



The Capital Crescent Trail

Vol. VII No. 2

Fall 1994

Interim Trail Proposed -- Passes Council

A resolution to establish an interim trail from Bethesda to Silver Spring passed the Montgomery County Council July 19. The Coalition had pushed hard for this step and Chairman Scott Hall said "this is our biggest step forward in a couple of years."

The future use of the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) corridor between Silver Spring and Bethesda has been a hotly

debated issue since as early as September, 1986 when the Montgomery County Council approved the use of the former railroad right-of-way for transit, recreation, conservation, and/or utilities. Montgomery County will not put a permanent trail in this portion of the CCT corridor until it makes a decision on whether to install a transitway between Silver Spring and Bethesda along with the trail. Since this decision may take

years, the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail has advocated establishing an interim trail which involves removing the railroad rails and ties, and compacting the railroad bed. These interim steps would have to be completed in any event for any of the uses being considered by the County, there would be effectively no additional cost for this interim usage.

(Continued on page 2)

Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan (Tunnel)

In the process of completing the Bethesda Central Business District (CBD) sector plan this summer the Montgomery County Council modified language in the plan that threatened to exclude the trail altogether from the tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue. However, while the final plan provides that there may be space for the trail in the tunnel, the plan says that space in the tunnel may be constrained by the transitway that has been proposed to accompany the trail between Bethesda and Silver Spring. In the worst case, the plan still says that the transitway could, if necessary, eliminate the trail from the tunnel. Earlier this summer, the Council voted to eliminate options for placing the transitway along Pearl Street and East-West Highway

leaving only options that would put the transitway in the tunnel.

The CCCT's goal is to establish a continuous trail that is kept intact on the trail's right-of-way. The Coalition will closely monitor future developments that could potentially displace the trail from the right-of-way, including the tunnel, causing users to negotiate busy streets of the central business district, impeding travel on the trail, and creating significant safety problems.

The Coalition will first work with the Maryland Mass Transit Administration (MDMTA) to create an environmental impact study (DEIS) being created to analyze transitway options between Bethesda and Silver

Spring. (The DEIS is the first of a number of studies that have to be done by MDMTA to secure federal funds for a transitway.) The CCCT plans to participate in the September 21 MDMTA initial scoping meeting, and future similar meetings, to ensure that the trail remains an integral part of any transitway proposal.

REACH THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL BY:

The CCT Information Line
(202) 234-4874 to hear a recording of events or to leave a message.

OR

INTERNET:

EWBROOKS@OASYS.DT.NAVY.MIL

Interim Trail Proposed -- Passes Council .. (cont'd)

On April 7, 1992 Councilmembers Isaia Leggett and Betty Ann Krahnke submitted a resolution to the Council in support of the CCT, that would establish an Interim Trail Task Force. The purpose of the task force is to provide recommendations to the Council on how to proceed with the establishment of an interim trail in the trail corridor between Bethesda and Silver Spring, without compromising long-term options for use of the right-of-way.

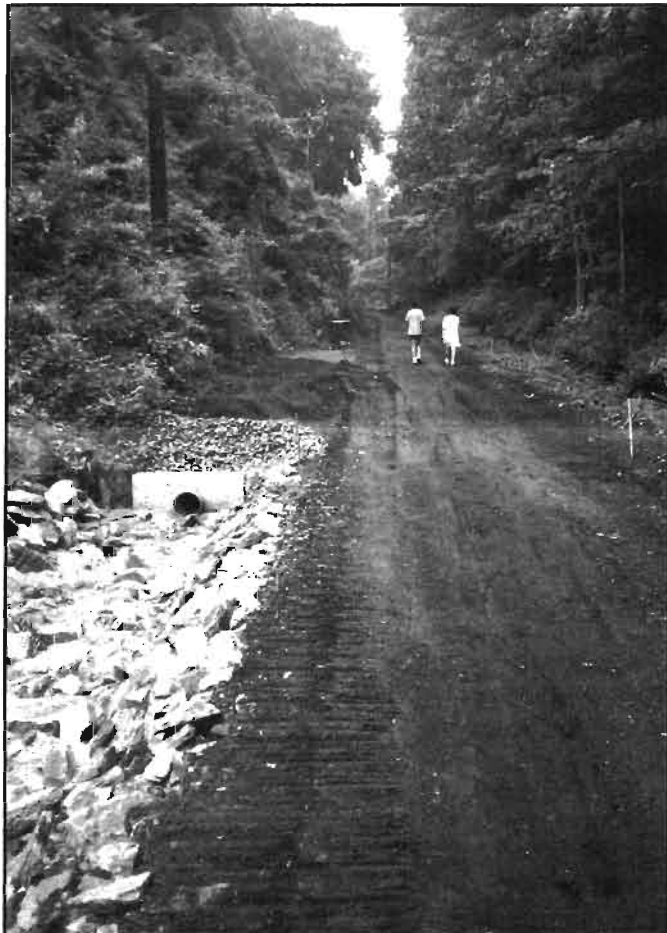
Councilmembers Leggett and Krahnke's resolution did not pass in committee. However, on July 19, 1994 the full council

voted in favor of the resolution to establish the Interim Trail Task Force. The resolution was slightly amended with the addition of one more voting member and the inclusion of language which states that the interim trail will not prejudice the ultimate use of the right-of-way. Voting in favor of the resolution were Councilmembers Leggett, Krahnke, Adams, Dacek, Ewing, Hanna, and Subin. Voting against were Councilmembers Berlage and Praisner. The CCCT wishes to thank WABA and its volunteers for their assistance in getting out an action alert before the Council meeting, as well as readers of

"DC BIKE" for their letters to the Council members.

The Task Force will be established in mid-September and will consist of 9 voting members representing the following groups: Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail; Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Coalition; Residents whose property adjoins the right-of-way; The Town of Chevy Chase; Action Committee for Transit; Columbia Country Club; Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce; Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce; League of Women Voters. The Task Force has 60 days to complete their study.

Stormwater Drain Mismanagement?

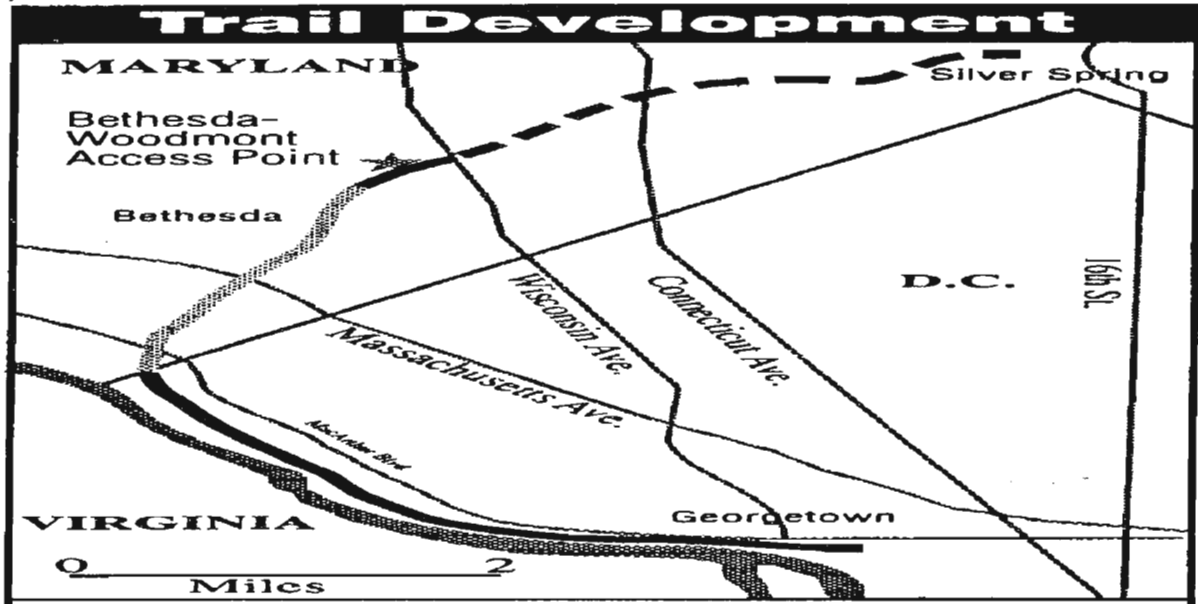





Trail users walk on unpaved portion of trail, where Montgomery County is currently installing some 20 infiltration trenches, between the DC line and River Road. Photo: Chris Brown

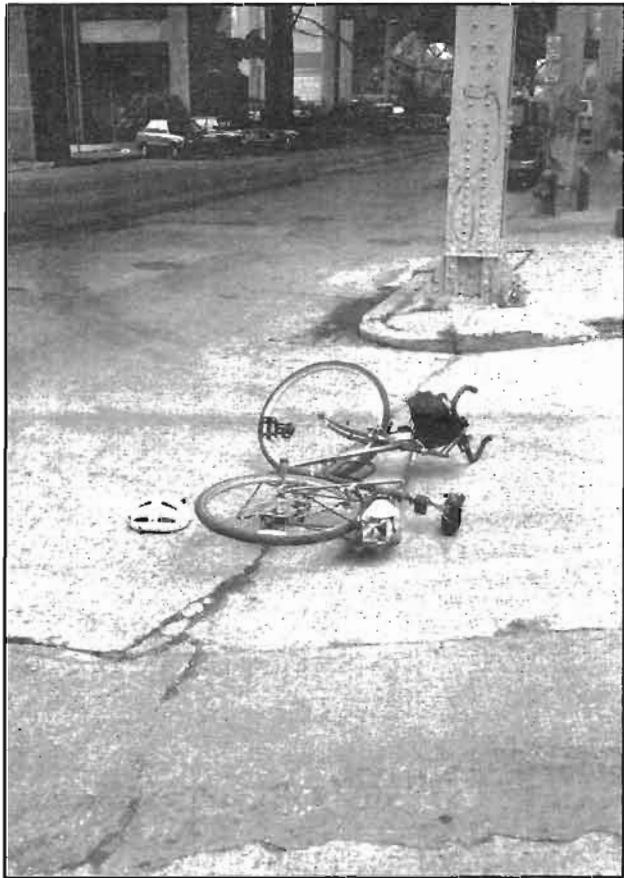
Over the past several months the Coalition has met with Ted Graham, Director of the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (MCDEP) and officials of Montgomery County Parks Department (MCPD) to discuss the Coalition's concerns over the proposed highly engineered structures. In the early part of the summer the Coalition presented a report to MCDEP and MCPD questioning the placement of infiltration trenches and a drainage pipe which are typically employed for managing run-off from a 12-lane interstate highway. The report suggested that the methods were seemingly inappropriate for a simple 10-foot wide hiker/biker trail. The Coalition also questioned the long-term effectiveness of the system, and the increased maintenance cost for upkeep of the elaborate infrastructure such as trenches which fill up with sediment needing to be "cleaned out" even if properly maintained. The Coalition argued that the natural capacity of the highly vegetated corridor would be sufficient to detain and filter stormwater.

In response to the Coalition's efforts, MCDEP and MCPD agreed to eliminate two of the twenty-two trenches but refused to abandon an engineered solution to managing stormwater in the corridor. The Coalition, not seeking to impede construction of the trail segment, has decided not to pursue the matter further but remains concerned that the development of other sections of the CCT and other trails in the county will be affected by the decision to go ahead with the installation of the trenches.

TRAIL HOT SPOTS



-  Development plans in review
-  Development to be completed 1994-1995
-  Section developed for use



With K Street under the Whitehurst Freeway fully paved during July scenes like this. . . .
Photo: Chris Brown

K Street Without the Accidents



. . . will be replaced by smooth riding for bicyclists.
Photo: Chris Brown

Work Continues (Slowly) on Arizona Avenue Trestle

According to the National Park Service, work is continuing at night to redeck and repaint the Arizona Avenue trestle. The project has experienced considerable vandalism, including cutting of chain link fence, but is still scheduled to be completed by December, 1994. Meanwhile for an alternative route to get from Fletchers Boat House to Massachusetts Avenue contact the CCT Hotline at (202) 234-4874.



Construction began on the Arizona Avenue Trestle in May but no visible signs of progress were displayed in July. Photo: Chris Brown

Bethesda Avenue Access for Cars Too?

Beautiful plantings at Bethesda Avenue are the work of the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (below), with financial contributions from the Coalition and local businesses; though some find the trail serves a double purpose: bike path and car sales area .



Photo: Henri Bartholomot

Off The Tracks

Welcome, New Coalition Groups!

Over the summer the following groups joined the Coalition:

Palisades Citizens
Potomac River Greenways Coalition
Potomac Valley Track Club
Riviera
Westmoreland Hills Garden Club

We're Now on the Map...

The Friendship Heights Metro map that is. Take a look at the lighted map the next time you are in the station.

Thanks for Responding to the Canary...

In our spring issue we inserted canary colored announcements asking folks to renew their membership. The response was fantastic. We've managed to pare down a database of more than 3000 to just over 750 and we have met our goal to update our database. It was quite costly and time consuming to produce and mail 3000+ newsletters. That means we can now save more than half of our newsletter expenses.

June 28

At our June 28 annual meeting held at Elm Street Park in Bethesda we celebrated three miles of completed trails, awarded volunteers, saw a sideshow and elected a new board. More than 50 people

showed for the event. Thanks go to the following volunteers for their donated time, effort and talents: *Nadine Dutcher, Barbara Braatz* and boardmembers *Chris Brown, Scott Hall* and *Margaret Marchak*. Special thanks to *Claude and Faith Broome, Bill Thompson* and *Sharley Hindelang* for their generous event-organizing assistance.

Board Elections

The Coalition elected the following members to the board on June 28: *Scott Hall*, Chairperson; *John Dugger*, Vice-Chair; *Jennifer Longsworth*, Secretary; *Rob Lyons*, Treasurer; *Charlie Wellander*, Assistant Treasurer; *Henri Bartholomot, Ernie Brooks, Chris Brown, Doug Engle, Margaret Marchak, Dena Yver* and WABA's *Ellen Jones*. We are excited about new volunteers *Jennifer Longsworth*, who has been a CCCT volunteer in the past and *Rob Lyons*, a Bethesda accountant, who has agreed to oversee the finances in conjunction with *Charlie Wellander*.

Are you a real estate lawyer, engineer, landscape architect or press agent?

If you do happen to have these skills and are willing to volunteer your time please give us a call and we'll be happy to put you to work. (The Coalition is also in search of people who have none of the skills mentioned above as well. That's right none of the above-mentioned skills are needed to be a volunteer.) The CCCT is at a crucial point in its existence where all sorts of

non-skilled and skilled people are needed. Now is also a good time to get involved if you are interested in exploring opportunities to become a boardmember for the upcoming June, 1995 - June, 1996 year. The next meeting is September 20, 7:00 p.m. at Bethesda Library, and as usual open to the public. See you there.

Reach the Capital Crescent by Internet!

For those of you who prefer to "surf the net" you can reach the Capital Crescent Trail through *Ernie Brooks*, "ewbrooks@oasys.dt.navy.mil" he'll process your request.

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YES! I WANT TO HELP CREATE THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

- \$60. Sponsoring Membership; includes T-shirt and subscription to *The Capital Crescent Trail* and action alerts for one year.
- \$25. Sustaining Membership; includes your name in our annual report, subscription to *The Capital Crescent Trail* and action alerts for one year.
- \$10. Annual Membership; subscription to *The Capital Crescent Trail* and action alerts for one year.

All contributions are tax-deductible - Please make checks payable to CCCT

I'D LIKE TO VOLUNTEER MY TIME, I WANT TO HELP WITH:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> advocacy | <input type="checkbox"/> telephoning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> assisting with CCCT mailings | <input type="checkbox"/> trail clearance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> researching | <input type="checkbox"/> event organizing |

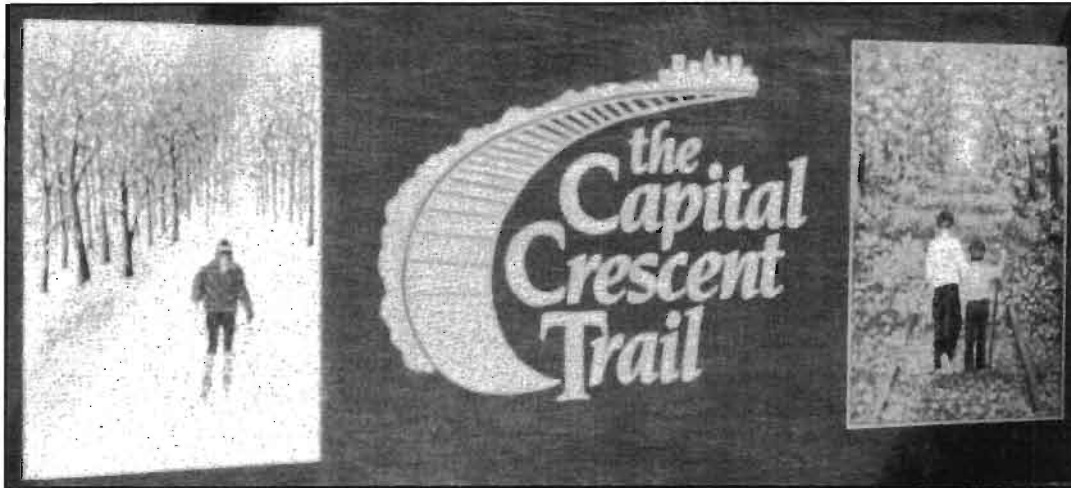
I know of an organization that may join the CCCT. The group is _____

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ (h) _____ (w)

Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail
P.O. Box 30703, Bethesda, MD 20824 Telephone 202-234-4874



In search of...the beautiful sign above; we seemed to have lost touch with it since 1991. Is this sitting in your basement collecting dust? Please contact the CCCT Hotline (202) 234-4874 so that we can once again make use of this great piece of work! Photo: Courtesy Chris Brown.

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Bethesda, MD 20824

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