



## Town of Randolph

Office of the  
**TOWN COUNCIL**  
From the desk of  
**Councilor Gordon**

41 South Main Street  
Randolph, Massachusetts 02368  
Telephone (781) 961-0918  
Fax (781) 961-0905  
[www.townofrandolph.com](http://www.townofrandolph.com)

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To Ayanna Pressley's office –

I'd like to bring to your attention three separate issues of environmental injustice in Randolph, about which the Town of Randolph could use federal help. A "letter of support" would be a great start on all three, but further involvement would also be welcomed!

### ***1) Superfund site PFAS source on Randolph/Holbrook border***

In July, the Holbrook Conservation Commission denied the construction permit for the TLA Trash Transfer Station because they had failed to do PFAS testing, as ordered by the Randolph Town Council and Holbrook Select Board in joint Resolutions in 2022. PFAS has been found in high concentrations in several wells in the Baird-McGuire Superfund site, which overlaps the TLA site and has spillover into Randolph and our joint reservoir. I'm following up our temporary victory with new joint Randolph-Holbrook actions to strengthen PFAS testing and PFAS remediation when hotspots are found.

I'd like Rep. Pressley's help in authorizing PFAS testing (and possible PFAS remediation) on the Superfund site – like a "letter of support" for my PFAS clean-up plan linked below, which has been met with strong pushback from Town officials and equally strong support from voters. Many of the PFAS testing sites would be water testing downstream in Randolph and soil testing on adjacent Randolph properties – plus more in Holbrook (Rep. Lynch's district).

P.S. The Randolph Town manager contacted your office early in 2023, with a "letter of support" from the Randolph Democratic Town Committee signed by me as chair, seeking a federal budget line item for PFAS remediation, perhaps \$5 million. That money would go to PFAS GAC filtering, PFAS testing, and possible PFAS remediation. Funding would be useful in next year's budget too -- any update?

Reference: <https://jessegordon.com/CleanUpPFAS.htm> and Superfund info at <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csinfo.cfm?id=0100392>

### ***2) Abandoned Nike missile site in Blue Hills State Park***

The RICC Community Center has begun "Mass in Motion" hikes around the Blue Hills State Park – on July 30, we hiked around the abandoned federal Nike/Ajax missile site in North Randolph. It is ugly and dangerous and should be remediated – like the other two missile site components were remediated decades ago in the wealthy communities of Braintree and Milton. I've recently been "re-opening" the Randolph sections of the Blue Hills near the missile site by placing "Welcome" signs and getting our DPW to clean up the trails,

because the Mass DCR has denied any trail improvements in Randolph (another environmental injustice). I'd like to extend the "re-opening" to removing the extensive barbed wire and filling in the dangerous underground holes left over from the 1950s missile siloes. The state DCR dismisses all inquiries by saying "it's federal," but DCR legally owns the land.

A "letter of support" from Rep. Pressley would help, explaining to DCR that they have the right to clean up the federal mess on state land, since they have been claiming for decades that it's out of their control. Or better yet, explaining to DCR that they have the *obligation* to clean up the federal mess, and the feds will provide funds to do so, like they did for Braintree and Milton decades ago.

References: <http://jessegordon.com/Pasture/> for "Blue Hills re-opening", plus video showing kids how they can climb down into the abandoned missile control rooms at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cs9obYuQZ4>

### ***3) Abandoned rail right-of-way from Stoughton to Braintree***

Randolph has a lovely "rail-trail" extending from the Braintree MBTA station through Randolph and well into Stoughton and beyond, called the "Old Colony Rail Trail" and formerly owned by the Old Colony Railroad company and then Conrail. But most of the rail-trail is closed to the public, abandoned by its owners and left to blight our community with overgrowth and trash. I'd like to clean up the rail-trail and open it for public recreational usage, but that idea is hindered by ambiguous land ownership.

For decades, the Randolph DPW has maintained a one mile section of the rail-trail, from North Street to Depot Street (the site of the abandoned rail depot, which now includes a memorial marker). Our DPW clears brush and trash at Town expense, but the Town doesn't own the land. And sometimes neighbors complain, such as a tree falling across an abutter's fence in June, which the DPW has no right to clean up, nor does the abutter!

At issue is the ambiguous ownership status of the land, which is several miles long and 50 yards wide. The Commonwealth, in theory, took possession of the land when the federal right-of-way was abandoned, but there's no paperwork saying so. The Town of Randolph's official parcel maps list no ownership at all – just an empty linear space between abutters on both sides. We're at a standstill for any progress because the federal/state/private ownership is so old and ambiguous. A "letter of support" stating that other municipalities have successfully assumed ownership of rail-trails in similar circumstances would help – the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy suggests that's a workable path forward.

References: <https://www.randolph-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1952/Old-Colony-Rail-Trail-Presentation-PDF> for my CPC application to clean up the next segment, which was denied because nobody could figure out land ownership. More info at <https://www.randolph-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1952/Old-Colony-Rail-Trail-Presentation-PDF> -- history at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old\\_Colony\\_Railroad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Colony_Railroad) -- CPC application was done with <https://www.railstotrails.org/>

--Jesse Gordon  
Randolph District 2 Town Councilor  
Text 617-320-6989  
[jgordon@randolph-ma.gov](mailto:jgordon@randolph-ma.gov)