

Bike trail extension slightly delayed

By [Danielle Ameden/Daily News staff](#)

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MILFORD — Construction of the Milford Upper Charles Trail's second phase has been delayed slightly amid concerns from neighbors and disappointment over who submitted the job's low bid.

Trail committee Chairman Reno DeLuzio said a pre-construction conference will probably be held in August. He expects P.A. Landers Inc. would then start building the next three miles of bike path.

DeLuzio said he is disappointed the Hanover-based paving company came in with the low bid of a \$2.99 million bid. D&F Afonso Builders was the second lowest bidder at \$3.03 million.

DeLuzio said P.A. Landers' documented "shady dealings" make it a less desirable general contractor, from his perspective, than the reputable Milford company owned by Domenic Afonso.

According to the Justice Department, Landers last year agreed to pay \$900,000 for civil claims after generating fake and inflated weight slips for truck loads of asphalt on federally funded paving projects.

The company and two top executives have been convicted by a jury of conspiring to defraud the state and several municipalities. The company was fined \$3 million, and some company officials were sentenced to jail time, according to the Justice Department.

The Milford bike trail work is fully funded by the state and Federal Highway Administration, and the contractor is chosen by a competitive bid process.

Adam Hurtubise, a spokesman for the state's Executive Office of Transportation, was not able to comment yesterday.

Meanwhile, with the shovel hitting the ground soon, owners of two Main Street properties are being forced to make adjustments.

Sam's Citgo at 28 Main St. and the commercial building next door, which has tenants including Stock's Barber Shop, are losing the ability to use a sliver of town-owned land between them. The strip is needed for a spur of the bike path that will be put on an old rail bed stretching from Main Street to North Bow Street's Senior Center.

The biggest impact will be for Sam's, which is set to lose most of a paved area that's about 15 by 30 square feet.

Manager Shaker Zida worries the move will hurt business at his gas and service station.

Most of the area is open, and needs to be that way, he said, so fuel trucks and big rigs that run on diesel can make it in to fill up and get back out onto Main Street.

Besides the land being used, a steel barrier fence will be erected beside Sam's, DeLuzio said, so traffic doesn't interfere with trail users' safety.

Tom Stock, who owns the barber shop next door, suspects the plans are "really going to affect the gas station big time."

Even with the available open space now, Stock said, bigger trucks scrape the stucco building he's in while making turns into the gas station.

"These trucks, I don't know how they're going to get in and out of (there)," he said.

DeLuzio said neighbors were notified the trail is coming through and "told to make arrangements." He said he's been in contact with Franklin lawyer John G. Dugan, who represents the estate that owns the Citgo station.

"They're not really happy with what's resulted," DeLuzio said.

"It limits their full use of the site," DeLuzio said. "Their full use of the site was dependent on them using town property."

He said the neighbors started using the land without permission, but also without objection, after the town acquired it from CSX in 2001.

Dugan could not be reached for comment yesterday.

The trail's first phase, completed in 2007, has entrances at the commuter parking lot across from Sacred Heart Church and next to Dunkin' Donuts on Main Street. They meet and lead to the paper Deer Street off Rte. 85, just north of Exit 20 on Interstate 495.

The second phase will pick up at Deer Street and go to the Hopkinton town line, and also run from Rte. 109 to the Holliston line.

Completion of the trail's third phase, the so-called missing link - a one-mile stretch running from the commuter parking lot to Rte. 109 - is years away.

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PDF: Upper Charles Rail Trail phases

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