



The Almshouse Neshaminy Manor Center 1260 Almshouse Road
Doylestown, Pennsylvania 18901 215.345.3400 FAX 215.345.3886
E-mail: bcpc@buckscounty.org

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Executive Director

October 8, 2021

Re: Newtown Rail Trail Update

Dear Neighbors:

This announcement is the latest effort to keep you informed of the most recent developments relative to the ongoing development of the Newtown Rail Trail in Upper Southampton Township.

Trail Opening

As communicated in August, the county has been working with our engineering firm, and construction company, to determine the cause of the erosion, and to identify solutions for addressing these issues. The primary source of the erosion is due to heavier than anticipated stormwater runoff, some of which can be attributed to runoff from some adjacent properties.

Since our last communication, the county has identified, and will shortly be installing, stormwater management improvements in the area between Street Road and Tamanend Park. This is the area which has experienced the greatest amount of erosion. In addition to the implementation of stormwater management best practices, the county will be paving the section of the trail extending from 2nd Street Pike to Tamanend Park. For the remaining sections of the trail, we have started the application of an environmentally safe emulsion to help bind the existing materials together. With these various improvements, we hope to officially open the trail this year.

Invasive Vines

As you may have noticed, the county has also worked with the Penn State Extension, and their volunteers of the Master Watershed Stewards Program, to address the aggressive and invasive vines. The volunteers from the program generously donated many hours of time during September and October to help with the removal of these vines within the trail corridor. As part of the management plan, a licensed sprayer will also be applying an herbicide within the trail corridor to assist in the ongoing management of the vines.

We recognize that as adjacent property owners, many of you have been challenged by these vines for many years and have expressed an interest in understanding techniques you might use on your property to help control the vines. To assist in that effort, our contacts at the Penn State Master Watershed Stewards Program have recommended the following websites to reference for information and management techniques:



Mile-a-minute (*Persicaria perfoliate*)

<https://extension.psu.edu/mile-a-minute>

Japanese hops (*Humulus japonicus*)

<http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=3643007&DocName=JapaneseHops.pdf>

Porcelainberry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*)

<http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=3643646&DocName=Porcelainberry.pdf>

Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*)

<https://extension.psu.edu/multiflora-rose>

We have posted links to these documents on the Newtown Rail Trail Updates website located at

<https://www.buckscounty.gov/1081/Newtown-Rail-Trail-Updates>.

If you have additional questions regarding how to manage these vines on your property, we encourage you to contact the Penn State Extension Bucks County Garden/Watershed Hotline at 267-483-2020, Monday to Friday from 9:00 AM till 4:00 PM. They will be happy to discuss particular circumstances and give control recommendations.

Hazardous Trees

As communicated in August, due to the potential safety hazard presented by a number of trees, as evidenced by some already having fallen across the trail, the County has undertaken the removal of potentially hazardous trees within the SEPTA-owned/County-leased right-of-way. That work is anticipated to be completed by October 15, 2021.

Replacement of dead plantings

As communicated previously, we are aware of instances where the initial tree and shrub plantings have not survived. The County has a replacement guarantee with the landscape company that installed the trees and as part of the final inspection of the trail, any trees and shrubs that did not survive will be replaced.

Should you have any questions, please reference the Newtown Rail Trail website, <https://www.buckscounty.gov/1081/Newtown-Rail-Trail-Updates>, or contact Paul Gordon, Senior Transportation Planner at 215-345-3884, pwgordon@buckscounty.org, or Richard Brahler, Director of Transportation Planning at 215-345-3427, rgbrahler@buckscounty.org.

Sincerely,

Bucks County Planning Commission



Evan J. Stone
Executive Director

EJS/tmr