county to "take" the easement to construct the ramp. No schedule has been presented for construction, but we could see something in the not too distant future.

Metropolitan Branch Trail at the Silver Spring Transit Center:

The Maryland Transit Administration held a "Neighborhood Work Group" on the Purple Line design for the Silver Spring Transit Center, on May 30, 2012. CCCT Board Members Greg Drury and Wayne Phyllaier participated. The MTA presentation, drawings and maps of their proposed design are available at the MTA Purple Line website, www.purplelinemd.com, at the "Public Involvement" section.

The MTA presented a concept for bringing the Purple Line and the Capital Crescent Trail over Colesville Road and through the new transit center on an aerial structure that would have four levels. The Purple Line tracks and station platform would be at the top level, while the CCT would be on the third level. A second level "mezzanine" would be used for transit users to access the MARC platforms and the stairs and elevators to the Purple Line platform. The ground level would give access to the Red Line Metro much as it is now.

The proposed four level system would minimize conflicts between trail users and the many transit users crossing to the Purple Line, MARC, and Red Line platforms. Trail users would have access to the elevators to the other levels from the trail at the middle of the station. The CCT would meet the Metropolitan Branch Trail at the southern end of the station, and trail users would have access there to the street grid via Bonifant/Ramsey Streets and to a ramp down to the first level of the station and the Red Line Metro entrance.

Overall the design for the CCT through the station was about as good as can be expected for such a busy place. The MTA design should succeed in keeping cyclist/pedestrian conflicts at a minimum in the heart of the most heavily used transit center in the state. But CCCT asked MTA to work to "redo" the design of the junction point between the CCT and the MetBranch Trail at the south end of the station. The CCT meets the MetBranch at a "T" there, so that cyclists would be forced to stop to make the tight turn safely. MTA agreed to make their best effort to straighten the junction, even though the space available is very limited. CCCT will continue to follow this closely.

Construction of the Purple Line will not begin until 2015 at the very earliest, and may be delayed well past that by difficulty securing construction funding. The CCCT is not taking a position for or against the Purple Line, but it is important for CCCT to follow the design development closely. This may be the future of the Trail, even if not the near future.

Loughborough Mill *By Tony Marra*

At the Five Mile Post on the CCT, you may have noticed two markers that describe the Loughborough Mill. You may have even read the markers. However, there is more to the story than could be fit onto the historical markers.

The mill's name derives from the man who built it, Nathan Loughborough. He worked for the U.S. Government when it was headquartered in Philadelphia and then relocated to the new Federal capital of Washington, D.C. in 1800. At the time, Loughborough was acting Comptroller of the U.S. Treasury in the Administration of President John Adams. During his life, he had a number of other positions. He was a public notary, banker, tobacco farmer, and investor in the C & O Canal and Rockville Turnpike. He also commanded a cavalry company during the War of 1812.

Loughborough originally lived in Georgetown, but later purchased a 250 acre piece of property in the Tenleytown area of Northwest D.C. He constructed his home near the current location of American University on a road that today bears his name – Loughborough Road. One interesting story about his D.C. residency is that he refused to pay local taxes on the grounds of "taxation without representation". He was sued by the U.S. Marshal and, not surprisingly, the Loughborough defense did not prevail.

In 1808, Loughborough purchased a large tract of land near River Road, just east of the CCT, known as the Milton Farm. The property encompassed much of what is today known as the Green Acres and Westmoreland Hills residential neighborhoods, as well as parts of the current Little Falls Parkway and CCT. An existing building on the land, which had been a trading post and tavern and is dated to the early 1700s, became the foundation for Loughborough's new manor house. The home, referred to as the Milton house, still stands on Allandale Road, very close to the CCT, and is considered one of the oldest and best preserved surviving homes in Montgomery County. Loughborough turned the



Montgomery County property into a large tobacco plantation. He also grew wheat on the plantation and built a water mill (the Loughborough Mill) to grind the wheat grain into flour. Loughborough died in 1852 and the plantation passed on to his son and grandson. The property remained in the Loughborough family until 1924.

According to some stories, the Loughborough Mill was destroyed during the Civil War by Union soldiers because the Loughborough family supported the Confederacy. More likely, it was just abandoned as parts of the Milton Farm property were sold off and it simply succumbed to the effects of weather and neglect.

Bells and Whistles *By Jennifer Longworth*



We started a Bells and Whistles program to promote safety on the trail and we successfully install up to 100 bells each time we are "open for business". We can

hear our success when the many bikes for which we have installed bells go noisily by our table! Now that the Bethesda parking lot is closed, we have relocated to the trail at Dorset Avenue in Kenwood. Look for us - about once a month – usually on Saturday – we set up a table from about 10-12. **The Bells and installation are free!** So if you don't have a bell yet, bring your bike and we will install it for you.

We want to make the trail a safe place. Help us by ringing your bell or, if you don't have one, give a verbal warning that you are passing. It's the courteous and safe thing to do!

Please note - we do not just give out bells, we want to make sure they are installed and ready to use on the trail!



Trail Safety

by Ron Tripp, Chair, CCCT

Nearly every month the Coalition receives complaints about bicyclists. Others show up in the newspapers. Most complaints come from pedestrians, but some actually come from other cyclists. The simple fact is there will always be a few who will give all bikers a bad name with the inconsiderate nature of their riding. Likewise, there will always be a few walkers determined to make passage difficult for bikers. We all need to respect each other. Success has made The Capital Crescent a crowded trail, especially on weekends.

Many of us on the board are cyclists, and none of us want to be thought of as dangerous or inconsiderate riders. But it doesn't take much for all of us to look bad.

Bikers, expect to see enforcement. The police simply cannot ignore some of the abuses and complaints. Walkers, be aware of what's around you. Expect bikes. A busy trail is not a good place to gather and carry on conversations. Distractions are dangerous. Whether, biking, jogging, or walking, please do not place anything in your ears. Listen to the trail traffic, not your phone/music via headphones or earbuds.

In recent years we've seen the speed limits posted on the trail. Personally I'm not sure this accomplishes much. With or without signs, the speed limit on most trails is 15 MPH. Early in the morning when nearly all of the traffic consists of down-bound commuters, the speed is not an issue, even though most are traveling at about 17 or 18 MPH. When the trail is crowded, especially with children present, it's irresponsible to pass pedestrians at speeds as fast as

15 MPH, even if it is legal. Bikers, please consider the conditions and use some common sense. Hey, we're all human and want to get our 'speed on' and may not be in a mood to relate to an older pedestrian on a joyful stroll with his equally fragile granddaughter, let's try not to reprimand anyone and cause even more bad will.

Walkers, please expect and allow bicyclists to come around you. It is a shared use trail. I realize that most of the bikes seem to be traveling too fast. Depending on the conditions, they may be too fast; but legally, most are within or close to the speed limit. If you're walking and a bike is going past you at the speed limit, it's moving at 5 times your speed; more if it's coming from the opposite direction. Yes, to a pedestrian, it's fast.

Bikers, you're passing people at 5 or 6 times the speed they are moving at. Imagine a car passing you at 75 MPH ... it's the same thing. Slow down a bit as you go around and leave some space. And most importantly, announce your intentions, either verbally or with a bell. And every bicyclist on a shared-use trail should keep in mind that the slower means of transportation has the right-of-way. You may have to wait until it's safe to pass.

Finally, a simple 'Thank-You' now and then goes a long way toward diffusing tensions; much more so than some of the other words we hear. Please, safety requires a little effort on the part of all users.

CCCT Light Rail Updates <http://www.purplelinemd.com/>

To obtain up-to-date information about the Purple Line, please use the website noted above, which is administered by the Maryland Transit Authority and endorsed by Governor Martin O'Malley. As you will see, the website contains a wealth of information, including details about upcoming community meetings and summary briefings on meetings that have already occurred.

As we navigate the best way to blend the needs of our community, the politics, the agendas, and the fiscal demands/requirements I find it analogous to a nuclear cloud passing over. All the explosive repercussions of immediate need that may now be delayed for a decade – has sent a wave of constructive changes in preparation for the unknown.

So, as we use money already allocated and waiting – as in the new bike track in Bethesda as an alternate to the Air Rights tunnel; and some new monies allocated like the Silver Spring Transit station preparing for the Purple Line addition and including a new CCCT trail pass-through connecting the CCT to the Metropolitan Branch Trail resurrecting a 15 year+ old

dream of completing a Bike Beltway – we couldn't be happier – and we're seeing new energy, projects, committee improvements and plans as this threatening cloud pushes forward. We are leveraging this unique moment.

Still much depends on our system and negotiating with the powers that be to get the best changes, not just to fulfill a promise or get extra funds because of... but to be awesomely practical for our CCT patrons. *Then we will continue to carry the name Capital Crescent Trail proudly!*

A new promise to you is CCCT bringing you and our communities together in a town-hall format to maximize these choices along with WABA and other strategic stakeholders. Keep an eye out for notices.

If you have more ideas or would like to consider being invited to a Light Rail Committee meeting held by us, or being on the CCCT Light Rail Committee – please contact **Greg.Drury@gmail.com** or **202-674-8102**.

GET INVOLVED!



Consider contributing 5-10 hours a month by being a CCCT Board member – environmental committee, light rail committee and other needs. Contact ron.tripp@yahoo.com or 301-652-7940.

Are you thinking of becoming a CCT commuter?

Hundreds of cyclists use the CCT every day to get to work. It is a great way to lose some weight and lighten your gasoline bill. The Washington Area Bicyclist Association has a commuter assistance program to help new cycling commuters get started. See "Getting There By Bike" at their website, www.waba.org.

Now you may donate/renew with your credit card via the CCCT web site!
Visit www.cctrail.org to use our secured method.

Yes! I want to help complete the Capital Crescent Trail and make it safer and more pleasant to use!

Name(s) _____ (H) _____ (W) _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ E-mail _____

NEW MEMBER RENEWING MEMBER

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

- \$10 Basic Individual
- \$30 Contributor
- \$60 Path Finder
- \$100 Patron
- \$200 Trail Blazer
- \$500 Benefactor

A DETAILED FOUR-COLOR MAP OF THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL WITH HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES IS AVAILABLE AS A FOLDING POCKET MAP.

Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

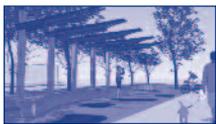
Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail
P.O. Box 30703
Bethesda, MD 20824

THIS MAP IS FREE TO ALL NEW MEMBERS.

Make your tax-deductible contribution checks payable to: The Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail. Mail to the address above. Or, visit our web site to donate/renew with a credit card.

Thanks for your efforts on behalf of the Trail! Here's an additional contribution of \$ _____ .

Membership is good for one year from the 15th day of the month that you join.



I Support the RIVER ROAD PLAZA. Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____ .

We are an all-volunteer organization. I am interested in volunteering, contact me for: Advocacy Events Trail Maintenance

We do not share our membership list with any organization except our affiliate organization, the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. CCCT is exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code and is qualified to receive tax-deductible contributions.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE, www.cctrail.org, FOR ACTION ALERTS and TRAIL UPDATES.



CCCT
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Bethesda, MD 20824

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Trail Closed by Storm *by Ron Tripp, Chair, CCCT*

It is very seldom that The Capital Crescent Trail, or any part of it, is closed to users. Winter weather may keep people away, downed trees will cause others to lift their bikes over the obstructions and construction may cause delays. But like most of you, we hate to see the trail closed. Unfortunately, a section of the trail was closed for a few days and others were blocked by debris, following the severe storms that had hit the area at the end of June.

Trees, branches, limbs and leaves littered the trail. Fences along portions of the interim trail were down on top of the roadway. Users were walking and biking over top of chain link fencing near the Country Club. And none of that was enough to consider the trail closed. South of Massachusetts Avenue, large caliper trees came down over the trail, bringing the power lines with them. This was a dangerous situation. Montgomery County Parks Maintenance Official, Jeff Devlin, made the decision and closed off that section of the trail until it could be made safe again. It was the right call.

On the evening of July 3rd PEPCO crews were on trail replacing poles and restoring the power lines. By the morning of the 5th, PEPCO was gone, Parks crews had removed the down trees from the trail and the trail was open.

The CCCT Board commends Mr. Devlin for keeping trail users away from a dangerous situation. We also note that Montgomery Parks accomplished an amazing amount of clean-up work in short order on their section of the trail, as did Montgomery County DPW on the interim trail, and the National Park Service on the D.C. section of the trail. The storm did a lot of damage, the remnants of which can still be seen, but trail surface was usable within days.

