

Let's finish the Neponset Greenway!

The Commonwealth is spending millions on one missing piece from Tenean Beach to Morrissey Boulevard; we propose connecting north & south of there, with inexpensive wayfinding signage.

1. Missing piece: state DOT/DCR project (nothing proposed)
2. Connecting south to Pope John Paul II Park (this project)
3. Connecting north to Carson Beach (this project)
4. Beyond south end of Neponset Trail (after this project)

Slide show by
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City of Boston's role:

Goal is to fill the gap in the best multi-use trail in Massachusetts, but it's only partly-filled by the existing DOT/DCR project. We propose to help fill the remaining gaps inexpensively...

3. Signage north to Carson Beach

(this segment is long and usable, but unmarked because it's unconnected from the "end" of the Neponset Trail)

1. State DOT/DCR project site

(the state will build the infrastructure here, including signs; we'll see what's needed after they've finished)

2. Signage south to Pope John Paul II Park

(this segment needs wayfinding signs for a confusing on-road stretch; that would connect the state project to many miles of well-marked Neponset Trail)



1. State DOT project

- The Commonwealth (DOT/DCR) is underway with this long-needed project - we welcome it!
- We trust the DOT/DCR to install appropriate signage for the area within this project - like the granite obelisk shown.
- We're proposing wayfinding signage on both the north and south ends of the DOT/DCR project.
- We're seeking authorization from the City of Boston to install maps and signs, and funding from the Community Preservation Committee for signposts.



2. Signage south to Pope John Paul II Park (Slideshow for the mile to Tenean Beach from the south)

- There are several signs for both the Harborwalk and the Neponset Trail along this stretch, with both logos; key decision is: "What do we call this stretch?" (maybe "Harborwalk/Neponset Greenway"?)
- Need a dozen wayfinding signs because half is on-road. (maybe with a double-logo). Slides show a dozen possible spots.
- Need several maps showing connection north to DOT/DCR project and Harborwalk, and south to Neponset Trail. Slides show three existing (but empty) map kiosks; those would do!
- We can produce the maps if the City of Boston authorizes us to post them in the empty kiosks. We're seeking funding from the Community Preservation Committee to produce a dozen signs but need authorization for those too.



3. Signage south to Pope John Paul II Park (slideshow north to DOT/DCR project, showing a dozen spots for wayfinding signs)

This is exactly what's needed --
north end of Pope John Paul II Park.

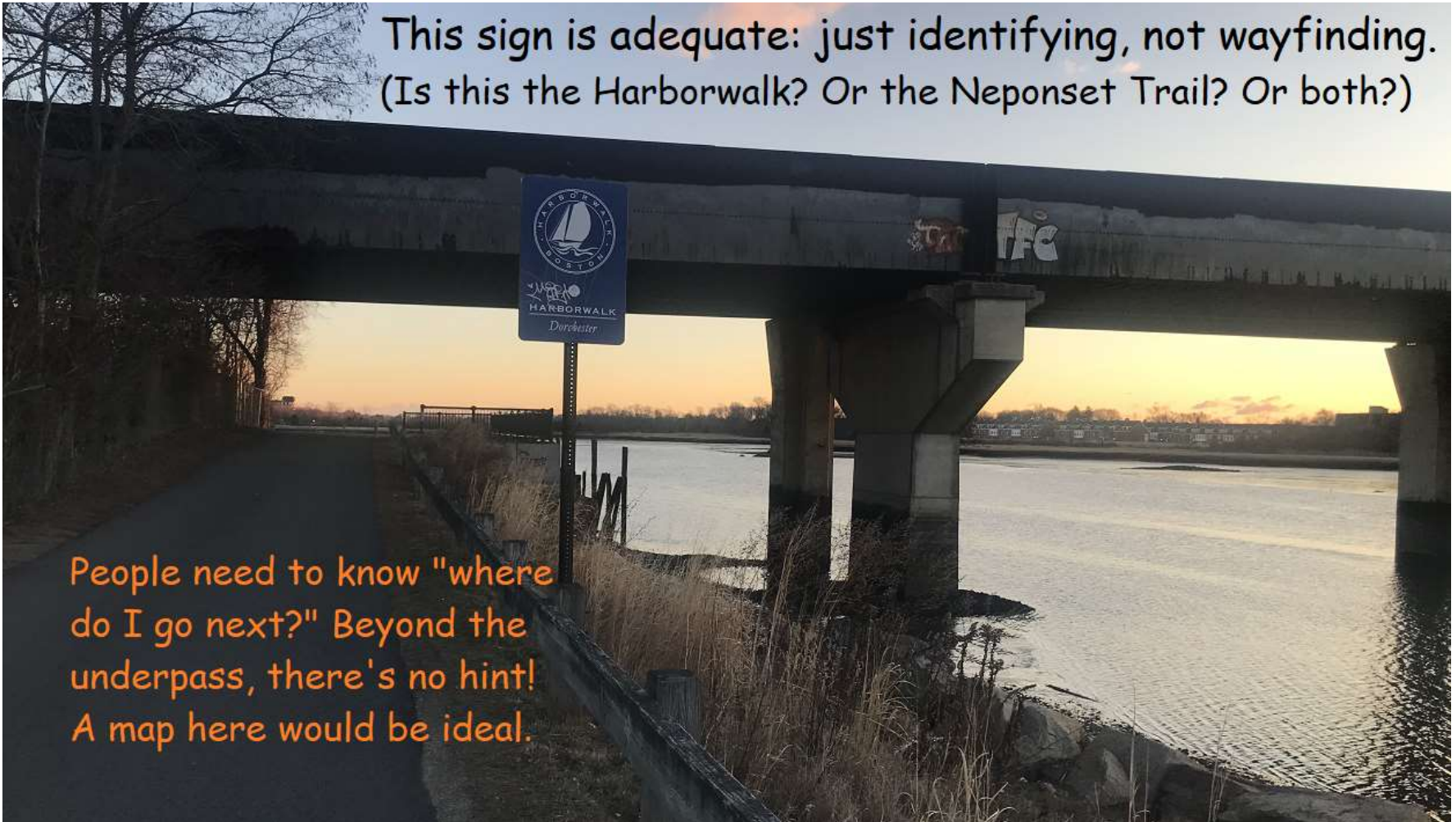


This is the last good sign:
a full mile to the DOT site



A consistent name and symbol could be spotted at a distance.
(This is the MBTA Red Line underpass; the road bridge underpass is just south)

This sign is adequate: just identifying, not wayfinding.
(Is this the Harborwalk? Or the Neponset Trail? Or both?)



People need to know "where
do I go next?" Beyond the
underpass, there's no hint!
A map here would be ideal.



This spot declares the start of the Neponset Greenway when heading south.
It could also be the start of the Harborwalk when heading north (if signs said so!)



Several wayfinding signs when heading south; none heading north.

These granite obelisks are great; and a map here, but only southward,



Ideal spot for a map - with "You Are Here" and the whole extended trail.

This kiosk is at the Taylor Street (south) end of Joseph Finnegan Park - an empty map box begging for a map!

We suggest the map extend from Carson Beach (DCR) to the Randolph side of Blue Hills (DCR) -- north and south ends of the "Neponset Greenway / Harborwalk". And mention Joseph Finnegan Park too!



Alas, the map box has no map.

"Map maintenance" is another City need.

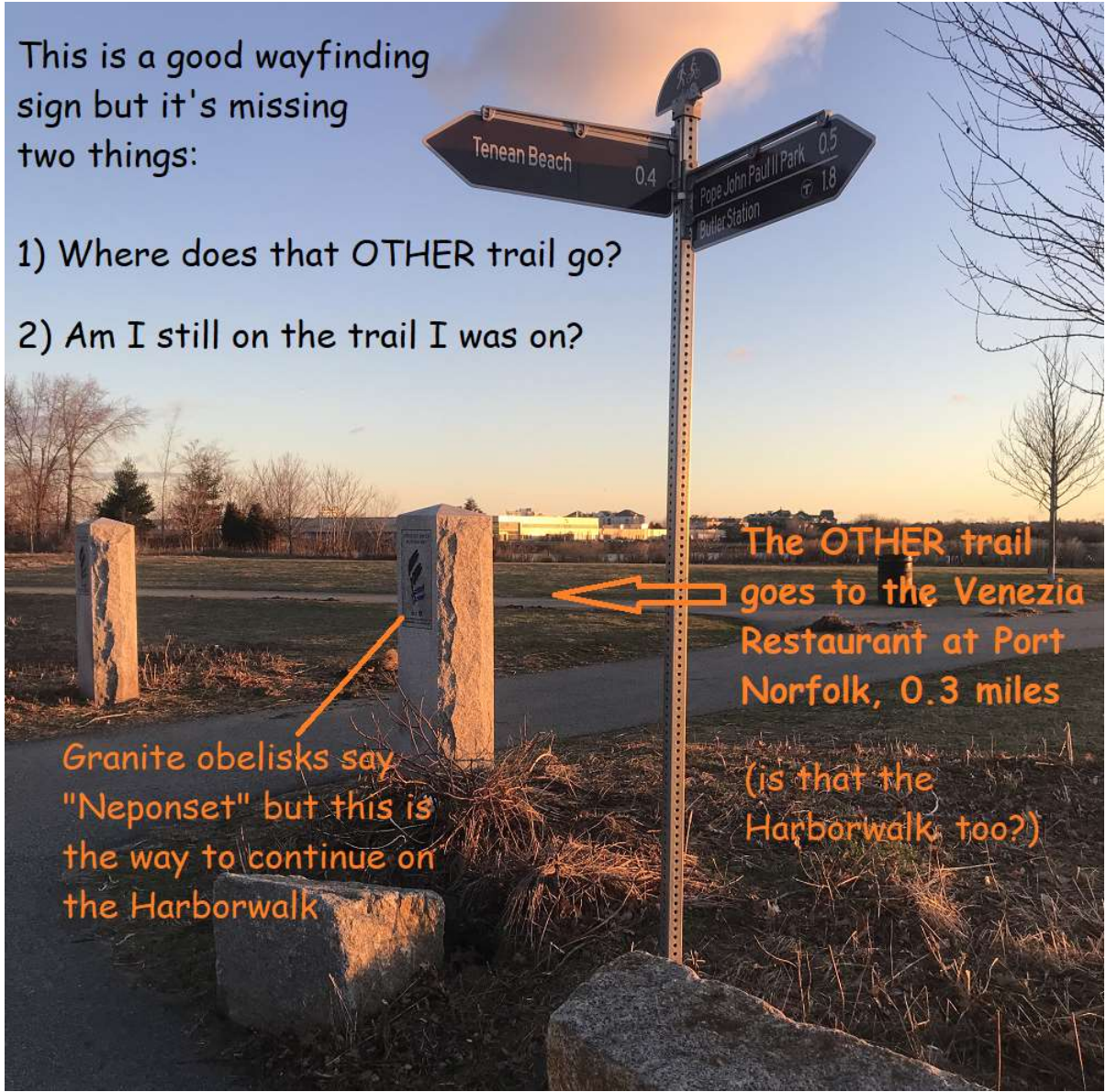
Granite obelisks are easier to maintain!

This is the other end of Joseph Finnegan Park.

The granite obelisks can be spotted from a distance, so people know they're headed in the right direction.

Consistent naming would be useful.
And consistent signage more useful.

Remember there was one "Harborwalk" sign south of the MBTA underpass; is this still the Harborwalk?



Corner of Walnut St. and Water St.

You can see Finnegan Park from this street, but because it's no longer "off-road," people need signage to know they haven't gotten lost.

Maintaining signs like used to be here --is really what we're asking for. Both wayfinding signs and maps.



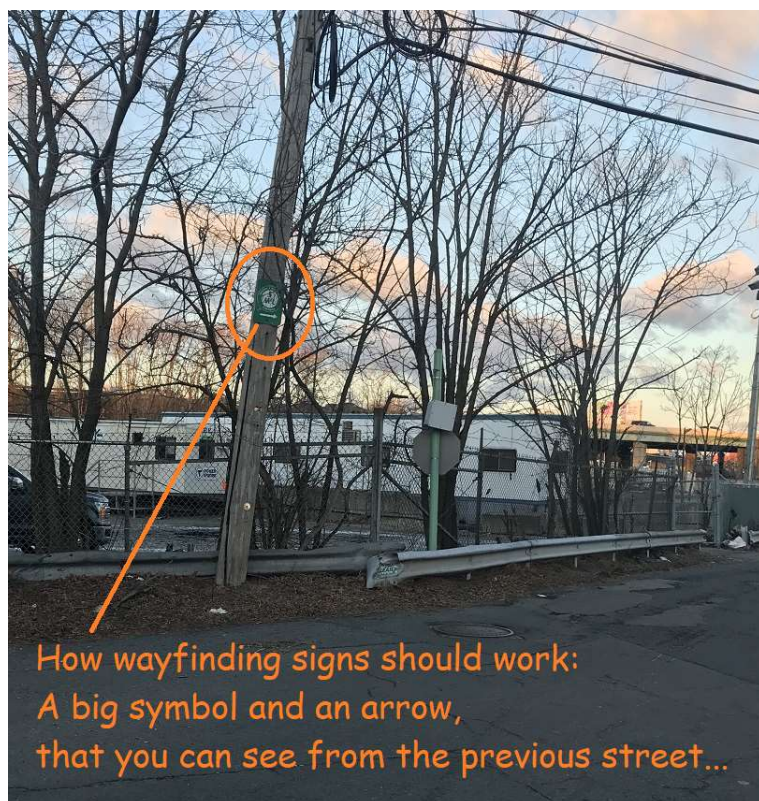
SOMEONE knew this was a good spot for a sign. But for a decade or so, this sign hasn't been maintained.

Ideal spot to indicate that you're on the trail just a block to Finnegan Park, and a full map

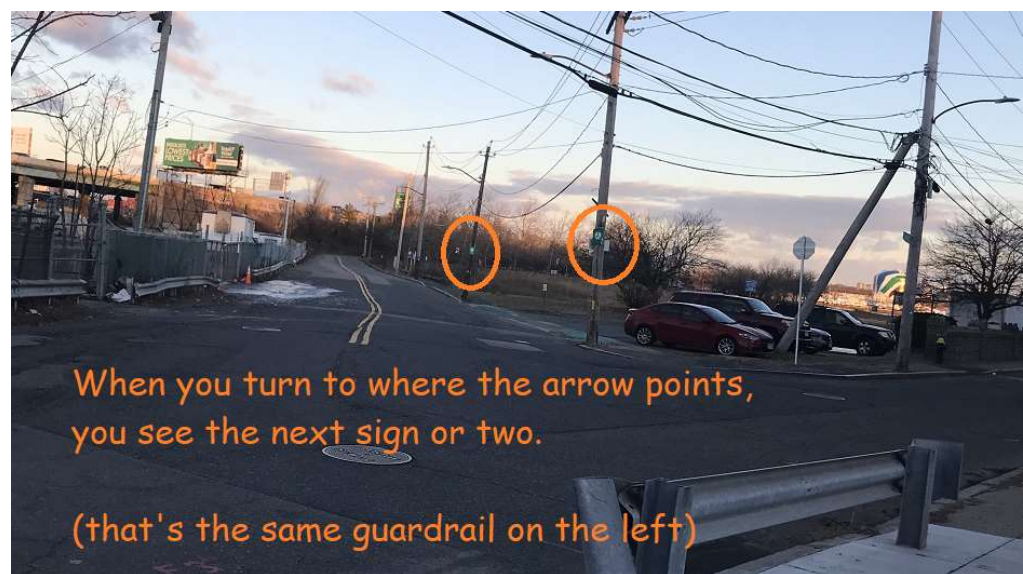
Great example of wayfinding signs - but these say "Sullivan & McLaughlin", a company located at 74 Lawley Street on the Port Norfolk peninsula (near Venezia).

Sullivan & McLaughlin Co. knows this neighborhood is very confusing and easy to get lost, so they invest in wayfinding signs.

The City of Boston should make the same investment all around the same neighborhood.



How wayfinding signs should work:
A big symbol and an arrow,
that you can see from the previous street...



When you turn to where the arrow points,
you see the next sign or two.

(that's the same guardrail on the left)

The DOT/DCR project begins just north of this point, at Tenean Beach. Is all of that part of the Harborwalk?

The sign on the left indicates this is the Harborwalk, maybe? (it officially starts at UMass)

The sign on the right indicates the Neponset Trail is southward, but Google Maps calls this spot the "Neponset Trail" (including the whole of Tenean Beach north of here).



We'd like the City of Boston to declare everything from Tenean Beach south to John Paul II Park as "Harborwalk/Neponset Greenway" with a double name, and a double symbol on each of a dozen new signs.



We're just south of Tenean Beach here, off-road off Conley Street,

The arrow here means "go south to the Neponset River Trail"?

The Harborwalk logo sign here seems to indicate we're ON the Harborwalk...

3. Signage north to Carson Beach

(About 3 miles from Morrissey Boulevard northward)

- There are several signs for the Harborwalk (not the Neponset Trail) along this stretch, so: "What do we call this stretch?"
- Need a dozen wayfinding signs because existing signs focus on road traffic and MBTA traffic. Slides show a dozen possible spots.
- Need several maps showing connection south to DOT project & Harborwalk. And maybe a couple of new map kiosks.
- We will produce these maps, too, if the City of Boston authorizes us to post them and builds kiosks. We're seeking funding from the Community Preservation Committee for that too.



Continuing northward on Morrissey Blvd., we reach UMass entrance on the right...

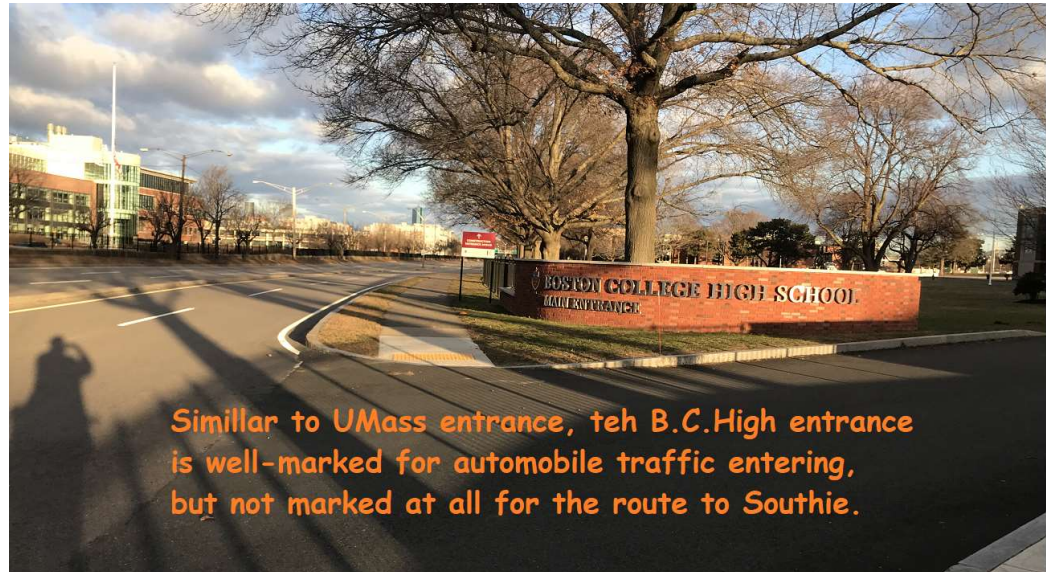
- Harborwalk turns right but "Harborwalk/Neponset Greenway" continues straight here.
- The crosswalks are well-maintained and feel safe, but there are no signs other than "UMass to the right".



- What's needed is a sign saying:
"UMass to the right; Harborwalk/Neponset Greenway straight."
- Also needed is differentiation between the Harborwalk segment that circumnavigates UMass and the long-distance trail that bypasses UMass.

B.C. High is not on the Harborwalk, but it IS on the route from the Neponset Trail to Day Boulevard...

- Entrance to BC High turns right but "Harborwalk/Neponset Greenway" continues straight here.
- The crosswalks are again well-maintained, but there are no signs other than "BC High to the right".



- What's needed is another sign saying: "BC High to the right; Harborwalk/Neponset Greenway straight."
- Adding a new "Harborwalk/Neponset Greenway" segment here would mean pedestrians could make a complete circle around all of Columbia Point. (The existing Harborwalk is about 3/4 of a complete circle)



JFK UMass MBTA station entrance

- Auto traffic has numerous signs at the split to Day Blvd to the right, and Columbia Road to the left. A pedestrian sign is needed!
- The assumption here is that any pedestrian here would want to go to the MBTA station via the overpass.
- It's not very far at all to Day Blvd., and the sidewalk is a good multi-use path.
- All that's needed is a sign saying so.



Boston Teachers' Union through-access (Day Blvd. entrance)

- The BTU parking lot disallows automobile cut-through by barriers at key spots on roadways through several parking lots.
- But pedestrians and bicyclists can readily bypass those barriers and get from here to Morrissey Blvd. (and we do!)
- The sidewalk from Morrissey Blvd. to Day Blvd. feels clear and safe, and is ok if signs say to go that way. But maybe a deal with BTU could allow this well-known shortcut to appear on the official route map.
- All that's needed is a sign saying so.



Harborwalk on Day Boulevard

- The Harborwalk continues along Day Boulevard from the BTU for 1.2 miles.
- A big map at the start might say "This path continues almost all off-road..."
 - 3.5 miles to Tenean Beach
 - 4.5 miles to Pope John Paul II Park
 - 7.9 miles to Blue Hills Parkway
 - 11.3 miles Neponset River Reservation
 - 12.3 miles to Houghton's Pond
 - 14.4 miles to Ponkapoag Pond
- Maybe the Harborwalk continues to Farragut Road - if that's so, the big map goes there instead. And at all the endpoints listed above...

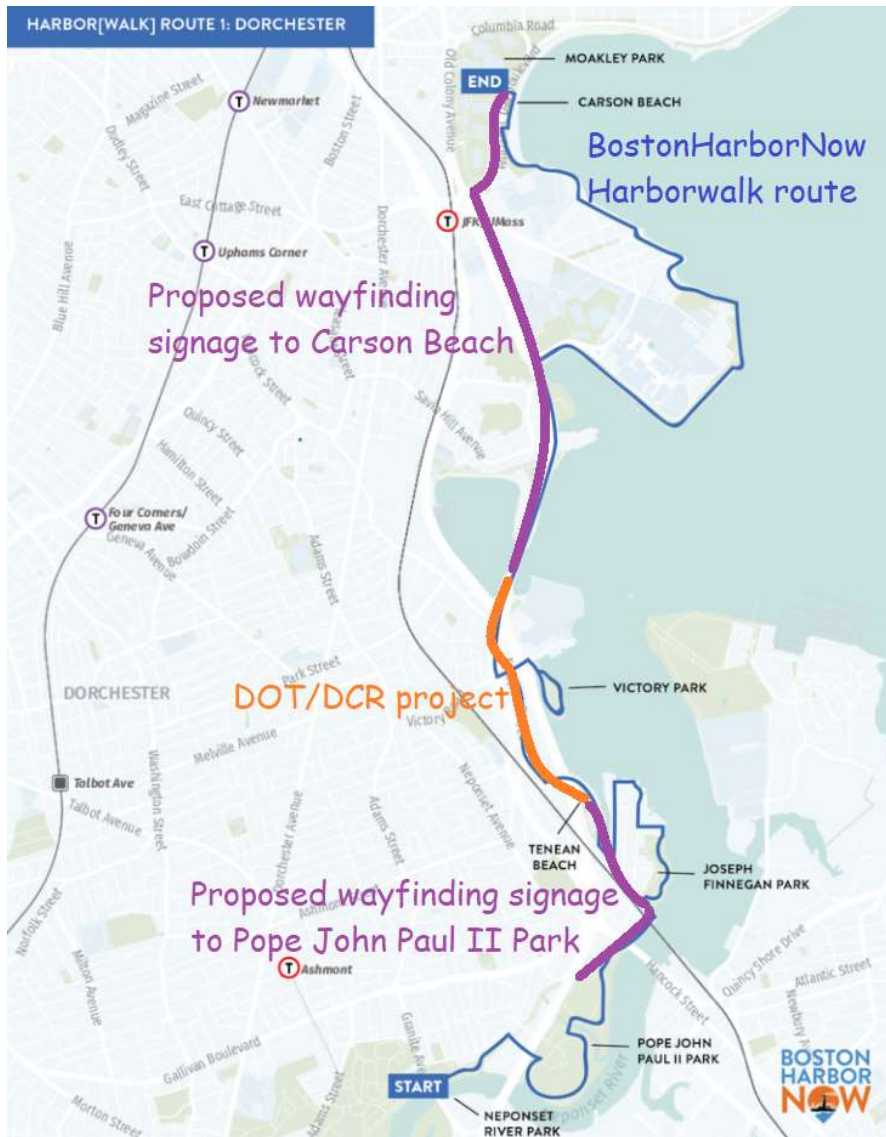


4. Beyond south end of Neponset Trail: (some big maps)

Funded by "other than Boston"

(seeking funding from two other Community Preservation Committees)

- YES: The rest of the Neponset Trail southwestward:
Connections to Milton / Houghton's Pond
(seeking funding from Milton CPC)
- NOT: Wayfinding for the rest of the Harborwalk
(UMass and other diversions are not part of this proposal)
- NOT: Connections to Quincy and Canton
(in NepRWA long-term plans but not part of this proposal)
- YES: Connections to Randolph / Ponkapoag Pond
(seeking funding from Randolph CPC)

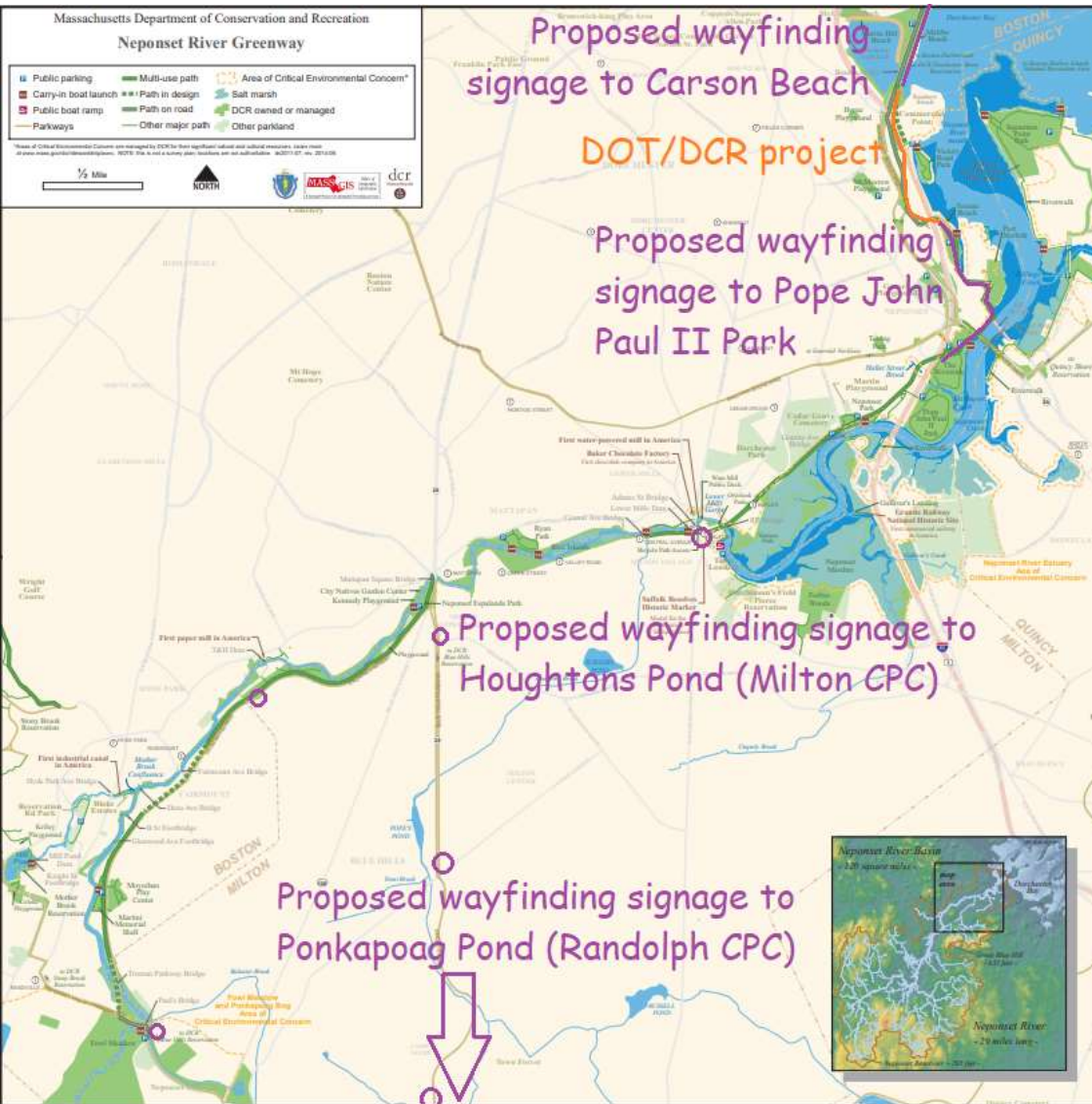


Big Map: Harborwalk

According to BostonHarborNow.org, the Harborwalk includes...

- Half of Carson Beach ("End")
- UMass coastline,
- diversion to Victory Park,
- DOT project area,
- Port Norfolk coast,
- Joseph Finnegan Park,
- Pope John Paul II park,
- Neponset River Park ("Start").

We're suggesting a "double name" for the overlap section between the Harborwalk and the Neponset Greenway.



Big Map: Neponset Greenway

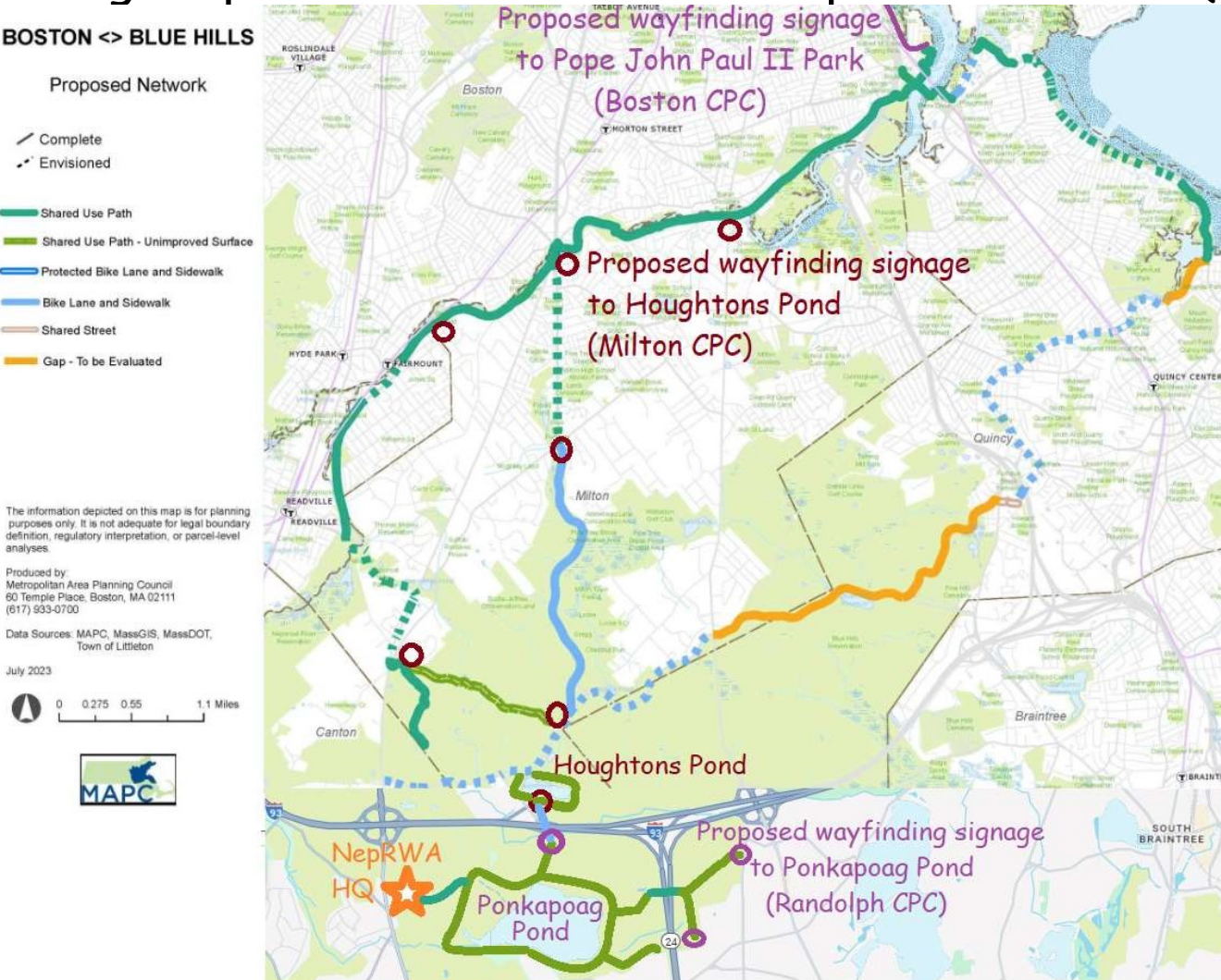
According to DCR, the Neponset River Greenway includes...

- Malibu Beach
- DOT/DCR project area,
- Tenean Beach,
- Pope John Paul II park,
- Neponset River Park,
- Neponset Esplanade Park,
- Fowl Meadow/Paul's Bridge

We're proposing wayfinding signage in two additional projects: via the Milton CPC & Randolph CPC, to connect the Neponset Greenway to the Blue Hills State Park

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/neponset-river-greenway-map-tnf/download>

Big Map: Boston <> Blue Hills Proposed Network (MAPC / NepRWC map)



The proposed wayfinding signs in Boston are the "northern end" of the Neponset Greenway. Separate proposals address the "southern end"...

Wayfinding signage in Milton along the Neponset Greenway northward to the Harborwalk AND southward to Houghton's Pond in Blue Hills Reservation (proposal to Milton CPC)

Wayfinding signs in Randolph around Ponkapoag Pond in the Blue Hills Reservation (proposal to Randolph CPC; two maps already installed; DCR project also underway)

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/neponset-river-greenway-map-tnf/download>

REFERENCES:

“Boston Harbor[walk]s Kickoff on the Dorchester Shores”

By Boston Harbor Now, October 9, 2019 [with map]

<https://www.bostonharbornow.org/boston-harborwalks-kickoff-on-the-dorchester-shores/>

“FILLING IN THE ‘MISSING LINK’: Greenway past halfway mark along Morrissey”

By Cassidy McNeeley, Dorchester Reporter, July 24, 2024

<https://www.dotnews.com/2024/filling-missing-link-greenway-past-halfway-mark-along-morrissey>

“NEPONSET RIVER GREENWAY: DORCHESTER-HYDE PARK, MASSACHUSETTS”

-BIKE IT OR HIKE IT-, January 01, 2025 (with plans for DOT project)

https://bikeitorhikeit.org/neponset_river_greenway.htm

“Boston <> Blue Hills: Proposed Network”

By Neponset River Watershed Association (MAPC map)

<https://neponset.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Boston-blue-Hills-Vision-scaled.jpg>

<https://www.neponsetgreenway.org/> (Neponset Greenway last updated 2022)

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Available online at: <https://RandolphGreenway.com/Neponset.htm>