Concord River Greenway Park
Multi-lingual Signage

2008 Mass History Conference
Worcester, MA  June 9, 2008

Jane Calvin, Executive Director
Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust
Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust
Connecting People with Where They Live

- Concord River Greenway
- White Water Rafting
- Historic Preservation
- Urban Forestry
- Land Protection
- Environmental Education/Youth
Concord River
Greenway
Changing Perception by Connecting with People at Multiple Levels
Concord River Greenway

- Reconnects neighborhoods
- Reconnects Lowell’s largest open spaces
- Construction begins 2008 – this June!
- Total cost = $3+ million
Not just a Greenway!

Project will be linked to flora/fauna research and socio-economic and land use history research

- Mass Audubon ECO-inventory
- Oral History Project/Signage
Outreach Events
Concord River Greenway

Section I to be constructed Summer 2008, including public art and historic signage
Greenway – Before & After
Greenway – Before & After
Concord River Greenway: A History of the River and Adjacent Neighborhoods

Chad Montrie (UML History Department) and LP&CT

Lawrence Street Bridge, Concord River (Photo: Center for Lowell History)
Henry David Thoreau
A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers (1849)

“But now at length we heard this staid and primitive river rushing to her fall, like any rill. We here left its channel, just above the Billerica Falls, and entered the canal, which runs, or rather is conducted, six miles through the woods, to the Merrimack, at Middlesex, and as we did not care to loiter in this part of our voyage, while one ran along the tow-path drawing the boat by a cord, the other kept it off the shore with a pole, so that we accomplished the whole distance in little more than an hour.”

Concord River Oral History Project, C. Montrie
Historic Wayside Signage for Greenway

**Nature**

The Lowell Cemetery is one of the oldest "garden" cemeteries in the United States. Established in 1841, it was meant to be a burial ground for the dead and a park-like retreat for the living.

Water-powered manufacturing started early on the lower Concord River. Here, eighteenth-century settlers built numerous dams and mills to saw lumber, grind grain, and card wool. In 1818, Moses Hale erected several buildings at Wamesit Falls to make gunpowder.

**Industry**

**Community**

With the growth of industry in the nineteenth century, Lowell attracted thousands of immigrants. The first large group of foreign-born came from England and Ireland, and waves of immigrants from other countries followed, often organizing their lives around a church.

"Who looks upon a river in a meditative hour, and is not reminded of the flux of all things?"

- Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nature (1836)
Which Languages?

- Proximity to locale of signage
- Audience you are trying to reach
- Unique populations

We chose:

Spanish, Portuguese, & Khmer
Greenway Sign #2

WAMESIT FALLS OVERLOOK

Nature
Where Wannalancet’s seventeenth-century palisade fort once stood, Rogers Fort Hill Park was established in 1886, on the site of the Rogers family farm. The formal paths and fountains of the park’s lower portion were designed by the Olmsted firm and completed decades later.

Industry
Starting as an overseer at Moses Hale’s gunpowder factory, Oliver Whipple married Hale’s youngest daughter and took over the business in 1821. That same year he also financed construction of the Wamesit Canal, which extended to its fall reach by mid-century and powered other mills and factories drawn to the area.

Community
Even as late as the 1920s, most of the residents in the Lower Concord River corridor—the Sacred Heart, Back Central, and Lower Belvidere neighborhoods—were either foreign-born or the children of foreign-born parents.

Parents of Massachusetts-Born Residents in Concord River Neighborhoods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both Parents Foreign-Born</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Parent Foreign-Born</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Parents U.S.-Born</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General Advice

- Finalize text before translating
- Seek multiple translators for each language
- Decide what will be translated
- Decide on sign format and how to integrate translations early on in process
- Leave more time than you think for translation process
Greenway Sign #3

**Nature**

Children growing up in Concord River neighborhoods played in local parks, vacant lots, and even abandoned mills. They also fished and swam in the river and canals, in spite of certain hazards. Dye waste turned swimmers fingernails various colors, and the water reeked of sanitary waste.

"There was an old footbridge that went over the river down there, right in back of the mills. When I was a kid, you’d go up to Fort Hill Park and take that as a shortcut home. Over the years the water had washed boards away. It was just the metal structure. You’d have to kind of balance your way to walk across it. That’s what we called the ‘balley’ bridge."

— Martin Longyear, former Crowley Street resident

**Industry**

The Lowell & Andover Railroad was completed in 1874, branching off from the Boston & Maine below Lawrence Street and traveling a short path on what is now the Concord River Greenway. With this rail access, Perry Street finally saw the arrival of business and trade.

American Hick and Leather, located on the site now occupied by Bradford Industries, was one of the largest tanneries in the United States. It stood in 1936, and the buildings were licensed by the in the 1950s. (photo right)

**Community**

In the 1890s, immigrants began to come to Lowell from the Azores, Madeira, and Cape Verde islands, as well as continental Portugal. Many of them settled in Back Central and, in 1907, they built their own church, St. Anthony’s of Lisbon, on Central Street.

"The Portuguese always kept their homes very neat and clean. They had all different kinds of flowers, of course, but they also had grapevines, and they’d have the arches."

— Mary Lou Longley, former Equate Street resident

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**Spanish**

"Quién mira a un río en un estado meditativo de paz, está recordando el flujo de todas las cosas."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nature (1836)
Avoid “Spanglish”

- New immigrants may provide more of a word for word translation
- Multiple translators will avoid this issue
- Sample: Portuguese
  - The first large group of foreign-born came from England and Ireland, and waves of immigrants from other countries followed, *often organizing their lives around a church.*
  - O primeiro grande grupo de estrangeiros nascidos no exterior veio da Inglaterra e Irlanda seguidos de ondas de imigrantes de outros países, *muitas vezes organizando suas vidas ao redor de igrejas.*
  - FINAL VERSION ... *sendo igrejas o ponto focal da vida comunitária.*
Greenway Sign #4

**Nature**

Although River Meadow Brook and the Concord River once teemed with shad and alewife, by the nineteenth century, dams blocked fish runs and the waters ran heavy with industrial waste and domestic sewage.

**Industry**

The first mill at Mazzie Falls was an iron works, built in 1791 by Nathan Ames on the west bank of the river. By the 1920s the site belonged to the Lowell Electric Light Company, which also opened a generating facility on the opposite bank, north of Rogers Street.

**Community**

Smaller in number than other immigrant groups in the area, Back Central’s Armenian population was still large enough to establish St. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church in 1920, near Lawrence and Church Streets. Many of the immigrants’ children attended the nearby Colburn School, built in 1879.

"My uncle threw the trash right in the river, right off the [Rogers Street] bridge. And down there, there was washing machine. I mean picking up out of the water. ... People used to put it in, and no one hated an eye. That's not what everybody used to do, throw [their trash] in the river."

Richard Maloney, former Haskin Street resident
Space for Translations

- Each language will take up a different amount of space.
- Word length – Khmer had very long words (sometimes an entire line).
Community Sign #5
Smaller in number than other immigrant groups in the area, Back Central’s Armenian population was still large enough to establish St. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church in 1920, near Lawrence and Church Streets. Many of the immigrants’ children attended the nearby Colburn School, built in 1879.

Khmer

ខ្មែរ

Portuguese

Comunidade
Em menores números do que outros grupos imigrantes da área, a população arménica da vizinhanca do Back Central ainda era grande o suficiente para estabelecer St. Vartanantz Igreja Apostólica da Arménia, em 1920, perto das Ruas Lawrence e Church. Muitas das crianças de imigrantes frequentavam a Escola Colburn, construída em 1879 e situada na vizinhanca.

Spanish

Comunidad
Con el comienzo de la inmigración del sur y del este de Europa al principio del siglo viente, una inundación de inmigrantes polacos y lituanios llegó al vecindario que se conoce como Lower Belvidere. Tipicamente los polacos asistían a la Iglesia Holy Trinity, en la calle High entre las calles Oak y Porter, y los lituanos asistían a la Iglesia St. Joseph’s Lithuanian en la calle Rogers.
Historic Wayside Signage for Greenway

Middlesex Falls

Nature

Drawing on centuries of tradition, native inhabitants used the land along the Concord River to cultivate corn, beans, and squash together in the same field. Beans restored soil fertility; squash leaves shaded the ground, and corn stalks provided a scaffold for beans. Plant diversity also minimized the threat of insect pests.

Community

With the onset of immigration from southern and eastern Europe at the turn of the twentieth century, a flood of Polish and Lithuanian immigrants came to lower Boxford. Typically, the Poles attended Holy Trinity on High Street between Oak and Porter Streets, and the Lithuanians went to St. Joseph's Lithuanian Church on Rogers Street.

Industry

Middlesex Falls was first dammed in the eighteenth century to power a grist mill and saw mill on the west bank. Later, in 1838, entrepreneur Thomas Hurd oversaw construction of a new dam as well as a power canal for textile manufacturing there. The Middletown Manufacturing Company produced woolen goods at the site until the early twentieth century, when it began renting its mill buildings in the 1920s as the textile industry declined. In 1956, the Warren Street property was converted into a parking garage.

“A Strong Protest Against Rebuilding of Tannery in Howe Street

On the east bank of Middlesex Falls, the White Brothers opened a tannery, which they sold to American icon and leader in 1899. After a controversy over rebuilding the collapsed framing house, they moved all operations to Perry Street.

“I was born in the Fayette Street area, and right behind the house where I lived was the river. On the left was a French family, the Pons. We were the Polish family, Rachel (name) was in the middle, and on the right I remember the Killiey, the Irish family. And on the top of the hill we had a black family, the Edmunds.”

— Mary Lou Lemay, former Fayette Street resident
Other insights...

- Portuguese
  - Brazil – growing population in Lowell
  - or Portugal
  - or Azores – some of the early immigrants and a large population of Azorean Portuguese live on the Concord River
Historic Wayside Signage for Greenway

**Nature**
Until the mid-eighteenth century, there was an island in the Concord River, downstream from Middlesex Falls, that provided two good fishing places at either end. Wampanoag Indians and early white settlers caught shad, alewife, eel, and salmon in great quantities, before dams and pollution decimated fish stocks.

**Industry**
Constructed in 1790 to facilitate the movement of people and goods around Pawtucket Falls, the Pawtucket Canal became part of an extensive power canal system used by Lowell's textile mills. This included the Massachusetts Mills, built at the Merrimack and Concord River confluence in 1841, as well as the adjacent Prescott Mills, incorporated in 1844.

**Community**
During the end of the nineteenth century, an increasing number of immigrants came to live and work in Lowell. Irish, English, and Canadians made up the largest portion of foreign-born residents in the city’s Concord River neighborhoods, but many other ethnic groups were also represented, sometimes by only one person from a particular country.
ផ្លែក្តែង

ដំបូងបង្ហាញថ្មីប្រលេងនូវផ្លែក្តែងសម្រាប់ដោយផ្លែក្តែងត្រូវបានដឹងថា គឺជាគ្មជាតិដ៏អស្ចារ្យបំផុតដ៏អស្ចារ្យបំផុត។ បើមានអ្នកដែលបានផ្តល់ឱ្យប្រឈមប្រាក់ប្រមែរពោលប្រព័ន្ធរបស់ខ្លួនឯង ប្រាប់អ្នកនឹងបានប្រឈមប្រាក់ប្រមែរពោលប្រព័ន្ធរបស់ខ្លួនឯង។

ប្រការ្ក្រែអត្បី

ក្រុមប្រវត្តិវិជ្ជាចូលប្រហិតដើម្បីពន្លឱសប្រវត្តិក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មី។ វាមានការព្យាយាមលើប្រព័ន្ធវីដូនដែលបានបញ្ជាក់ថាក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មីប្រហុកពីម៉ាស៊ីនម៉ាស៊ីនពីរ។ ក្រុមប្រវត្តិវិជ្ជាចូលប្រហិតដើម្បីពន្លឱសប្រវត្តិក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មី។

សិក្សាចូល

ក្រុមប្រវត្តិវិជ្ជាចូលប្រហិតដើម្បីពន្លឱសប្រវត្តិក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មី។ វាមានការព្យាយាមលើប្រព័ន្ធវីដូនដែលបានបញ្ជាក់ថាក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មីប្រហុកពីម៉ាស៊ីនម៉ាស៊ីនពីរ។ ក្រុមប្រវត្តិវិជ្ជាចូលប្រហិតដើម្បីពន្លឱសប្រវត្តិក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មី។

អត្បីអនុញ្ញាតូច

ក្រុមប្រវត្តិវិជ្ជាចូលប្រហិតដើម្បីពន្លឱសប្រវត្តិក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មី។ វាមានការព្យាយាមលើប្រព័ន្ធវីដូនដែលបានបញ្ជាក់ថាក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មីប្រហុកពីម៉ាស៊ីនម៉ាស៊ីនពីរ។ ក្រុមប្រវត្តិវិជ្ជាចូលប្រហិតដើម្បីពន្លឱសប្រវត្តិក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មី។

ប្រការលំដាប់ចូល

ក្រុមប្រវត្តិវិជ្ជាចូលប្រហិតដើម្បីពន្លឱសប្រវត្តិក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មី។ វាមានការព្យាយាមលើប្រព័ន្ធវីដូនដែលបានបញ្ជាក់ថាក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មីប្រហុកពីម៉ាស៊ីនម៉ាស៊ីនពីរ។ ក្រុមប្រវត្តិវិជ្ជាចូលប្រហិតដើម្បីពន្លឱសប្រវត្តិក្រុមប្រវត្តិជីវវត្តិថ្មី។
Source of Translations

- Ask local organizations that work with immigrants (Coalition for a Better Acre)
- Ask local organizations that support a particular population (MAPS, Light of Cambodian Children)
- Ask community leaders
- Cost – $.13/word
Contact information

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