

The Stony Run Bridges - A Little History



The old bridge at Ridgemedede across the stream

On October 7 the Friends of Stony Run, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks hosted a joyous ribbon-cutting event to celebrate the formal opening of the two new bridges over Stony Run.

Only a few Tuscany–Canterbury residents remember when the Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad, affectionately known as The Ma & Pa, went out of business in the 1950s. Residents living in communities along the abandoned railroad right of way gradually created a walking path from Remington and Stone Hill to Northern Parkway. Most of the pathway was on City parkland, but in numerous places the informal path either crossed stretches of private property and busy public streets or the Stony Run in a manner that was hazardous for all and impossible for some. This was especially true in Tuscany-Canterbury where the stream runs between Linkwood Road on one side and apartment complexes on the other. For years crossing the stream near Stoneyford Road involved a treacherous leap or balancing on a log.

With a continuous path as a goal, neighborhood volunteers began what became a decades long quest

About 15 years ago TCNA President Peter Molan mused and dreamed about a bridge over the stream near the intersection of Stoneyford and Linkwood Roads. Soon after Kirsten Day Held, who lives on Tuscany Road, formed an organization that worked with the City for several years to build a bridge on the site. At Kirsten's urging the Department of Recreation and Parks even hired an engineering firm to design a bridge on the site. Several years passed, though, and still no bridge. Next up was TCNA President A.J. O'Brien, who because of his interest in the neighborhood and the Ma and Pa Railroad's history, wanted to figure out how to consolidate the walking path and the old railroad right of way. A.J. worked with lawyers at the Community Law Center to determine whether or not the right of way still existed after the parking lots of the Linkwood Apartments and The Carlyle were constructed

By this time others became interested in the dream of a continuous path along Stony Run and with the necessity of easing the walk to and from Wyman Park. For three years a small group of Tuscany-Canterbury residents met at Choclatea every Tuesday morning to plot and plan. The group included A.J., Anne Perkins, Sue Talbott, Ralph Kurtz, and Bill Eberhart. Soon they were joined by Sandy Sparks from Charles Village, Matt Greenwood from Remington, landscape designer Matt Fitzsimmons from Hord Koplan Macht and an intern from Greater Homewood. The Choclatea group determined that the first step would be for all the neighborhoods along Stony Run from Northern Parkway to Remington and Stone Hill to agree on an alignment for the walking path. This involved raising money – about \$20,000 – to hire a landscape architect to design the path and provide maps to use in discussions with neighborhood leaders. The money was raised from individuals, foundations, and Johns Hopkins University. TCNA contributed \$1,000 from its treasury. During the spring and summer of 2012 the Choclatea group held meetings with residents in all the communities along Stony Run and eventually got agreement to the proposed alignment.

Next came the need for construction money and lots of it. Our neighbor, Delegate Maggie McIntosh was/is in a key leadership position in the Maryland House of Delegates and was able to persuade Governor Martin O'Malley and then Secretary of Natural Resources John Griffin to appropriate \$1.2 million dollars in two budget years for the Linkwood Road bridges and a number of other projects along the path from Northern Parkway to University Parkway. Construction projects seem to take forever – engineering and landscape design, procurement and bidding contracts, construction and storms meetings with the Rec and Parks folks etc. Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke had to come to the rescue numerous times as the bridges neared completion. Finally it all came to a joyous finale on October 7.

Never forget, though, that it happened in great part because of the time, effort and perseverance of volunteers and elected officials from Tuscany Canterbury sticking with it over the years.



The New Bridge