

Dutchess County Transportation Council
Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Meeting

January 28th, 2021, 3:00 p.m.
(via Microsoft Teams)

Summary

- 1) Introductions:** Emily Dozier (DCTC) welcomed everyone to the meeting (see attached list). She noted that the BPAC meets quarterly. If anyone would like to be added to (or removed from) the email list, let Emily know.
- 2) Presentation:** *East Fishkill Rail Trail Connections* – Michael O’Brien, Town of East Fishkill

Michael stated that he is the economic development director for East Fishkill. The recently completed Empire State Trail now extends from Hopewell Junction south to New York City. Estimates show 100,000 more people could be coming through East Fishkill on the trail. He and a local task force are working on how to take better advantage of the rail trail, especially to encourage its use as a transportation option and to provide access to restaurants, businesses and other destinations in the town.

The task force looked at three areas: Fishkill Plains, Stormville, and Hopewell Junction. Businesses in Fishkill Plains were not interested in better connections to/from the rail trail. In Stormville, the Town plans to encourage use of Old Route 52 for trail users to access the hamlet. In Hopewell, the Town is working on plans to extend Governors Blvd and install a median and roundabouts on Route 82 to make it more of a town center. The task force evaluated several options for connections to/from the trail.

In the meantime, the Town worked with the Governor, MTA and NYSDOT on plans to improve the Route 82 bridge. The Town prefers an at-grade crossing instead of replacing the bridge. They envision pocket parks, signage, and other amenities near the crossing. NYSDOT will be working on a design for the crossing, and the Town is working on grant applications for roundabouts and other street improvements. Local businesses are excited, thinking that an at-grade crossing will bring more people into the hamlet. However, it needs to be a safe crossing for people on the rail trail.

The group provided input. David Anderson mentioned a [similar rail trail crossing of a busy road](#) (Old Connecticut Path) in Framingham, Massachusetts. It has a signal that is activated by people who want to cross pushing a button. He said it works well. The speed limit there is 30 mph. Michael noted that the speed limit on Route 82 is 35 mph, but some people go much faster.

John Galbraith suggested adding signage about local restaurants and other destinations near the trail. He stated the bicyclists also need to feel comfortable leaving the trail—the local streets need to feel safe.

Mike Matts agreed, noting that drivers are going fast and are distracted. Bicyclists need to feel safe and have enough space on the road. He encouraged the Town to also consider lodging options (camping, AirB&Bs, etc) for long-distance cyclists using the trail. Hopewell could be a good stop-over point from New York City, and if people stay overnight, they'll use restaurants, shops, and other businesses in town. Mike added that showers at workplaces helps make it possible to commute by bike.

Jeff Anzevino encouraged the Town to look at trail-adjacent zoning and the [Trail Towns guide](#) (available at <https://www.trailtowns.org/>). Look at the parcels along the trail and zone them to enable mixed-use, so people can live and shop or work near the trail. Keep development focused in the hamlet. Jeff also encouraged the Town to look at [Complete Streets](#) principles for the streets that connect neighborhoods and the trail. Finally, he said that the County buses all have bike racks, so the Town can promote using the bus to access destinations as well.

Tom Watt suggested reviewing the [Empire State Trail](#) website, in particular the [Empire State Trail Design Guide](#), which includes designs for at-grade crossings and on-street bicycle facilities.

Karl Beard agreed that a Complete Streets approach is important. The Town could use this as an opportunity to become more bicycle friendly, which will also support businesses.

Emily noted that Mary Nisley couldn't attend the call but sent an email stating that she is concerned about the safety of an at-grade crossing, and the designers should walk through the intersection and see how busy it is. Michael said the speeds and volume are a concern; traffic needs to be slowed in the area.

Jeff Anzevino noted that if you can change the design of the road so that speeds are 30 miles per hour, that would slow traffic while maintaining the capacity of the road.

Tom added that in his neighborhood in the Village of Nassau (Renssalaer County), State Route 20 has a 35mph speed limit, which is strictly enforced. Speed enforcement is important. Education of trail users is also important.

Michael thanked everyone and welcomed additional input: michaelbpobrien@gmail.com.

3) DCTC Updates/Announcements

- a. [Moving Dutchess Forward](#): The Transportation Council is working on an update of the countywide long-range transportation plan, which will set policy and project priorities. There is a project website that includes sections of the plan, a short video, and a public survey. Emily stated that the plan focuses on removing transportation barriers to accessing basic needs and key destinations. She noted that the survey closes on 1/31 and encouraged everyone to take it and share the link with others.

- b. [Arlington Main Street redesign project](#): This project, which aims to redesign Main Street in Arlington as a more complete street, is nearing completion. A public meeting was held in early October via Zoom to share the preferred design concept-- see the project website for a link to the video and slides. The final report is almost done.
- c. [Poughkeepsie 9.44.55](#): This project looks at options to redesign the Route 9/44/55 interchange (the bowtie) and the Route 44/55 arterials. There was a virtual meeting about concepts for the interchange (see link on the website). We are now looking at design options for the arterials, including how to make them better for people walking or bicycling.

4) Partner Reports/Roundtable

- a. County DPW:
 - a) The [Harlem Valley Rail Trail extension](#) was completed in December. See the link for a short video.
 - b) DCTC is working with DPW on improvements to County roads to make them better for walking. A project on Dutcher Ave and Henry St in the Village of Pawling will narrow the intersection and add a crosswalk (construction in spring 2021). We are also working on sidewalk improvements along Innis Avenue in the Town of Poughkeepsie (design consultant to be selected).
 - c) Let Emily know of suggestions for improvements to County roads, particularly those that have the potential for sidewalks or improved sidewalks.
- b. Traffic Safety Board [Watch Out For Me campaign](#): 'Watch Out For Me' decals have been installed on several bus stop shelters, and more are planned.
- c. [County Transit](#) completed an evaluation of each bus stop's accessibility (sidewalks, ramps, shelters, etc.). Recommendations are being considered for each location. A public meeting was held on January 26th (see link for presentation and recording).
- d. [Dutchess Tourism Bike Tour Guide](#): Colleen Dorney noted that the guide has been updated and is available on Tourism's website. They have printed 48,000 copies. Let Colleen know if you'd like a print version: Colleen@dutchesstourism.com. She thanked the group for their help with the update.
- e. Roundtable: projects/updates
 - a) Kathleen Davis announced the next Winnakee Dutchess Trail Roundtable on February 25th at 1pm via Zoom. Andy Beers from the Empire State Trail will be presenting, and others will give local trail project updates. See <http://www.winnakee.org/dc-trails-roundtable/> for more information.
 - b) John Galbraith said that the sPOKe bike rescue has been on hold but he is eager to get it going again when possible, and to work on other bicycling related projects.

5) Funding, Events & Announcements

- a. [Empire State Trail completed.](#) Emily and Tom Watt encouraged everyone to check out the new [Empire State Trail](#) website.
- b. [Beacon rail trail plans](#) Emily noted that the City of Beacon is pursuing converting the old rail line south of Main Street into a trail (see link for news article). She has not talked to the City about the project.
- c. [State Greenway Plan](#) drafted
- d. [Park & Trail Partnership Grants](#) (PTNY) – applications are due March 11. Emily explained that these are for Friends groups of parks on land owned by New York State.
- e. Other announcements/updates
 - a. Tom Watt noted the need for consistent rules along the Empire State Trail (EST), including on the Walkway, Dutchess Rail Trail, and the extension south to Putnam County. There are often conflicts between various users on the trail—dog walkers and dogs, strollers, people walking and people bicycling. There should be consistent expectations for how to share the trail. A forum could be established to help the various entities that manage parts of the EST set and enforce those rules.
 - i. Emily noted that Scenic Hudson has convened some groups in the Hudson Valley and is interested in promoting safe sharing of trails. The Rails to Trails Conservancy and League of American Bicyclists have some online materials, including graphics/messaging and videos.

6) Follow-up Items

- a. [County bicycle parking/bike routes map](#): send bike rack locations (photo and description) & suggestions for improvements to the map to Emily.
- b. Send Emily ideas for future presentations.
- c. Send [Michael O'Brien](#) any additional suggestions regarding trail connections in East Fishkill.
- d. Let [Colleen Dorsey](#) know if you'd like print versions of Tourism's bike tour guide.

7) Next Meeting: April 29th, 3 pm

Meeting schedule: January, April, July, October; last Thursday, 3:00 – 5:00 pm (typically)

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Name	Organization/Municipality	Email
Brandee Nelson	Tighe & Bond	B Nelson@tighebond.com
Carl Whitehead	Town of Poughkeepsie Planning Board	carl.h.whitehead@gmail.com
Colleen Dorney	Dutchess Tourism	colleen@dutchesstourism.com
David Anderson		dfa@us.ibm.com
David Gordon		dgordonlaw@optonline.net
Eric and Jef		
Jeff Anzevino	Scenic Hudson	janzevino@scenichudson.org
John Galbraith	sPOKe/City of Poughkeepsie resident	jmgbike@gmail.com
Karl Beard	National Park Service (retired)	karl.kd2fx@gmail.com
Kathleen Davis	Winnakee Land Trust/Hyde Park Trails	kathleendavis072@gmail.com

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Name	Organization/Municipality	Email
Melanie Dupuis		edupuis@pace.edu
Michael O'Brien	Town of East Fishkill	michaelbpobrien@gmail.com
Michelle Gluck	Cornell Cooperative Extension - Dutchess	mg822@cornell.edu
Mike Matts		michael.j.matts@gmail.com
Nancy Foster	Walkway Ambassador	nancyfoster@optonline.net
Natalie Quinn	City of Poughkeepsie	NQuinn@cityofpoughkeepsie.com
Ozie Williams		ozie.williams@ymail.com
Ross Ritter	Bikeway/LaGrange resident	rritter@homesteadfunding.com
Sharon Kroeger	Resident	generalstoresk@optonline.net
Tara Grogan	Dutchess County Transportation Council	tgrogan@dutchessny.gov

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Name	Organization/Municipality	Email
Teresa Sanchez	Walkway	tsanchez@walkway.org
Tom Watt	NYS Parks	thomas.watt@parks.ny.gov