

Segment 4



Begin: Hardwick Elementary School (HES) Driveway

End: Creamery Road, Hardwick

Length: 3,000 +/-

Comments: The former Boston and Maine (B&M) right-of-way along this segment is no longer available for future rail or trail development due to its abandonment and formal transfer to the abutting residential landowners along this segment. If the right-of-way was still intact for development, obstacles still exist involving an active rail crossing as well as a major stream crossing [59,60,61]. This land transfer apparently occurred as part of the subdivision and development of the land between the B&M right-of-way and River Run into residential housing. As a result, the former B&M right-of-way has actually been dissolved and incorporated into part of the residential properties along the westerly side of River Run. In at least three instances, all or a portion of the former rail bed has been removed. In these areas, swimming pools, sheds, fencing, and other "backyard" structures occupy the former railroad R.O.W [62,63,64]. The remaining portion of the right-of-way contains light-to-moderate vegetative growth [65,66].

Options for trail development along this segment include a designated bicycle lane on either River Run or Lower Road or a shared "rail with trail" on the active Massachusetts Central Railroad right-of-way. These options will be discussed in more detail within this report.

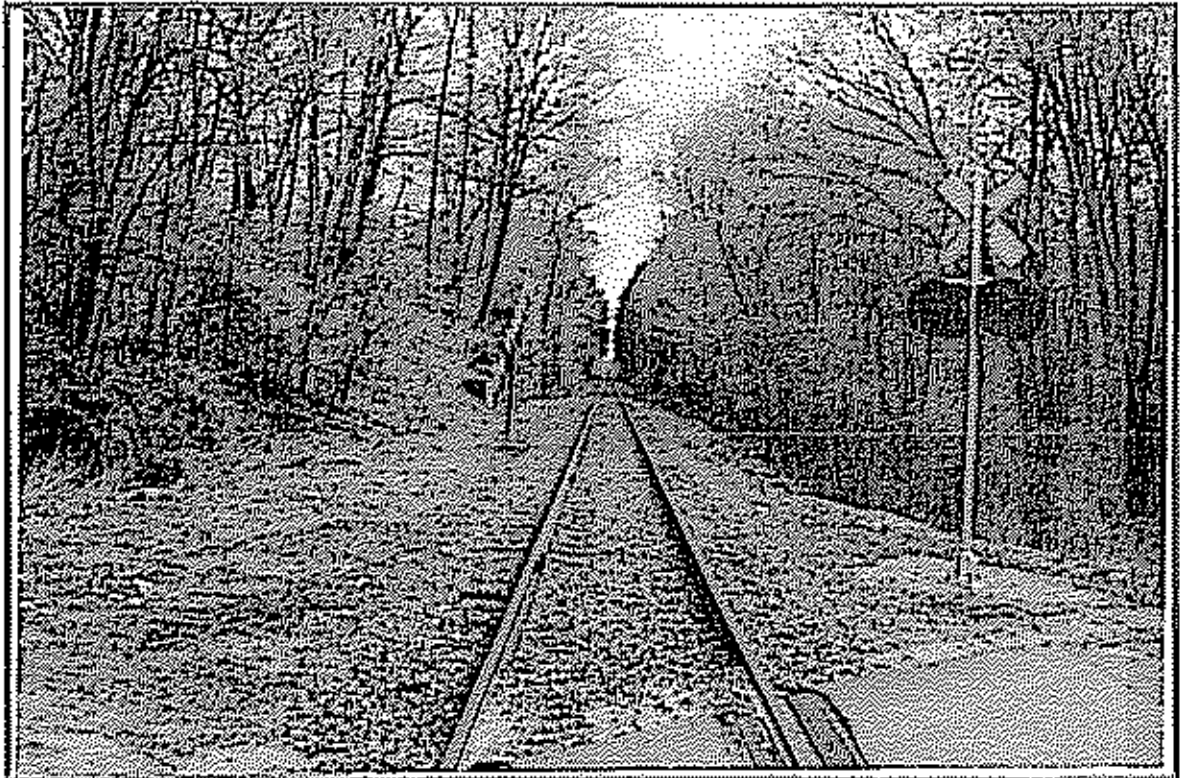
In order to continue onto segment five, a road crossing at Creamery Road is required. Creamery Road is a secondary rural road used primarily by local traffic for access to River Run as well as Unitas Road in New Braintree [67,68,69]. Traffic volume is minimal with an estimated travel speed of 25 to 30 miles per hour. Sight lines appear to be adequate for both trail user and motorist. Safety mitigation would be required including a stop sign for the trail user and a caution sign for the motorist.

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SEGMENT 4

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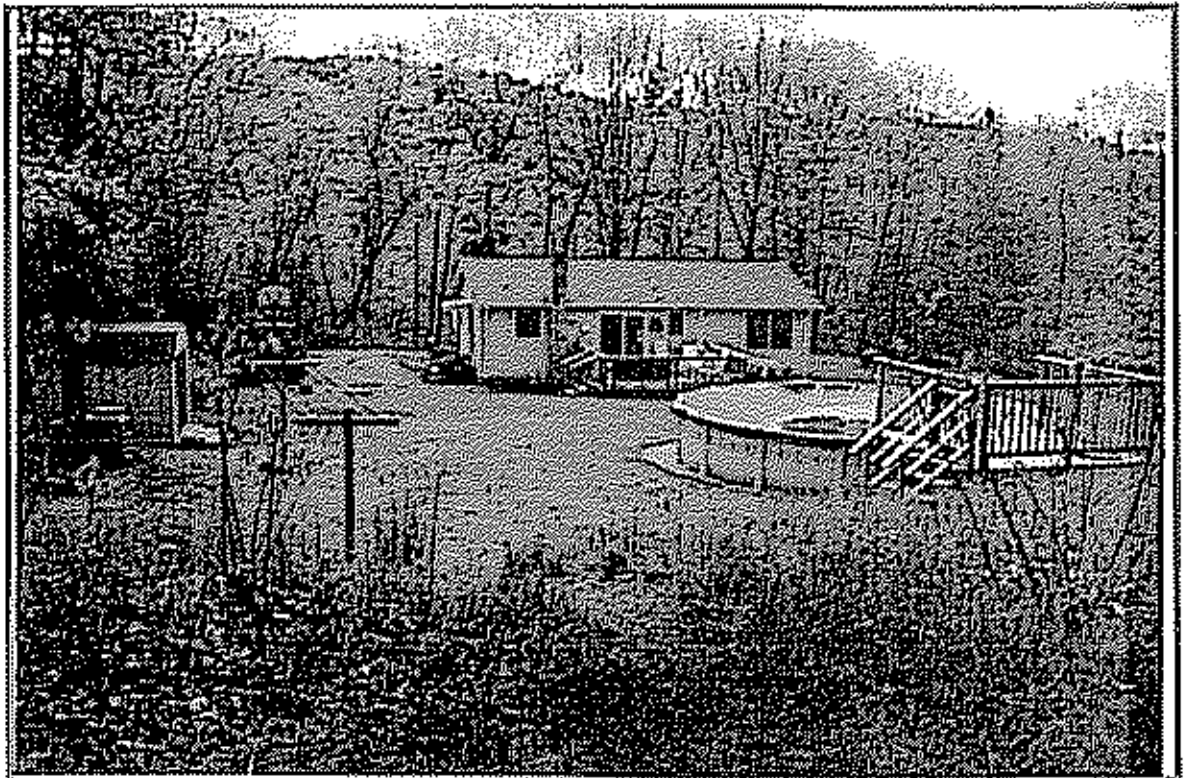


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SEGMENT 4

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SEGMENT 4

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SEGMENT 4

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SEGMENT 4

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SEGMENT 4