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Proposed Alignment for Phase IV of the William C. O'Neill Bike Path

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On August 16, 2010, the Narragansett Town Council voted to accept the revised Master Plan – in the form of an Executive Summary – for Canonchet Farm. The plan includes routing of the William C. O'Neill Bike Path through Canonchet Farm, connecting the current terminus of the path on Mumford Road to Narragansett Beach and completing the fourth and final phase of the Bike Path. The Executive Summary does not specify the exact route, but relies on later determination by the Town and the Rhode Island Department of Transportation to align the Bike Path. At the time of the plan's acceptance there were several alignments proposed, routes that were discussed during the Planning Board review of proposals made by the Canonchet Farm Master Plan Review Committee and other groups.

It is our understanding that the RIDOT is waiting for the Town of Narragansett to propose an alignment (and only one alignment) so it can begin planning and development of Phase IV. We also believe that the Town should make such a selection as soon as possible because previously earmarked funding and other resources may be directed to other Greenway Projects.

We believe that selection of the bike path route should be guided by the following principles:

The alignment should take advantage of views of Pettaquamscutt Cove and the Narrow River.

The route should cause the least disruption to wetlands (a single crossing, even one requiring construction of decking, is preferable to multiple crossings), and minimize the footprint during construction.

The routing should protect valuable natural and historical features on Canonchet Farm, including the American Beech Grove, the two stone bridges and the vernal pools, and afford opportunities for viewing and interpretive signage of the same natural and historical features.

The path should cause the least disruption to stone walls on the property, using existing openings in the walls. Any repairs to the walls should be for safety reasons only.

The Bike Path should provide an alternate route to Narragansett Beach and to the South County Museum. The path should not be considered an express route to either location.

The route should not interfere with existing hiking trails by overlapping or paralleling the trails. Where the Bike Path route intersects a trail it should do so at a right angle, so as to discourage or prevent bikes on the trail.

The route should be a four-season path.

We propose routing the final segment of the William C. O'Neill Bike Path along the abandoned Sea View Railroad grade that runs along the eastern edge of Pettaquamscutt Cove on the west side of Canonchet Farm as the most expeditious and least disruptive alignment through Canonchet Farm. In addition, this route would offer spectacular views of Pettaquamscutt Cove and the lower Narrow River.

The attached map depicts the proposed alignment to a degree of specificity appropriate for this stage of planning. The proposed route is as follows:

Starting at the current end of the Bike Path, cross Mumford Road and proceed northeast beside Riverside Drive on Town property for approximately 800 feet.

Curve around the Narragansett Elementary School property on an existing elevated surface created during construction of the school, heading east for approximately 730 feet.

Connect with the abandoned Sea View Railroad grade near the northeast corner of the school property. At this point the Bike Path intersects with the hiking trail as the trail crosses the railroad grade.

Proceed northeast on the abandoned Sea View Railroad grade 700 feet to the point where the National Grid utility easement meets the railroad grade, which National Grid uses to service the existing power line.

Travel north approximately 2,050 feet along the easement to a point approximately 60 feet northeast of utility pole #567.5.

Turn southeast and cross the salt marsh on decking 104 feet to the upland woods at the northwest corner of Canonchet Farm.

Proceed 195 feet across the heavily wooded upland to the northeast-southwest trending stone wall where the wall has been damaged.

Pass through the stone wall and trend easterly on the south side of an east-west trending stone wall for about 250 feet.

Turn south and travel 225 feet to an opening in northeast-southwest trending wall where it crosses the hiking trail.

Proceed south southeast 260 feet to the central west side of the North (or Upper) Meadow.

Follow along the edge of the meadow turning east and travelling along the north side of the east-west trending wall to the saddle opening between the North and South Meadows.

Travel southwest 175 feet and then turn southeast to travel 190 feet between the meadow and the stone wall.

Turn southwest and continue on the existing cart path 100 feet.

Turn southeast into the woods and continue 600 feet along the northeast edge of the South Meadow to the vehicle access point to the hiking trail.

Continue 275 feet south southeast to cross the Boy Scout Trail at a right angle and then 180 feet to northwest corner of the Anne Hoxsie Lane Parking Lot.