



The Capital Crescent Trail

Spring 1994

FIRST SECTION OF TRAIL OPENED

We are proud to announce that a ceremony marking the completion of Phase I of trail development was held at the Bethesda Pool March 30. The event, sponsored by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) and the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (M-DOT), also recognized the beginning of Phase II, of the Bethesda Pool to D.C. line (see related story next page).



Seen here cutting the ribbon are (from left to right) Tom Miller, of Miller Properties; Bill Hussman, Chair MNCPPC; Bruce Adams, Councilmember Montgomery County; Chris Brown, CCCT Chair; Neal Potter, Montgomery County Executive; Gus Bauman, Former-Chair MNCPPC; Betty-Ann Krahnke, Councilmember Montgomery County; Connie Morella, U.S. House Representative; Steve Taylor, PEPCO representative; William E. Hanna, Jr., President, Montgomery County Council. Photo by Ernie Brooks.

In his commemorative speech, *Chris Brown*, the CCCT Chair, noted that an inadvertent spelling of the word "trail" as "trial" on the morning news may have held particular significance. "The misspelling of the word trail contains more than a bit of irony to it," Brown said. "We have gone through many trials in our quest to develop the trail. But today we have reached another plateau in our pursuit of a first class greenway for the metro area."

Among the more than 30 people attending the celebration were CCCT volunteers *Henri Bartholomot, Charlie Wellander, Tom Barrett and Ernie Brooks. Peter Harnik*, Vice President: Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and *Ellen Jones*, Director of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (and CCCT assistant extraordinaire), were also present as well as numerous private and public officials (see picture). When the second phase of the trail is finished, it will connect the

Georgetown portion to the Bethesda Trailhead at Woodmont and Bethesda Avenues.

REACH THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL BY:

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

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INTERIM TRAIL RESOLUTION -- Unresolved



Hikers on Undeveloped Silver Spring Portion of Trail. Photo by Tom Barrett.

The CCCT board is forging ahead with its continuing efforts to establish an interim trail on the Bethesda to Silver Spring portion of the Georgetown Branch. The CCCT decided at its 1994 Winter retreat to make working with Montgomery County on the issue a top priority. Although substantial progress has been made on the trail, approximately one-third of the right-of-way in the northern portion of the line remains untouched. (See map, page 4)

The CCCT has asked the County to proceed promptly to pass an interim trail task force resolution. The resolution, floated twice before, was first submitted April 7, 1992, at the urging of the CCCT board, by Councilmembers Isaiah Leggett and Betty Ann Krahnke. The resolution generally calls for the examination of options available to Montgomery County for interim use of the Silver Spring portion of the Georgetown Branch of the trail.

The provision asks for the establishment of a task force with at least one voting member from each of the following groups: the Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Coalition; the CCCT; adjacent property owners; Town of Chevy Chase; Action Committee for

Transit; Columbia Country Club; Bethesda Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce; and Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce. The unexecuted document also provides for three non-voting members from the County Council Staff, the County Executive Staff and the Planning Board Staff. The resolution calls for the task force to report back to the council its findings within 60 days of its initiation.

Considering the CCCT's request, Montgomery County Councilmembers Bruce Adams and Derrick Berlage of the Transportation and Environment Committee expressed opposition to the resolution as introduced by Councilmember Leggett. Councilmember Adams, responding to concerns raised at the March 22 council work session, proposed amending the resolution to include other interest groups, and adjusting the study period from 60 days to six months. His amendments are expected to be presented when the full council meets to vote on Leggett's resolution.

The CCCT's decision to make passage of the resolution its top priority comes at approximately the same time as the Maryland Department of Transportation's

move to revive the trolley/trail design study. The study was suspended in late 1990 and is included in the Bethesda-Silver Spring master plan. The CCCT has asked the County to proceed with removal of tracks and ties so that a smooth surface will be left behind for interim trail use. Whatever the council's final decision may be, it could take years to develop. This will frustrate progress toward completion of the trail, in addition to the larger bicycle beltway. Should an interim trail be approved and

implemented, it is not expected to interfere with any future plans the Council and County Executive may have for the installation of a transitway on the same portion of the trail.

CCCT TOUR: Celebrating The First Paved Section Of The Trail

Fifty-six bikers and walkers participated in the second annual Capital Crescent Tour on November 13, 1993. The turnout was well above the 16 participants at the inaugural tour in 1992. Two events were held this year: a 21-mile circuit consisting of an 18-mile bicycle ride using portions of the CCCT and Rock Creek Park, and a 3-mile walk which showcased the right-of-way between Bethesda and Silver Spring.

Forty-seven participants completed the entire 21-mile loop, which highlighted the completed portions of the trail, both in

Maryland (0.6 miles) and the District (3 miles). Tour participants also had the opportunity to "walk the rails" on the undeveloped portions of the trail, and to imagine what the trail will some day be like. Refreshments were offered to participants at a rest stop at Thompson's Boat House in Georgetown. It was the universal opinion of the participants that the developed portions of the trail were "awesome" and the completed Capital Crescent Trail will be a terrific resource, both for recreation and transportation.

The 1993 Tour was held in order to celebrate the completion of the first four miles of the trail, known as Phase I. In attendance at the day's events were Maryland State Senator Howard Denis and Montgomery County Councilmembers Bruce Adams and Betty-Ann Krahnke: to them as well as all of the other contributors and volunteers who helped make the 1993 Capital Crescent Tour such a success, the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail would like to extend a very special thank you. And of course, we would like to thank all of those who came out to participate. See you on the '94 Tour in October.

1993 Capital Crescent Tour Participants (in no particular order):

John Peschecatore, Lori Miller, Dorothy Hodges, Joe Rissinz, Ron Miller, Mike Prentice, Kathy Daniel, Jane Hudnall, James Hudnall, Gary Poole, Cindy



Bicyclist enjoys completed portion of the Capital Crescent Trail. Photo by Tom Barrett.

Marisch, Ken Lyons, Tom Iurino, Paul Carroll, Maya Crony, Barbara Bratz, Martin Ricardo, Jeff Boberg, Jill Boberg, Mark Bernstein, Jay Miller, Scott McNulty, Joe Howard, Eden Tes Famariam, Tom Wilging, Pamela Howard, Calicoe Richir, Jerimee Richir, D. Quin Yowell, Kathy Kreychi, Laretta Burke, Chris Long, Jeanne Grillo, Ann Grillo, Cathy Cottingham, Chris Brown,

Mary Rollofsen, Brent Chivers, Bill Silverman, Alex Silverman, Annie Silverman, Carol Minder, Kathleen Dobie, Margaret Jones, Kathleen Hacker, Bob Haladay, Hilda Messina, Carol Messina, Chas Messina, Lee Hoffman, Bill Spitzer, Nessa Spitzer, Lisa Mendelson, Ursula Lemanski, Helen MacCollum.

CCCT Volunteers (in alphabetical order):

Jeff Allen, Henri Bartholomot, Tom Barrett, Ernie Brooks, Nadine Dutcher, Doug Engle, Ursula Lemanski (who organized the event), Margaret Marchak, Anna Marty, Keith Marty, Bob Piper, Trisha Price, Arlie, Fran and Frank Wright, Dena Yver. Donations made by: **Bicycle Pro Shop, Georgetown; Giant Foods, Inc.; Pepperidge Farm Foods; Rails-to-Trails Conservancy; Safeway Foods, Inc.**



Tour participants hop on their bicycles for the cycling leg of the tour at Connecticut Avenue. Photo by Tom Barrett.

CCCT Recognized With National Greenways Award

The Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail board is pleased to announce that, "in recognition of its leadership and success in creating one of the nation's most outstanding local greenway projects," CCCT has been selected as one of the recipients of the American Greenways DuPont Award. In a March 18 letter announcing the award to CCCT Chair *Chris Brown*, Patrick Noonan, President of The Conservation Fund wrote that, "through the leadership, energy, and dedication of you and your volunteers the vision of a national network of greenways and linked open spaces...is well on its way to becoming a reality."

The award, created by DuPont in cooperation with The National Geographic Society and The Conservation Fund, will be presented to the Coalition during a reception in mid April.

Council Committee Preserves Wisconsin Avenue Tunnel And Street Route Option But Votes Down Bethesda-Woodmont Bridge

The Montgomery County Council's Planning and Economic Development Committee voted on March 31 in its fourth meeting regarding the Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan to preserve both the tunnel and street route option for the trail at Wisconsin Avenue. At its third session the committee preserved three alternative alignments for the transitway; one would end at the "Apex Building" west of Wisconsin Avenue keeping the transitway in the tunnel. The other two options propose the trail to run along Pearl Street and East West Highway to Wisconsin Avenue either at street level or below-grade allowing the trail to stay in the tunnel.

Also on March 31 the committee voted to delete the Bethesda-Woodmont Bridge from the Bethesda Central Business Sector Plan.

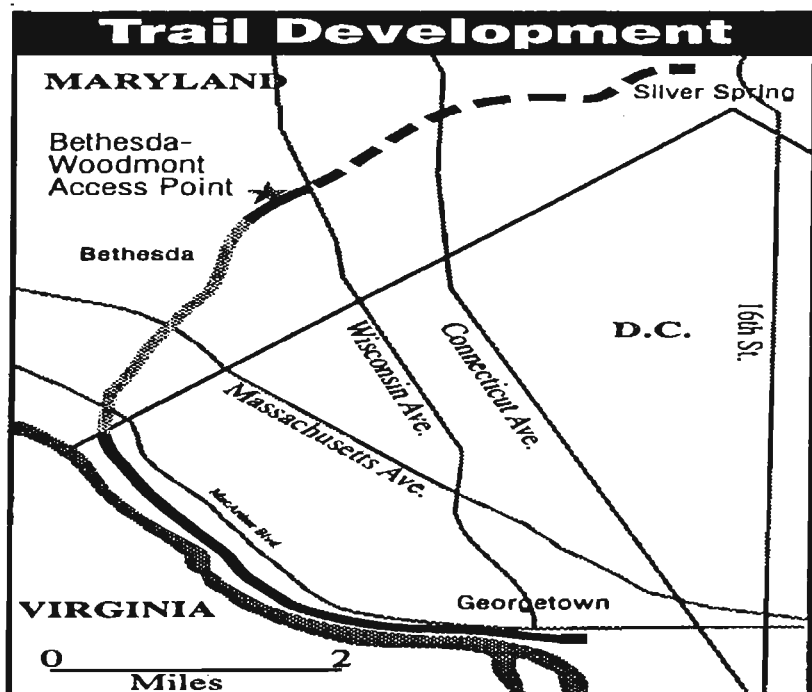
Both issues will be voted on in a full council meeting this month and tracked, as usual, by *Henri Bartholomot* (who does more than a terrific job). For more information about this issue please attend the next CCCT meeting at the Bethesda Library on April 18 at 7:00 p.m.

TRAIL HOT SPOTS

Since you've last heard from us, there has been a lot going on with the trail, despite the cold and icy winter. Here's a brief overview from south to north.

Georgetown K Street

The DC Department of Public Works is designing plans for the facelift of K Street in Georgetown. The planning process is not expected to be completed until next year, and does not call for significant work to occur before the completion of improvements on the Whitehurst Freeway. CCCT board member *Scott Hall* is meeting with an ad hoc group of organizations to discuss their views on the plans, and the Coalition will continue to monitor the planning process. Tom Burke of the DC Department of Public Works made a presentation to interested citizens in attendance at a recent meeting.



- No development plans as yet
- ▨ Development to begin in 1994
- Section developed for use

Arizona Trestle

The Federal Highway Administration has started to adapt the bridge that crosses Arizona Avenue for trail use. The bridge, custom built back in the late 1880s, was curved to fit the palisade shelves. It was constructed from two railroad spans which were built for other railroads and adapted for Georgetown Spur use. The Federal Highway Administration should finish adapting the bridge at a price of approximately \$755,000 this fall. When the Highway Department finishes managing the bridge's adaptation, it will include a 16-foot wide concrete deck with an arched chain link fence on each side of the path.

River Road Bridge Funding

The Montgomery County Executive's proposed new Bicycle Pedestrian ISTEAs Projects for the county's fiscal year 1995-2000 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) gained approval March 24 from the Montgomery County Planning Board of the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC).

The approval means that the Planning Board gives high priority to funding in 1995 for the purchase, design and construction of a bridge over River Road for \$550,000. The CCCT has requested that the county require a bridge of 12-14 feet wide, approximately four feet wider than the project description, in order to accommodate projected trail user demand.

The Maryland Department of Transportation's decision on the ISTEAs Enhancement project requires that a list be created of high priority projects and a 50% local match to provide funding where necessary and in order of priority. The completed acquisition of the Georgetown right-of-way should satisfy the local matching provision as required by the Maryland Department of Transportation, while new county funding needs to be found for the other priority projects.

The Planning Board's recommendation will be submitted



The curved Arizona Ave. trestle posed challenges for engineers trying to fit the Capital Crescent into the palisade shelf in the 1800s. The paved portion will be wider than it appears above when completed this fall. Photo by Tom Barrett.

to the County Council for review as an amendment to the CIP program. After the Planning Board makes a recommendation it will then be submitted for the State Highway Department's approval. The Coalition appreciates the help of Park and Planning Staff Dan Walsh and Bill Gries for including the River Road bridge on the priority list.

Bethesda Avenue Access /Trail Head

During its end-of-the year fund-raiser, the Coalition met its fund-raising goal, and is thus able to contribute to the work on the proposed Capital Crescent Trailhead in Bethesda. The Woodmont/Bethesda Avenue Crossing will be a key stopover

and access point as trail users make their way toward Rock Creek Park and Silver Spring. Generous contributions amounting to \$5,000 were raised through the Coalition's members and a DuPont/American Greenways grant (see related article). Those funds will be augmented by contributions of Bethesda businessmen Thomas C. Miller (\$5,000), and John Ourisman (\$15,000). These contributions will assist in the financing of the trailhead work planned by the Montgomery County Parks Department. At a recent Board meeting, County Landscape Architect Rachel Davis Newhouse presented preliminary plans and drawings to the Coalition for critique.

Columbia Country Club

Over the last several months, CCCT board members have entered into a dialogue with representatives of the Columbia Country Club, whose golf course straddles the trail corridor. The right of way was owned by CSX and operated as a train corridor from 1909 until it was purchased by Montgomery County in the 1980's. The Country Club is anxious to ensure that proposed new uses of the corridor will not interfere with golf course operations. The Club's primary concerns are two fold: safety of trail users, and liability for the Club. In addition, the Club worries that new uses of the right-of-way may interfere with golfers' ability to cross the corridor to access areas on both sides. Two of the course greens as well as two of its tees border the right-of-way, and by the club's own admission, encroach upon the right-of-way.

In its attempt to minimize the effects of trail corridor developments on the Club and its golfers, the Club had plans drawn up and submitted to the County which called for routing the right-of-way four to five feet below-grade, and constructing three access bridges across the corridor. CCCT representatives prefer to maintain an at-grade trail on the right-of-way, along with the use of "soft engineering" such as trees and other vegetation to shield trail users and course users alike. CCCT presented this option to members of the Club in December. When Club spokesperson Vincent Burke addressed the CCCT board at the February 14 meeting, he indicated the Club was still pursuing the below-grade option. The CCCT is anxious to maintain a dialogue with the Columbia Country Club, and to reach a workable position as it strives toward its goal of an interim trail in 1994.



Silver Spring portion of the trail at Columbia Country Club. Photo by Tom Barrett.

Coalition Member Thanks

The Capital Crescent Trail would like to extend a special thank-you to four of its member organizations which helped our 1993 fund drive by donating portions of their membership lists to the cause. Thanks one and all to:

- ☐ *Mr. David Burwell*, President, **Rails-to-Trails Conservancy**
- ☐ *Mr. Paul Pritchard*, President, **National Parks and Conservation Association**
- ☐ *Mr. Ken Nichols*, Executive Director, **Audubon Naturalist Society of the Central Atlantic States**
- ☐ *Ms. Ellen Jones*, Director, **Washington Area Bicyclist Association**

Also, special thanks to:

- ☐ **EcoPrint**, Bethesda, MD (for donating ink and paper to the effort).

Through your help and the assistance of hundreds of Washington-area citizens, the Coalition will be able to continue our advocacy and public education about the trail throughout 1994. In addition, the generosity of you and your members and longtime CCCT members will allow the Coalition to make at least one cash donation to help in the trail's development. Together, we will share in the satisfaction of completing a first-rate greenway for the metropolitan area. Couldn't have done it without you!

Volunteer Information

Doug Engle has been out preparing the trail for spring traffic with the following volunteers: *Wendy Fredsides, John Whittaker, Ray Bingham, John Studach, Elton Elison, Jamie Dycus, Jay Chamberlin and Helen Benedict.* As usual, Doug has been heading up the great effort to keep the trail in shape. Thanks folks!

Doug has also been spending a lot of his free time making the sturdy brown and yellow colored mileage posts seen on the lower portion of the trail commencing in Georgetown. (See picture to the right.) Each of the seven posts reflect the original railroad mileage. He figures he's spent 15 hours per sign start to finish including researching, constructing and installing each signpost. Thanks again for all your usual hard work!

Thanks goes to *Charlie Wellander, Judy Torrence, and Ernie Brooks* the new Information Coordinators. They are doing a terrific job keeping the information line up to date and making sure that the call-flow keeps moving. You may have heard from Charlie after you sent in your contribution last year because he also contributes many dedicated hours as our Assistant Treasurer collecting mail from our Post Office box and recording and depositing checks that we receive.

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**, our Information Coordinator/Surveyor/Photographer at "ewbrooks@oasys.dt.navy.mil" and he will make sure that your message will be forwarded to the appropriate person. Thanks for all your help Ernie!



Young supporter models Capital Crescent T-Shirt. Photo by Tom Barrett.



Rail-mileage marker on lower portion of the trail. Photo by Tom Barrett

Remember

CCCT meetings are usually held on the 3rd Monday of the month at Bethesda Library (7:00 p.m.). Call the info line for details. (202) 234-4874.

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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 CAN:

- research
- telephone
- write or contribute artwork
- organize an event

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

Calendar of Upcoming Events for Spring-Summer 1994

- April 16** Meridian 10K at Meridian Hill Park, 8:00 a.m. (Saturday). For details call Friends Of Meridian Hill (202) 387-9128.
- April 18** Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m. (Monday), Bethesda Library. Come munch on Hershey's kisses and meet the folks working on the trail!
- April 22** Bike to Work Day Rally, 7:10 a.m. (Friday) meet at trailhead near Ourisman at Bethesda and Woodmont Avenues to bike to Freedom Plaza at 14th and Penn. For more details call Jennifer Longworth (301) 320-4824 or Margaret Marchak (202) 986-5836.
- April 23** National Parks and Conservation Association's "March for Parks," 11:00-3:00 (Saturday, rain or shine). Meet at Picnic groves 13 and 14 on Glover Road, N.W. Contact: Ellen Wilson at (202) 223-6722 x 223 for more details.
- May 16** Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m., (Monday) Bethesda Library. Mark your calendar and come help plan the Third Annual Tour!
- June 4** National Trails Day Hike, (Saturday) contact Chris Brown for more information (202) 343-3758.
- June 12** (Tentative) WABA Bike Ride, (Sunday) call Ellen Jones at WABA, (202) 872-9830.
- June 28** Annual Capital Crescent Meeting (Tuesday) 7:00 p.m. Call Chris Brown for location details (202) 343-3758.

Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail
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