

Little Toot

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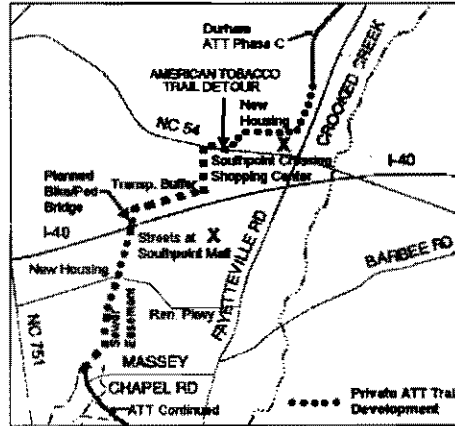
ATT construction pushes through South Durham

It's over the Interstate and through the malls to reach rural woods for the American Tobacco Trail in Durham. Construction has resumed on several fronts of the three-county, 23-mile, Triangle Region rail-trail project.

The most visible progress is completion of developer-provided paved trail along the edge of the new regional Streets of Southpoint Mall, which borders the south side of I-40. That sets the stage for a \$600,000 bridge to span a widened I-40 and connection with a north side detour through the Southpoint Crossing Shopping Center at NC 54 and Fayetteville Road.

The original railroad alignment was obliterated 15 years ago during the construction of I-40. Thus the complex detour.

Southpoint Crossing provided its part of the needed detour three years ago, a year before the city started development from downtown Durham to Cornwallis Road.



The next city phase, from Cornwallis Road to Southpoint, is under construction and making good progress, thanks to a mild winter. Construction includes the 1.6-mile Riddle Road Spur trail to the east. The spur will take users closer to pathways in Research Triangle Park.

When opened this summer, Durham will have continuous paved trail from the downtown Bulls Athletic Park to Southpoint Crossing, a distance of 6.3 miles. All the detour easements are in place to continue trail development a short distance to the north side of the I-40

ATT construction - cont. on page 2

Dunn-Erwin sets rail-trail opening

The Dunn-Erwin Rail-Trail Committee has planned a formal opening of the 5.3-mile project for 11:30 a.m. Saturday, June 15, in Erwin. The ribbon-cutting ceremony will be preceded by a fundraiser public walk of the trail at 8:30 a.m.

First stage development, including traffic control bollards, bridge railings, safety fencing and signage, is being completed. The improvements are being financed by National Recreation Trails Program and federal Transportation Enhancement grants.

The Dunn-Erwin Connector rail property was donated to NCRT two years ago by the Aberdeen & Rockfish Railroad and was placed in the federal railbank at that time. The local rail-trail committee is moving toward taking full responsibility for management and maintenance of the corridor. The goal is a paved trail between the two communities. Other improvements are proposed in a NC State University School of Design master plan which was funded by an Adopt-A-Trail grant from the state Trails Program.



CROSSING THE DIVIDE - ATT rail-trail crossing at Renaissance Parkway. The new Streets of Southpoint Mall is in the left background. Sidewalks connect trail, new multi-unit housing and the regional mall.

North Carolina Rail-Trails
 participates in workplace campaigns with



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ATT construction pushes south . . .

continued from page 1

corridor, according to Durham planner Beth Timson. The trail will parallel I-40 on the city's major transportation buffer to the bridge crossing site, from where it will continue south on the Streets of Southpoint section.

Beyond Streets of Southpoint Mall, another hurdle awaits: skirting wetlands along a half-mile sewer easement before connecting with the original rail bed at Massey Chapel Road. The easement allows trail use but may require some boardwalks, according to Timson.

While no date has been set for constructing the I-40 bridge, Triangle Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and Friends of the ATT are jointly hard at work on the original rail route from Massey Chapel Road south to the Chatham County line. The section is also being partially used for a recently-completed sewer line south of Massey Chapel Road.

The volunteers are cleaning, clearing and improving the right-of-way, working to open the South Durham County section to public use as soon as possible under a municipal agreement and a grant from the Durham Open Space and Trails Committee.

TRTC and Friends also are starting to

tackle similar chores in Wake County, which recently approved the start of ATT construction. The county has allocated \$1.3 million for the project. Construction will start on the south end at New Hill-Olive Chapel Road, running 3.75 miles north to Wimberly Road. The next phase runs from Green Level Road north to the Chatham County line. The final phase is the Wake center section, for a total of eight miles in that county.

An engineering study has been conducted on five bridge sites where the original superstructures were removed. Two of the bridges are in Chatham County, which has yet to negotiate a corridor lease from NCDOT.

TRTC continues to press for action on the lease after Chatham County was presented with an ATT master plan for that 4-mile section in December. Like much of the Triangle, Chatham County is now facing numerous development issues. The new 400-acre Rosemont development, an upscale gated community, straddles the ATT corridor in the northeast corner of the county. TRTC stresses that trail development and management is needed to keep the ATT corridor from continuing to be used for illegal dumping and as a playground for off-road motorized vehicles.

East Coast Greenway seeks NC supporters

Think BIG, like from the Canada boarder in Maine to Key West, Florida. That's the goal of the East Coast Greenway, a 2,600-mile trail connecting metro areas through 15 states. Some 500 miles of the ECG exist, mostly north of Washington, DC.

North Carolina has a start with six miles of the American Tobacco Trail in Durham open this summer and another 17 miles in staged development. Connecting Cary and Raleigh greenways can take the ECG to the state capitol. From that beginning it takes a leap of faith that a route can be obtained north to the Virginia border and south to Fayetteville, Wilmington and South Carolina.

Pushing the project is the East Coast Greenway Alliance, which started in Rhode Island 11 years ago. The North Carolina ECG committee started taking shape two years ago and is now chaired by Chuck Flink of Greenways, Inc., in Cary. An April meeting was held in Durham to publicize the program and to seek support from the state and communities along the proposed route.

For more on the EGC, visit: www.greenway.org.

N-S local management will try saving service

Norfolk Southern is going to local marketing and management as an exceptional step to maintain freight service in the southeast quadrant of the state. The move comes on the heels of rumors that N-S was trying to attract shortline operators to take over service on 485 miles of track to the southeast of Raleigh. The railroad previously announced that it intended to cut up to 4,000 miles from its entire system of 22,000 miles under a "Rationalization Program."

N-S says the lines do not justify full-scale operation by a major railroad. The southeastern lines connect to the N-S main line at Raleigh. Traditionally, eastern NC was managed from Greenville, SC, and marketed from Roanoke, VA. N-S hopes local responsibility will be more responsive to Eastern NC customers, primarily power plants, timber and chemical companies.



PITCHING IN - TRTC Pres. Bill Bussey, left, gets help from Chris David and Cotten Tyler clearing downed trees from South Durham County section of ATT. Volunteers also are gathering and hauling off truckloads of illegally dumped household trash and construction waste.

Greensboro planning rail-trail extension

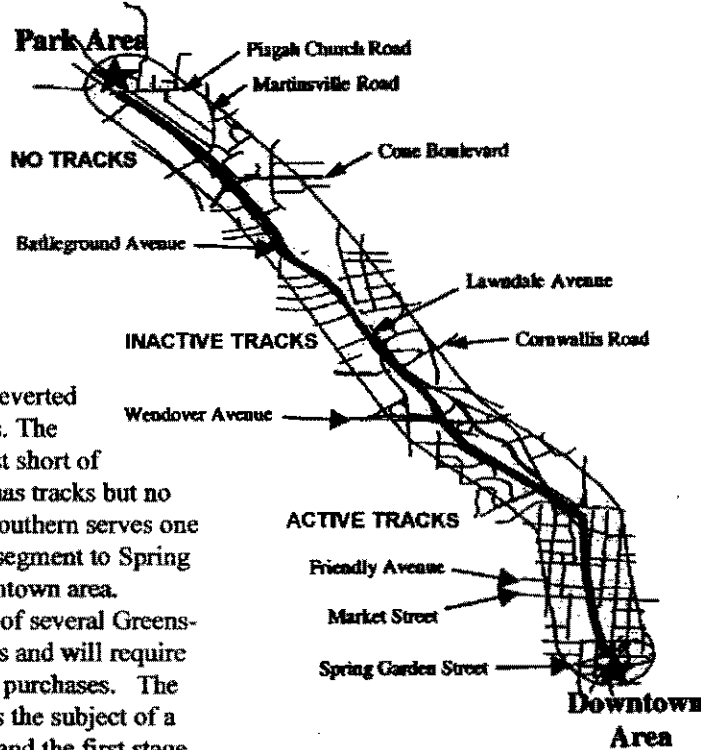
Greensboro is again looking to the old Atlantic & Yadkin as a way to extend the Lake Brandt Greenway and Bicentennial trails to downtown. The rail-trail corridor presently connects Bur-Mill Park at the northwest edge of the city with Guilford Courthouse National Military Park and Country Park, about half way to city center.

Utilizing another four miles of the A&Y corridor would double the rail-trail's length. The proposed extension, parallel to Battleground Ave., is in three segments.

The first, from Pisgah Church Road to Branchwood Drive, is without rails and has reverted to adjoining properties. The second segment, to just short of Wendover Ave., still has tracks but no rail service. Norfolk Southern serves one customer on the third segment to Spring Garden St. in the downtown area.

The extension is one of several Greensboro greenway projects and will require funds for right-of-way purchases. The rail-trail extension was the subject of a 1999 feasibility study and the first stage

was incorporated in a 2000 greenways bond referendum. The city currently has 75 miles of trails and greenways. Guilford County's Bicentennial Greenway Trail ties into the city network via the Lake Brandt Greenway, and will eventually link Greensboro to High Point 20 miles to the southwest.



National Trails Day

Get Out. . .



Hug a Trail

June 1, 2002

North Carolina Rail-Trails Balance Sheet As of December 31, 2001

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking Acct.	30,859.89
Savings Acct.	12,992.33
Savings CD	10,483.98
Endow. CD	10,586.07
Souvenir Inv.	191.22
Total Cur Assets	65,113.49
Fixed Assets	
Dunn-Erwin Rail Property	Undetermined Value*
TOTAL ASSETS	65,113.49*
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
Begin Fund Bal	76,618.96
Net Income	-11,505.47
Total Equity	65,113.49
TOTAL LIAB & EQUITY	65,113.49*

* NCRT was grantee in a donated quitclaim deed recorded April 20, 2000 (book 1412, pages 932-939, Harnett County Records) of a railroad corridor consisting of 61.33 acres more or less between the towns of Dunn and Erwin, NC. The property is burdened by Federal railbanking requirements and its use limited to a recreational trail or related uses.



NCRT Summer Meeting

10:30 a.m. Saturday, July 13. Board Room, Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens, 6500 South New Hope Road, Belmont, Gaston County.



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Reason for interest in rail-trails _____

NCRT annual memberships: Individual - \$20, Corporate - \$100

Mail to North Carolina Rail Trails, PO Box 61348, Durham NC 27715-1348

(Spring 02)

THANK YOU FOR JOINING NCRT

"To Preserve Rail Corridors and Promote Rail - Trails"



OVERHILLS STOP -An old freight depot is one of the many historic buildings on the Overhills estate, now part of Fort Bragg at Fayetteville.

NCRT tours historic Overhills estate

Four miles of public rail-trail is just one potential opportunity bundled in 10,580 acres that make up Overhills, the former Rockefeller winter estate. It was purchased by the military in 1997 to buffer Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base from civilian development. Now, the military is faced with what to do with the historic property.

The NCRT board was treated to a tour of the estate as part of its April 13 meeting in Fayetteville. The Rockefeller's three-story, 7,000-sq. ft., brick-and-tile, winter cottage is but one of dozens of buildings that receive minimal maintenance as the U.S. Army ponders how to preserve the historic property and possibly make it available to the public. The military has no budgeted funds and is looking for options. Public hearings were conducted last year, at which time NCRT proposed a public trail on the former rail bed that runs through the estate.

Besides housing, the estate includes depots, stables, barns, shops, lake and a Donald Ross-designed golf course - a treasure in itself. One proposal is a youth development golf program.

More information and photos are on line at <http://freepages.hobbies.rootsweb.com/~pfwilson/ovcrhills.html>

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