

January 12, 2026

Mr. Doug Ellis, Chair
Concord Historical Commission
141 Keyes Road, 1st Floor
Concord, MA 01742

RECEIVED

RE: Assabet River Multi-Use Trail and Bridge
MassDOT Project No. 612870
Concord, Massachusetts
Section 106 Review and Coordination

JAN 14 2026

PLANNING DIVISION
TOWN OF CONCORD MA

Dear Chair Ellis and Members of the Commission:

On behalf of the Town of Concord in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), Greenman-Pedersen Inc. (GPI) proposes to construct a pedestrian bridge and trail that spans the Assabet River in Concord, Massachusetts. It is anticipated that this project will be supported in part with federal funds and will therefore require review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (36 CFR 800). The enclosed project information is provided for the Concord Historical Commission's review in compliance with the regulations governing Section 106.

The project limits begin at the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail adjacent to the West Concord Commuter Rail station to the west side of the Assabet River. The shared use path crosses a town-owned parking lot and private property at 68 Commonwealth Avenue, and then navigates through forested upland and riverfront as it approaches the Assabet River. The proposed bridge crosses the Assabet River just upstream of the existing MBTA rail bridge. Once across the Assabet River, the shared use path will emerge from the forested Riverfront Area and floodplains adjacent to the Assabet River and travel through the 300-310 Baker Avenue commercial and industrial development until reaching Baker Avenue, where the shared use path terminates. The total length of the project from the western project limit to the eastern project limit is approximately 1,275 linear feet (0.24 miles).

In its existing condition, the Assabet River creates a barrier between the West Concord Station and West Concord Village area where there are office and industrial areas located at Baker Avenue and Baker Avenue Extension. The only nearby road crossing of the river is the Main Street Bridge—a distance, via sidewalk, of more than one-half mile between the station and any of the employment locations along Baker Avenue or Baker Avenue Extension. Moreover, the public has commented that the Main Street Bridge, designed primarily for vehicular use, does not provide adequate dimension for safe passage by pedestrian or cyclists and that this crossing is particularly treacherous for those who are not in vehicles. To shorten the walking or biking distance to work, pedestrians have been observed crossing the river on the Fitchburg Line railroad bridge. Since the bridge is closed to pedestrian access and has no walkway or other pedestrian accommodations, the practice is both dangerous and illegal. In addition to safety and accessibility concerns, the public currently has limited access to the Assabet River and adjacent areas of open space which offer significant scenic and passive recreational opportunities.

The purpose of the project is to close a significant first mile/last mile gap and expand potential trail connections in the community. The project involves construction of a shared use path and bridge over the Assabet River which will connect the West Concord Village business district, the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, and the West Concord Commuter Rail Station to the businesses on Baker Avenue and Baker Avenue Extension, which includes some of the largest employment centers in town.

The project proposes to design and build a multi-use shared use path and bridge. The shared use path is proposed to be 10- to 12-feet in width, with 2-foot shoulders on each side and surfaced with hot mix asphalt (HMA) pavement. Along its route, the path will traverse a variety of existing land uses. The first segment of the path, (approximately 585 linear feet), extends from the existing Bruce Freeman Rail Trail through the municipally-owned parking lot and across adjacent private property owned by the VOA Assisted Living facility. It then enters undeveloped woodlands and floodplain along the Assabet River behind the assisted living facility. A Conservation Restriction exists on this property for construction of the path and bridge.

The following segment (approximately 170 feet) traverses the existing wooded riverfront area and elevates the shared use path with retaining walls as the existing land begins to drop in elevation as it approaches the Assabet River. At this point, the shared use path will be conveyed over the Assabet River by three-span pedestrian bridge totaling 285 feet in length. The bridge is elevated approximately 19 feet at its highest point to maintain the clearance over the floodway and convey storm flows. The proposed bridge is situated directly adjacent to and upstream of the existing MBTA rail bridge over the Assabet River.

Once across the Assabet River, the path transitions back toward existing grade with retaining walls on either side for approximately 235 feet. At this point, the path will connect to a proposed elevated boardwalk which transitions to an at-grade public access trail through the adjacent private property at 300 Baker Avenue. The HMA path will maintain the shared use path width with shoulders as it meanders through the private property, a residential, industrial, and office park development, until intersecting Baker Avenue, where the path will terminate. Along the bridge segment of the path, rest and viewing areas are proposed, including benches and scenic overlooks. A louvered veil is proposed over a segment of the bridge on the south side to enhance the bridge experience for users by obstructing the view and noise of the nearby MBTA commuter rail.

The Town of Concord, MassDOT, and GPI request that the Commission review the enclosed materials at its earliest convenience, and solicit any comments the Commission may have regarding historic properties that may be within or adjacent to the project area.

Please submit all comments to Town of Concord Town Planner Elizabeth Hughes at ehughes@concordma.gov and Jeffrey Shrimpton at Jeffrey.shrimpton@dot.state.ma.us. Please feel free to contact Jeffrey Shrimpton (857.368.8824) of MassDOT Highway Division's Cultural Resources Unit if you have any questions concerning this project or the Section 106 review process.

Sincerely,

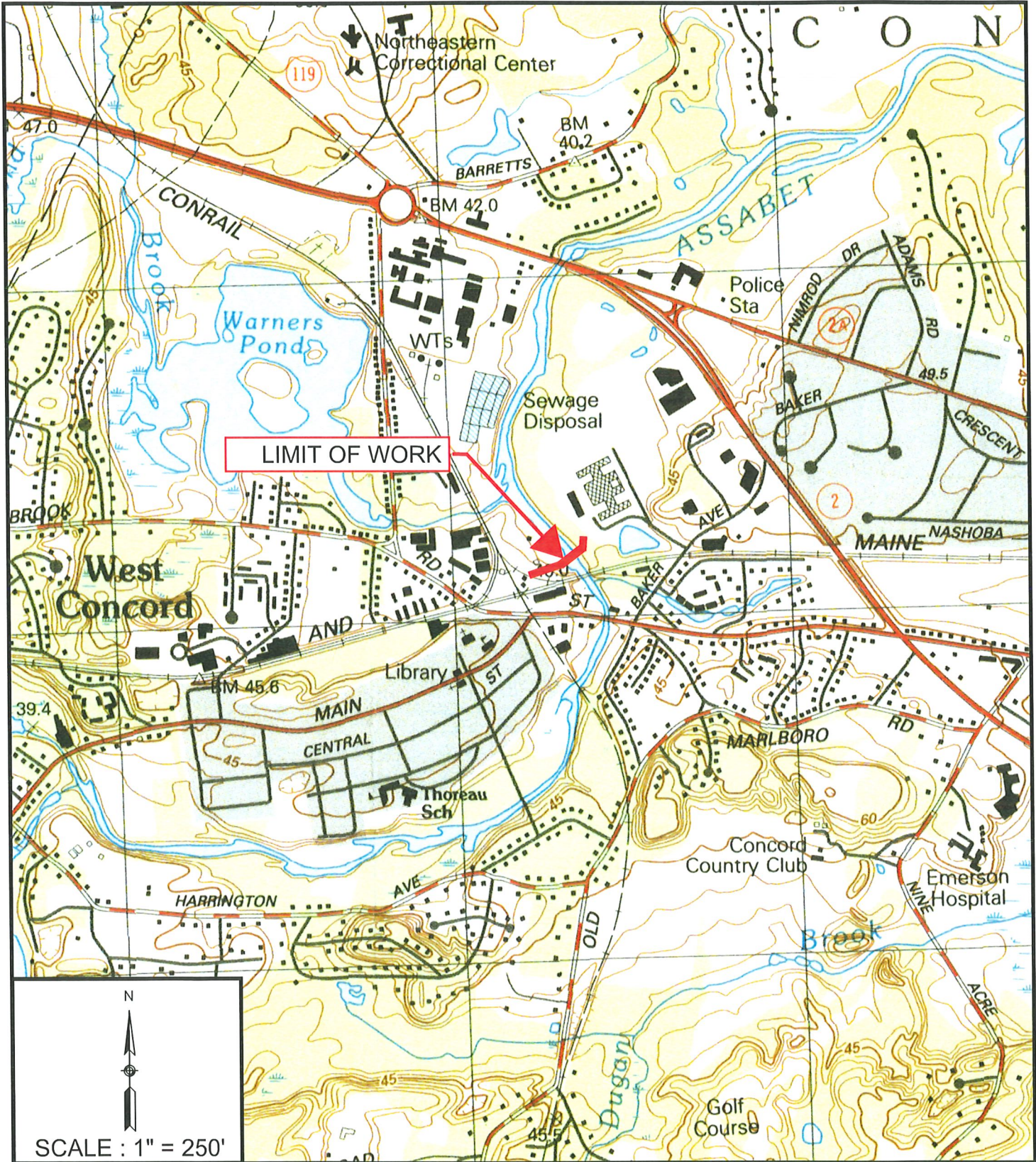
Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.



Samuel Campbell
Environmental Department Head

atts: USGS Site Locus Map

ccs: Brona Simon, Massachusetts Historical Commission, with atts. (by mail)
Jeffrey Shrimpton, MassDOT Highway Division, with atts. (by email)
Elizabeth Hughes, Town of Concord—Town Planner
Linda Walsh, MassDOT Project Manager
Michael Dami, MassDOT Highway Division – Environmental Analyst
Christopher Stairs, GPI – Project Manager & Director of Transportation Engineering
Alexa Marquis, GPI – Environmental Analyst



SCALE : 1" = 250'

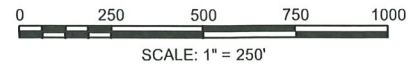


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**ASSABET RIVER MULTI-USE TRAIL
AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION
CONCORD, MA**