

Billerica Minuteman

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Interpretive panel unveiled at future home of the Middlesex Canal Museum

Mary Leach. Submitted to the Billerica Minuteman

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A small group gathered on the new observation deck on an old mill warehouse in North Billerica on Sunday, Oct. 3, to unveil a new interpretive sign explaining the history of "The Summit Pond and Floating Towpath" on the historic Middlesex Canal.

The new deck and sign are part of a larger project to restore the former warehouse at 2 Old Elm St. in the North Billerica Historic Mill District and rehabilitate it as the new Middlesex Canal Museum and Visitor Center.

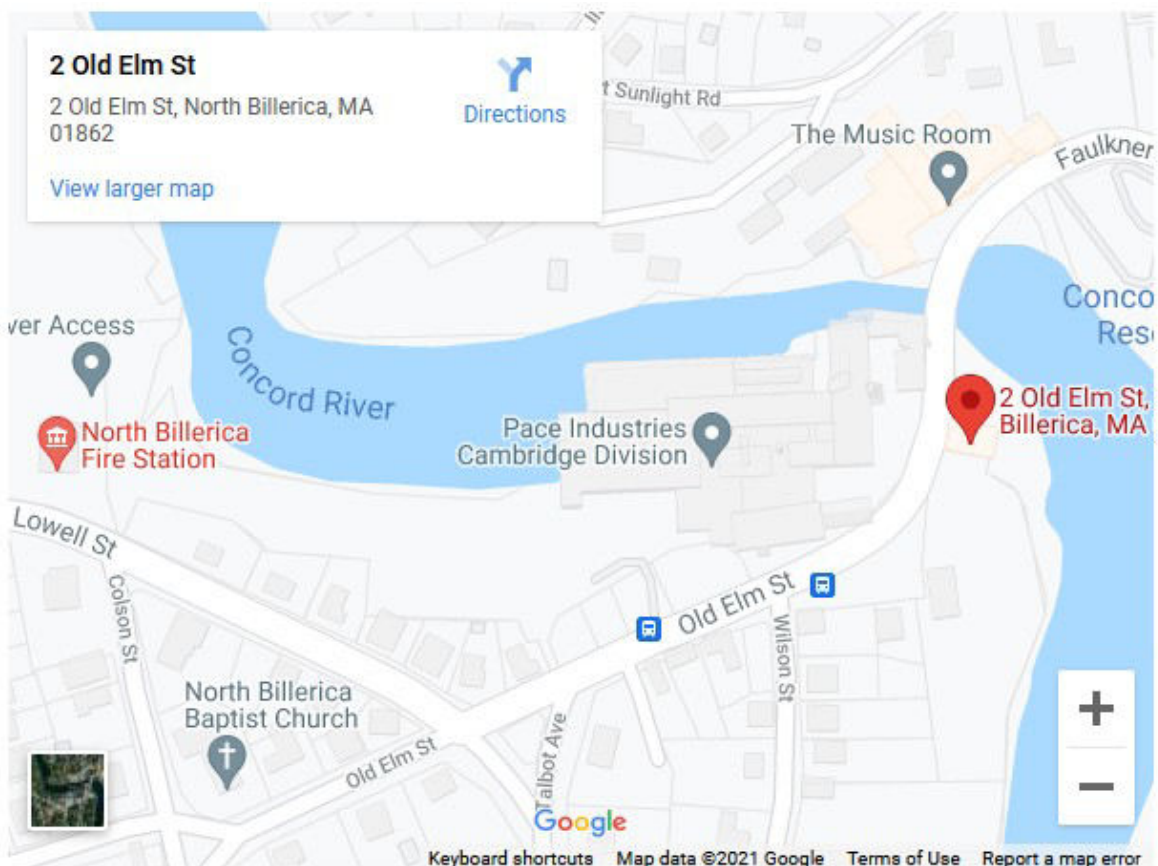


An interpretive sign panel was unveiled on Sunday, Oct. 3, at the future Middlesex Canal museum in North Billerica. [Courtesy Photo/Mary Leach]

The Oct. 3 event was a collaboration with Billerica Access Television and involved a hybrid cablecast with in-person attendees, Zoom attendees and pre-recorded comments, streamed live through public programming. Billerica resident Marlies Henderson served as the emcee.

The Middlesex Canal Association, which runs the museum in re space across the street from the renovation location, submitted a Sudbury Assabet and Concord (SuAsCo) Wild & Scenic Rivers Community Grant Application in 2020, and the River Stewardship Council awarded their request of \$11,500 to put towards the construction of an observation deck with a 24" x 36" interpretive sign.

The rehabilitation of the old mill building has been made possible by Community Preservation Act funding and private donations.



The final result of the project will be to move the current museum, located at 71 Faulker St., to the renovated mill site.

The museum is open to the public on weekends without admission and by appointment.

Live through Zoom, Linda Coombs, program director of the Wampanoag Aquinnah Cultural Center, educated the audience about indigenous history, culture, and other contributions. Civilization along the North American rivers started and continues with the indigenous peoples.



Billerica resident Marlies Henderson helped unveil the interpretive sign at the future Middlesex Canal museum with State Rep. Marc Lombardo, R-Billerica, and Sen. Cindy Friedman, D-Arlington. *[Courtesy Photo/Mary Leach]*

This was followed by recorded messages from Emma Lord, National Park Service Natural Resources Specialist who on behalf of the SuAsCo Wild & Scenic River Stewardship Council, and J. Jeremiah Breen, president of the Middlesex Canal Association, who gave a recorded presentation on the building restoration project.

State Rep. Marc Lombardo, R-Billerica, and State Sen. Cindy Friedman were also in attendance.

Lombardo presented Breen with a citation, expressing, "...the hope for future good fortune," when it came to the project.