

FRIENDS OF SAXONVILLE

NEWSLETTER • FALL 2015

A Saxonville Historic District? by Gerald Couto, AIA

The original scope of the proposed Saxonville historic district included approximately 130 properties including 86 that make up the National Register District. The new proposed district will be much smaller and will generally align with the area discussed by the EDIC in their village meetings. It is a costly and time-consuming process – approximately \$250 per property to prepare the forms. The mill will not be part of the initial district, but there is hope that the owners will reconsider at a later date.

The Historic District Commission met August 4 and discussed, but did not vote on, our initiatives for FY '16. Under serious consideration is the proposal for a district in Saxonville. I hope a vote will be taken at our meeting that will take place on Tuesday September 1 at 7:30 pm in Conference Room 2 in the Memorial Building. Interested parties are invited to attend.

Gerald is Chairman of the Framingham Historic District Commission. You may reach him at (508) 341-7900 or jerrydhd@msn.com. ❖



Central Street bridge reconstruction
© Jeffrey Poole

Friends at MetroFest 2015

by Paula Longden

Join us at the second annual MetroFest on Saturday, September 26 at Bowditch Field (475 Union Avenue in Framingham) from 11:00 am – 5:00 pm. There will be many exhibitors with goodies and food trucks selling various types of yummy delights. Last year's event was a huge success and we hope this year's to be even better!

Please stop by the Friends of Saxonville booth while you attend this awesome event.

Looking for a keepsake or gift? We will be selling Friends of Saxonville beer and wine glasses, "Entering Saxonville" magnets, and The Saxonville Mills book photographed by FOS board member Lynne Damianos and designed by Lisa Breslow Thompson. We will also have walking tour maps of Historic Saxonville and other information available.

For more information about MetroFest 2015, visit www.metrowestvisitors.org/metrofest/. ❖

Cochituate Rail Trail

by David Longden

The Friends of Saxonville is pleased to report that the Framingham portion of the Cochituate Rail Trail is now officially open. The Framingham Department of Public Works completed construction, which concluded with installing traffic lights at the Old Connecticut Path crossing. If you have not yet had a chance to walk or ride your bike on the trail, please do. It is peaceful, and a wonderful shortcut from Saxonville to Home Depot in Natick.

The Town of Natick is now beginning to plan its portion of the trail, which will eventually connect Saxonville to Downtown Natick and the MBTA train station. A bridge over Route 30, connecting the two Towns' sections of the trail is under discussion. ❖

Carol Getchell Nature Trail

by David Longden

One of the unique features of the Carol Getchell Nature Trail in Saxonville is its close proximity to two of Framingham's Public Schools: Cameron Middle School and Stapleton Elementary School. There is a dedicated access path to the trail from each school property. These paths allow the students and faculty to visit the trail for educational use and other activities.

At Cameron, the access path starts at the lower sports field and proceeds down wooden stairs to the north section of the Getchell Trail. At Stapleton, the access path begins near the garage in the back parking lot and proceeds down a hillside stairway. This stairway is made from earth and wooden timbers and leads to the south portion of the Getchell Trail and Nature Classroom below. This path is the closest access to the Nature Trail for residents living in or near McGrath Square.

Over the last several years, the path from Stapleton (and also Edwards Church) eroded so that it was not as easy to use. The timbers that form the



Stairs from Stapleton School to Carol Getchell Nature Trail © David Longden

earth "stairs" had shifted, and allowed even more erosion to occur. This made the path steeper, rougher and more difficult for small children to walk down to the river area and attend nature classes.

In a great example of cooperation between two departments of the Town of Framingham and local volunteer organizations including FOS, the Stapleton School path has undergone a major re-construction this past summer. The project included replacing the stairs and reinforcing them with rebar, installation of drainage features within portions of the staircase in an effort to properly guide runoff onto Town property, and re-grading the upper entrance to remedy erosion issues at the top of the trail. Seasonal staff from the Framingham Conservation Commission and staff from Framingham's Parks & Recreation department completed the work along with volunteer assistance on the weekends.

The end result is a rejuvenated trail path, allowing better access to the wonderful trail below. Please take a few minutes to visit the trail, enjoy the views of the Sudbury River, and listen to the quiet sounds of nature. ❖

Vibes from the Village

by David Longden and Susan Silva

Thanks to a comment made by long time FOS member Marge Sheetz, we now have American flags on the telephone poles in Saxonville's McGrath Square. Jim Paolini with the Town of Framingham made sure the flags were in place for July 4th.

Originally named Liberty Square, McGrath Square was re-named for James J. McGrath who was killed during WWI on May 31, 1918 in France. He is buried in a church cemetery in Mandres, France. ❖

New Business Member

MTechnology, Inc.

Stephen Fairfax
2 Central Street
Saxonville, MA 01701
(508) 788-6260
fairfax@mtechnology.com

Friends of Saxonville Annual Dues

by Paula Longden

On May 1, the Friends of Saxonville entered into our new fiscal year, with annual membership fees due at that time. Dues for individuals are \$25 and business memberships are \$50. If you have not already renewed your membership or would like to join for the first time, please send your payment in today. You may mail your payment to Friends of Saxonville, P.O. Box 3236, Saxonville, MA 01705-3236 or make your payment online at www.Saxonville.org via PayPal.

Your membership dues help us fulfill our mission: to educate the public about the special identity of Saxonville, and to preserve, enhance and protect its cultural, economic, environmental and historical qualities.

If you have any questions, please call Paula Longden at (508) 877-7034. ❖

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