



The Crescent

THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

Fall 2007
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Editor's Note: Development Affecting the Trail

This Newsletter Issue, as many in the past, reports ongoing CCCT efforts to protect, maintain and improve the internationally noted Crescent Trail at "trouble spots" such as the Air Rights Building Tunnel, the Woodmont East area (diagonally across from the Bethesda Trailhead), River Road, and the Palisades and Georgetown areas in DC.

A forthcoming matter of import to the CCCT, its members, and other trail users will arise next Spring when the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) will publish its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Purple Line proposed to run between New Carrollton and Bethesda. A key part of this project is the extension and paving of the CCT to the Silver Spring Metro. The MTA has been studying alternative alignments for the Trail and the Transit in the section between the Silver Spring and Bethesda Metro stations. These include either Jones Bridge Road or the Georgetown Branch right of way from Bethesda to Rock Creek and several alternatives from Rock Creek to Silver Spring. The design constraints are numerous and difficult; tradeoffs are likely to be made. Your Board has been and will be following these closely. You may wish to monitor developments by visiting the MTA website at <http://www.purplelinemd.com>. Check the MTA website for dates and locations of MTA "Open Houses" and other useful information.

Invasives



Work has been going on to root out invasive plants along the Trail between Bethesda Avenue and the DC line. Lynette Scaffidi of the Montgomery Parks Department has been working with volunteers from the CCCT and neighborhood groups to uproot non-native vines that threaten to strangle the trees along the Trail. At the same time, Parks and CCCT want to caution well-intentioned volunteers to:

- 1) Get weed warrior training before doing invasives work**
(see http://www.mcppc-mc.org/Environment/weed_warriors/contact.shtm)
- 2) Not work along the part of the trail that directly borders Arlington Road so as to avoid thinning out the foliage buffer between the trail and that busy street.**

There is a long term plan, focusing first on the vines near MA Ave. and the Trail, including a work session on Sunday January 13, 2008 between 1-3:30pm, meeting at Mass. Ave. and the Trail that day. **For more information, contact Lynette at lynette.scaffidi@mncppc-mc.org or call her at 301-949-0223.**



THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

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This open space at Woodmont Avenue may soon be lost to proposed development.

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!

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.

Why CCCT is not in the Combined Federal Campaign this fall

In past years, many of you have generously supported the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail (CCCT) through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). The CCCT will not be in the CFC list this year, and we want to let you know why.

The CFC has changed its qualification requirements and now requires organizations to maintain a staffed, dedicated office space to provide services to the public. The office cannot be in a shared space like a home office, and must be staffed at least 15 hours a week. As you know, the CCCT is an all-volunteer organization. We do not have any paid staff or a physical dedicated office. The CCCT Board concluded that meeting this new CFC requirement would cost much more than we would receive through CFC. So we will not be participating in CFC during the Fall 2007 campaign.

The CCCT has been receiving about 15% of our annual donations through the CFC. We encourage you to continue to support us by responding to our annual year-end request letter. Of course, you may contribute by mailing a check to the CCCT Post Office Box, or by using your credit card through the secure webpage at Network for Good (the link is on the 'Membership' page on our www.cctrail.org website).

Thank you again for your support and hope to see you out on the Trail!



We urge ALL users to exercise greater caution, courtesy and alertness. Please follow the safety tips below:

All Users:

- Wear a mirror on your helmet, eye glass temple piece, or hat Available at bike stores or on line (google, "bicycle mirror")
- STAY ALERT, TURN OFF YOUR IPOD
- Stay to the right
- Do NOT block the trail when stopping
- Do NOT block the trail by going 3 or 4 abreast
- Look behind you from time to time
- Pass ONLY after looking behind you
- Pass ONLY after a loud warning
- Pass ONLY on the left
- Pass ONLY if you have a 2 foot clearance
- When dark, wear reflective clothes
- When dark, carry a light
- Yield to others when entering the trail
- Yield to others at crosswalks
- STOP at stop signs, they indicate dangerous cross car traffic

Parents:

- PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN, keep them to the right!
- Do not let your children ramble freely across the trail
- Stay immediately behind or to the left of your children

Bikers and Bladers:

In addition to the above:

- Keep safe, reasonable speed
- Adjust speed to trail congestion and surface conditions
- Be predictable
- Wear a Helmet
- Warn with a loud bell, whistle or voice at least 2 seconds BEFORE overtaking someone

Hikers and Walkers:

- TURN OFF YOUR IPOD
- Do NOT READ while on the trail
- If warned before being passed, call out, "Thanks for the warning"
- If NOT warned before being passed, politely call out, "Please warn before passing"

Pet Owners:

- Keep your pet on a very short leash (required by law!)
- Treat your pet as you would a child

BE ALERT BE AWARE

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.ccctrail.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.

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.ccctrail.org, FOR ACTION ALERTS and TRAIL UPDATES.

Planning Board Decision Favors the CCT at Bethesda

Real Estate Developers Federal Realty and JBG submitted plans to M-NCPPC this spring for development of the site at the west end of the Bethesda Tunnel. The site includes the Thyme Square restaurant, Reed Street, and the space in front of the Bethesda Row Cinema. An underground parking garage, hotel, and high rise were proposed. The Trail would share a 75' wide corridor through the site with other public uses as a café, retail, and possibly Purple Line transit tail tracks. Plans called for closing the Bethesda Tunnel to trail traffic for up to 36 months during construction. CCCT Board Members met with the developer team several times to discuss their proposal. CCCT pressed for plan changes to keep the tunnel open and for a better final trail through the completed project.

Early in these discussions we were able to get some improvement in the plan to better separate the CCT from conflicting uses. Our strong request to keep the tunnel open was more difficult to resolve. But in October the development team agreed to keep the Bethesda tunnel open during construction, largely in response to strong pressure from the public. The issues of congestion in the public use corridor and the loss of public open space were not resolved satisfactorily when the Preliminary Plans went to the Planning Board for mandatory referral on November 8, 2007.

The Planning Board received hundreds of emails from the public concerned about the loss of open space in the heart of Bethesda. Over 30 people spoke at the hearing, most in opposition to the project. Our CCCT testimony focused on our serious concerns about the impact that the many competing uses in the shared corridor would have on the CCT. The Planning Board refused to approve the project plan in its current form, and the Planning Board directed the development team to come back with a new plan that would have more room for the CCT and more open space for public use.

This decision is a clear win for trail users. The development team must now create a plan that provides a much more pleasant trail environment. This also gives the County more time to consider alternative uses for this area, such as a park and plaza on the west side of this site as proposed by Councilmember Berliner in a November 5, 2007 letter to the Planning Board. We thank trail users for speaking up and letting the Planning Board and Council know how important the CCT is to them. They heard you, and a better plan for the future of this site should eventually result.

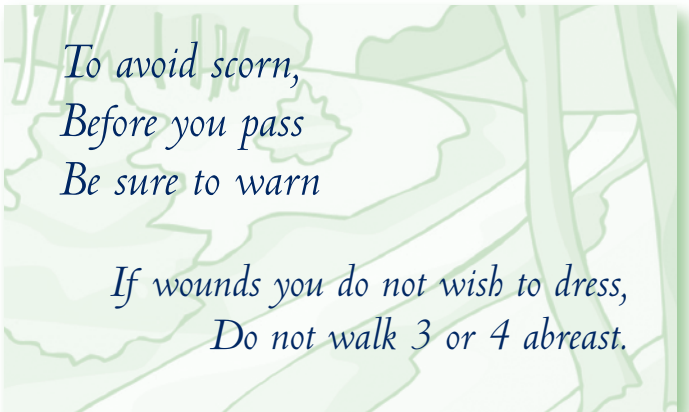
Palisades Detour

Earlier this Fall, The National Park Service (NPS) built a short detour just uphill of the Trail between trail mileposts 7.0 and 7.5. Fortunately there was space for the detour in this hilly area. The detour allows continued trail usage while NPS contractors work to stabilize the hillside which has been seriously deteriorated due to rain induced washouts and poor drainage. Fortunately, the detour route is short, obvious, and requires no turns. Hopefully, the hillside will be sufficiently stabilized to allow a return to the asphalt trail soon.

Phase One will consist first, of work done at the bottom of the hill and then, of work done from the trail down the hill. The latter effort will take 3-4 weeks and there will be truck traffic between Dalecarlia and the work site. Flag men have, and will, direct trail traffic as needed. Phase One ends with the major "erosion hole" filled and a new storm water pipe installed. Phase Two may not be necessary, depending on the results of a storm water study in the neighborhood above and work to be done there. There may be a Phase Three to install a buttress and NPS may decide to do additional work to address the fissure that developed near the work site.

River Road Plaza

The CCCT continues to work with Montgomery County Parks to build a public - private partnership to transform the current ugly macadam & gravel area on the outbound side of River Road just north of the trail into a green and pleasant plaza. Most recently CCCT has been collaborating with members of the nearby communities and their landscape architect to develop an attractive landscape, with benches and water fountain for trail users. When completed this plan will be sent to the County Parks Department for approval and subsequent construction.



*To avoid scorn,
Before you pass
Be sure to warn*

*If wounds you do not wish to dress,
Do not walk 3 or 4 abreast.*



CCCT
P.O. Box 30703
Bethesda, MD 20824

A Smooth Surface for the Dalecarlia Bridge

The Dalecarlia Bridge, built in 1996 and paid for by the Corps of Engineers, goes over a road connecting two parts of the Washington Aqueduct was designed to separate Trail users from the Washington water supply. A major component of the Dalecarlia Bridge is a former bridge which took the Georgetown Branch rail line over the Cabin John trolley line. This former bridge did not have a deck suitable for trail use, so a deck was created using wooden boards placed on the diagonal. These boards tended to warp and produce a rough surface, uncomfortable for bicyclists and impossible for rollerbladers. In wet or icy weather the surface tended to become slippery and dangerous.

The Coalition has lobbied ever since for an improved surface for the Dalecarlia Bridge, and the Parks Department recently installed a new deck. It is made up of plastic composite boards, placed horizontally using countersunk nails. Each board is placed flush against the adjacent boards, so the resulting surface is smooth and excellent for bicyclists, rollerbladers, and pedestrians. So far, there has been little experience with a wet surface and none with an icy one, but the new surface is clearly much safer than the wooden one.

Montgomery Parks did a commendable job in minimizing disruption to Trail use by completing the work in less than five working days during the hours from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., when the bridge was closed. An alternate route connecting to MacArthur Boulevard was clearly marked for the benefit of Trail users who needed to use that part of the Trail during the bridge closures.



*Let no one say, and say to your shame —
All was beauty here, until you came.”*