

# **HOPKINTON UPPER CHARLES TRAIL COMMITTEE**

**January 2017 Presentation to:**

**Hopkinton Board of Selectmen**

# AGENDA

- **Overview & History**
- **Past 6 months**
- **Future Plans**
  - Funding sources
  - Time line

## Shared Use Path



# Overview & History

- 2012, Appointed by BOS
- Vision of 5 MA towns to repurpose a derelict RR bed as a multi-use trail linking Milford, Holliston, Hopkinton, Ashland, Sherborn
- Committee Charge from BOS:
  - Develop the UCT from Milford to Ashland & include the Center Trail
  - Including planning, design, permitting, property rights acquisition and construction of the Trail and associated infrastructure
  - Identify, apply for and receive any grants; may advocate for CPC funds

# TRAIL CLASSIFICATION

- **CLASS 1** (Undeveloped) Trail- Low Level use
  - No maintenance, obstructions common, native material only, single path
- **CLASS 2** (Slightly improved)- Low to moderate use
  - -little maintenance, few or no allowances for passing, tread is native materials
- **CLASS 3** (Improved-Developed)- Moderate to heavy use
  - Random accessibility usage, maintenance 1-3 yrs. to remove significant obstacles, trail bridges as needed, unhindered one-lane travel, tread is native materials
- **CLASS 4** (Highly Developed) Heavy use
  - Has potential to be made accessible, few or no obstacles, maintenance yearly, structures frequent, interpretative signage, grades less than 12 %, two lane travel, tread is native or imported hardened surface , parking and variety of signage

# TRAIL CLASSIFICATION

## (continued)

- **Class 5** (Fully Developed) Trail- Intensive use
  - meets accessibility requirements, includes Pedestrian lanes, maintenance as needed, grades less than 8%, structures frequent, signage, width accommodates 2 lane and 2 directional travel, no obstacles on trail, above or on sides, tread asphalt or other imported material, designed for urban setting with trail head parking
  - Necessary for inter-municipality connectivity which would bring visitors & business's to Hopkinton and a community facility that the citizens can embrace & bring many more recreational opportunities to Town.
    - If we shortcut the process, the publics expectations will not be met.

# Upper Charles Trail Committee

## Design Guiding Principles

The UCT will integrate Hopkinton's recreation, conservation, education and economic development by providing connectivity to points of interest, downtown and other local trails

- Points of interest could include connecting school properties, Hopkinton Center for the Arts, EMC Field Complex, downtown businesses, and College Rock
- Promote downtown travel via the Main Street multi use path
- Follow Federal, State & accessibility guidelines and engage consultants
- Utilize town owned land and easements as necessary
  - Outreach to citizens & BOS when viable recommendations are mapped

# Conway School Study 2014-2015

- Engaged to look at options and challenges connecting from Milford UCT to the Center Trail and beyond.
- With no obvious routes clearly available, this study mapped options to consider for Hopkinton.

## Identified Challenges:

- Unlike Milford & Holliston, ownership of the old RR bed is divided between nearly 50 private owners
- Alternate routes limited by: private property, terrain, wetlands, narrow, busy roads.

# MAIN STREET CONNECTION

- UCTC Worked with Town officials & DOT representatives to create a model, **double lane, two way separated bike path and sidewalk** .  
The Main Street connection will:
  - Provide residents and visitors a safer way to connect from the Center Trail to Downtown.
  - Meet State mandated bikeway requirements: min. is 5 feet bike lane on each side of the road
- This multi use path would be unique to the MetroWest area, and would be the first of it's kind in the State.
- The Town is working on 25% design that includes this multi use path among other improvements to the downtown corridor

# Downtown bike/pedestrian path example



# Neighborhood Trails

## UCTC is COMMITTED TO MINIMIZING DISRUPTION TO EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

### Physical changes to roadway/sidewalks

- shoulder stripes should be painted on roads to provide bike lanes for both sides of the road, signs installed for bike usage.
- Existing sidewalks would need to be widened to 6 feet wide to accommodate pedestrian traffic.

### Quality of Life Change

- Increase level of noise
- Increase level of street parking
- Disruption of current peaceful atmosphere through out neighborhood

# Comparable Trails

	Milford	Holliston	Bruce Freeman Trail	Hopkinton
<b>Trail Class</b>	5	4	5	Center Trail 4
<b># Miles (completed)</b>	6.6	4.2 (phase 1)	6.8 (phase 1)	TBD
<b>Years Start to Finish</b>	18 years	15 years + still in construction	13 years + still in construction	TBD
<b>% of old RR bed used for final trail</b>	61%	80%	100 % phase 1	TBD

# The Past 6 Months

After the Town purchased the Irvine/Todaro property we investigated the possibility of tying the UCT in with the town's schools, Hopkinton Center for the Arts, and the EMC Field Complex.

- Given the timing of school construction, we placed a high priority on investigating ways in which the UCT could leverage this newly owned Town property.
- We discussed the possibility with School Superintendent and Planning Board
- An easement was requested and granted for a possible trail through the property.

The Committee hired VHB Engineering to prepare 3 separate feasibility studies using the following criteria for each potential trail area:

1. Provide multiple potential routes for the UCT in each area
2. Identify the obstacles in each, using the State, Federal and accessibility guidelines
3. Provide approximate construction costs for each area

# Design Criteria from VHB Consulting Engineers

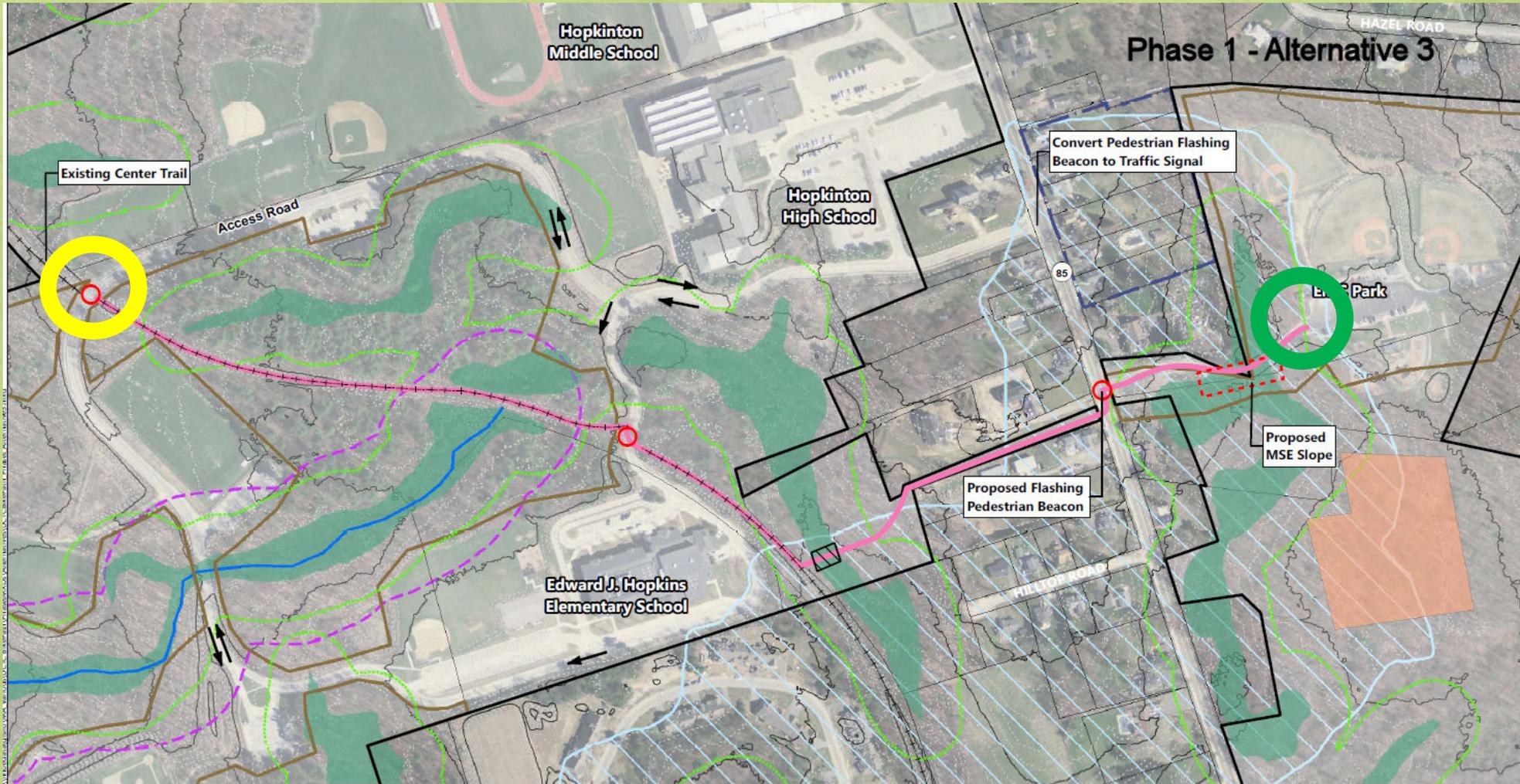
The project criteria has been derived based on standard engineering practices and successful application of regulatory standards. The primary references for the project criteria listed include:

- American with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines for Shared-Use Path
- Massachusetts Department of Transportation *Separated Bike Lane Planning*
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)
- AASHTO 2011 : *Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*
- The *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD)
- Related DOT Engineering Directives

# UC Trail Potential Segments Identified

- **Phase I** = Connecting the existing Center Trail with the current schools on Hayden Rowe Street and the EMC Field Complex
  - Feasibility study complete
- **Phase II** = Connecting the EMC Field Complex and the planned Elementary School (Irvine/Todaro site) to the Chestnut Street corridor.
  - Feasibility study complete
- **Phase III** = Connecting the existing Center School on Ash Street to the eastern boarder of the Town owned parcel South of Prestwick Drive (behind Rt. 135)
  - Feasibility study complete
- **Phase IV (FUTURE)** = Connecting the Milford Bike Trail to the Center Trail/Loop Road
  - Feasibility study in process

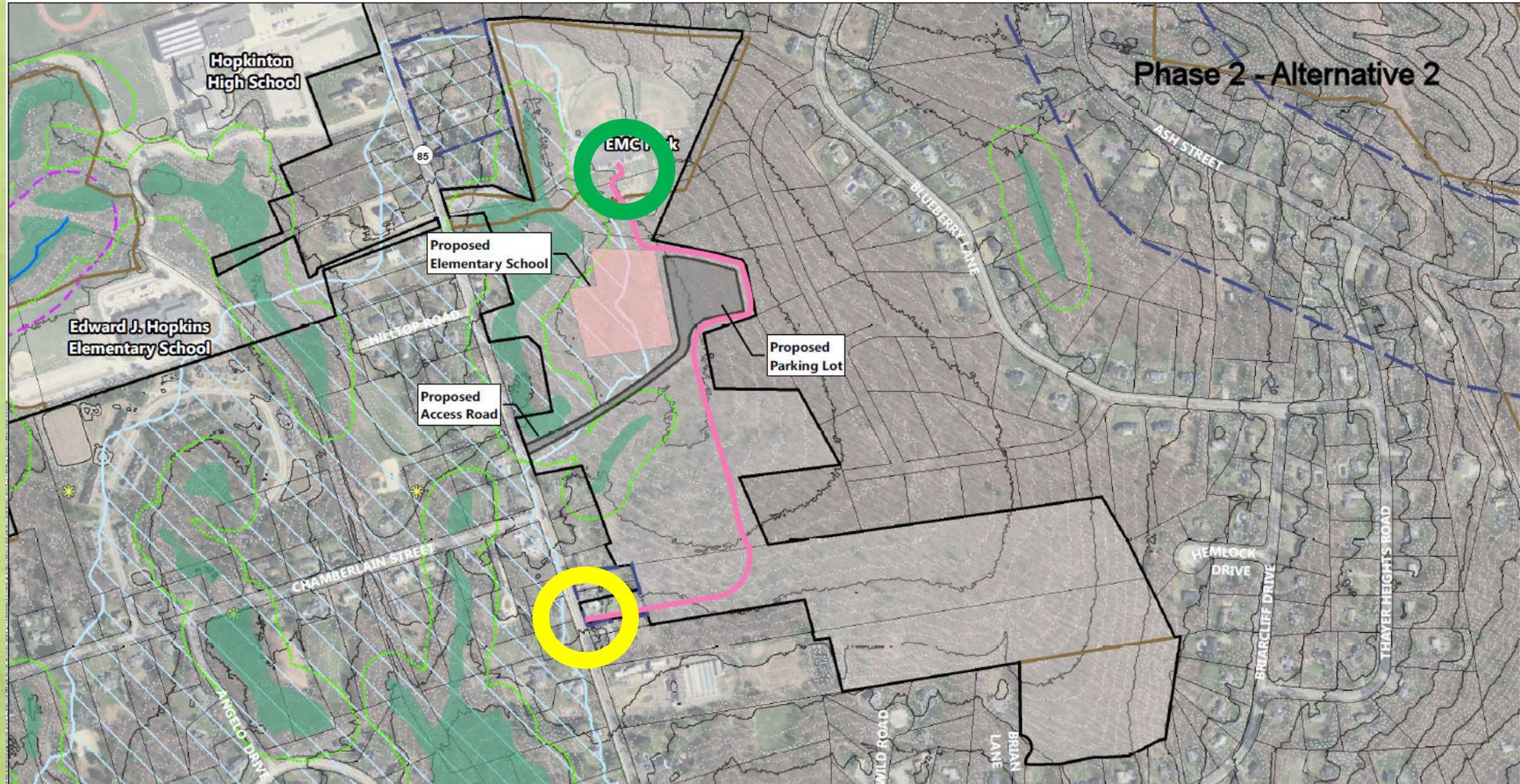
# PHASE 1 - EMC to Center Trail



# Summary- Phase 1, EMC to Center Trail

- This phase connects EMC Field Complex to the current Schools on Hayden Rowe
- This phase also adds connectivity to the Hopkinton Center for the Arts
- From the Center Trail, the proposed trail connects to downtown businesses and the Town Common via the in-process Main Street multi use path

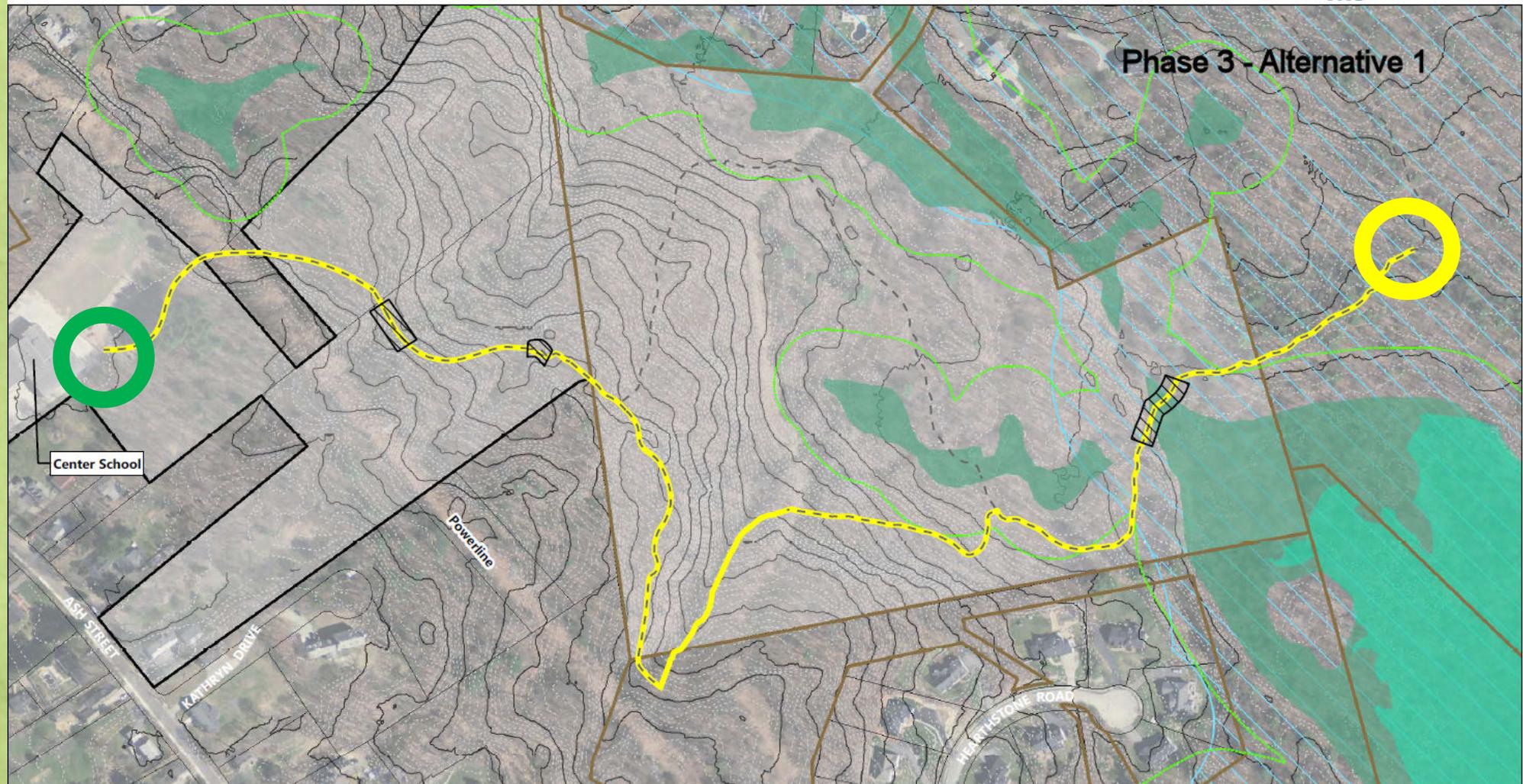
# Phase 2 – EMC to New Elementary School Site



# SUMMMARY PHASE 2, EMC to New Elementary School Site

- This phase connects the planned elementary school to the EMC Field Complex
- The southern piece of the Irvine/Tadaro property provides a trail head for parking
  - Because we do not want users parking along town streets and in neighborhoods, we would need to develop a large parking area(s) for users along the trail system if we do not take the UCT through this property
- The southern exit point of this phase gets us that much closer to the Milford Trail

# PHASE 3 – Center School towards Legacy Farms



# SUMMARY PHASE 3, Center School towards Legacy Farms

- Using Town property gets us headed toward Legacy Farm and much closer to Ashland
- This part of the trail would provide exciting, distinct & a unique path unlike any in the area
- It also connects the East side of Hopkinton to the downtown area

# FUTURE PLANS

- **FINALIZE** the Hopkinton Upper Charles Trail route
- **DETERMINE** funding sources
- **DEVELOP** a realistic timeframe for trail connection

# PHASE 4- Objective

As the bird flies it is 2.2 miles from the Milford bike trail to the Center Trail-

Unlike the previous maps, which were generated by VHB engineers, the following maps highlight the **conceptual routes** that will be used by the UCT committee to guide VHB using the following criteria:

- provide multiple options
- advise of challenges & obstacles
- provide a cost estimate





# Trail Costs & Potential Funding Sources

- **Ballpark cost estimate for a class 5 trail: \$1 million/mile-**
  - The State would pay for 90% of construction costs. The Town would be responsible for 10% of construction cost when accepted thru TIP
- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**
  - \$10 million awarded annually
  - Projects that leverage connectivity are given priority
  - Town would have to pay for the preliminary design study (aprox 10% of construction costs) before applying for TIP funding
  - Typically a four-year project backlog
- **Recreational Trails Program**
  - Administered through DCR
  - \$0.7 million awarded annually to non-motorized recreation initiatives
  - Preliminary design study is not required to apply for DCR funds
  - Used primarily for smaller trail improvement projects

# Conceptual TIMEFRAME for Hopkinton UC TRAIL

- **2017:** Determine Milford Connection
- **2018:** Determine Ashland Connection/ Finalize trail route
  - Approval of funds for preliminary design study by CPC in Fall 2018
- **2019:** Approve funds for preliminary design study plans at Town Meeting-
- **2020:** Receive preliminary design study/Enter TIP program
- **2021:** In cue for TIP program
- **2022:** In cue for Tip program
- **2023:** In cue for TIP program/Solicit bids
- **2024:** Begin construction
- **2025:** Finish Construction

# SUMMARY

- The UCTC charged with developing Multi-Use Trail connecting to Milford & Ashland
- The UCTC will attempt to minimize disruption to neighborhoods
- The UCTC is only in planning stage of data & research collection, however has a realistic timeframe/ plan has been established
- Safe crossing of Rt. 85 and other intersections are high priorities
  - Multiple crossing of the busy highway may disrupt traffic and be dangerous for trail users.
  - Whether the trail will proceed on the east or west side of Route 85 (or a combination thereof) is to be determined.
- The UCTC will provide periodic updates to the BoS and the public
- Our priorities include finding the most economical route that encompasses interesting geographic features and embraces our Town's businesses and facilities in a manner that benefits the entire Hopkinton community.

# QUESTIONS



Visit our web site at [UCTC.hopkintonma.gov](http://UCTC.hopkintonma.gov)