

Town of Stuyvesant Trails Committee
First meeting: October 14, 2009, Stuyvesant Town Hall

In attendance:

Mike Naegeli
Michelle Richardson
Don Widjeskog
Eddie Scott
Lee Jamison
Cal Burch
Mike Locker
Rich Anderson
Robert Bisson
Nancy Thomas
Bill Bateman
Bob Green
Kathy Schneider
Amy Abbati
Will Pflaum
Dee Peitragolare

Sean Cummings welcomed attendees and gave overview of the recently awarded Hudson Valley Greenway trail planning grant and why the town was forming a Trails Committee.

Reasons for forming the committee/general goals:

- ✓ Greenway grant recommends each participating town have a trails committee to coordinate and administer the grant. Hours of participation by volunteers can be calculated as “in-kind” services for local matching funds required by grant.
- ✓ Develop a town-wide trail system: Town Comprehensive Plan (1996) recommended creating a town-wide trail system, to the extent possible. Public information meeting hosted by town Greenway Committee in October 2008 surveyed residents and found they still supported trail development.
- ✓ Advocate for better access to Hudson River shoreline and trail development.
- ✓ Town Recreation Committee and Greenway Committee have discussed trail development briefly but have full agendas and activities to carry out. Town Board decided it would be better to have a separate Trails Committee.

Kinderhook-Stuyvesant-Stockport Intermunicipal Trail Project: Town of Kinderhook, the lead agency, just received notice that the \$10,000 trail planning grant from the Hudson Valley Greenway Conservancy was awarded. The money will be used to hire a consultant to study the feasibility of developing a multi-use recreational trail along the National Grid right-of-way (ROW) from the Village of Kinderhook south to Stuyvesant Falls and continuing south into Stockport and ending at Rossman Road (Chittenden Falls). The study will also review the feasibility of developing a trail along

the east side of the Kinderhook Creek, from Stuyvesant Falls through Lindenwald to the Village of Kinderhook.

Visual inventory of existing and potential trails

Sean Cummings gave slide presentation with photos and descriptions/commentary of existing and potential trails:

Nutten Hook south to Stockport

Shoreline topography is dense, with much wetland and a mix of private and public ownership. Not favorable to trail development, but could be evaluated more closely.

Nutten Hook

- ✓ Currently has about 1.5 miles of trails in three segments: (1) half-mile Old Federal Footpath runs on flat course along wetlands from Ferry Road to Ice House; (2) two-thirds mile trail runs up and over steep hill from Ferry Road to Ice House; (3) one-third mile trail runs from Ice House north along bluff, ends at stream inlet.
- ✓ DEC Forest Ranger Chris DiCintio lives on-site and maintains trails.

Nutten Hook north to Stuyvesant Landing

- ✓ Roughly two miles of shoreline, owned by DEC.
- ✓ Tidal inlet at north end of Nutten Hook would have to be bridged to develop trail heading north.
- ✓ Existing trail goes in from near Lang Road and Rte. 9J and goes south along river for about 1.3 miles. Pedestrians are not allowed to cross CSX tracks to access trail at Lang Road; also not allowed to walk alongside tracks from See Park south.
- ✓ Providing access at Lang Road and further developing the trail to connect Stuyvesant Landing and Nutten Hook would require agreement between town, CSX, DEC, and other state and federal agencies.

Stuyvesant Landing

Access road along CSX tracks allows people to walk to “point” and beaches south of Stuyvesant Landing. Technically, it’s illegal for pedestrians to use access road. Ensuring legal access to the area is critical to any trail development and general riverfront access.

Beaches and point (owned by DEC) are the site of proposed state park/boat launch. Access would be from a bridge constructed over the railroad tracks from Riverview Street. A complex situation, with many agencies involved in ongoing environmental review. Still unclear whether project will be developed. Site has existing trail loop of about one mile. Tidal inlet just to the south of the site would require elevated boardwalk to develop trail going south.

Stuyvesant Landing north

- ✓ Abandoned CSX line angles off from active CSX/Amtrak line about one-half mile north of See Park. Could be converted to “rail trail” but no access directly from See Park along tracks.

- ✓ State DOT owns land (scenic view) along Rte. 9J about 0.3 miles north of flashing light. Could possibly be access site to abandoned rail line.
- ✓ Rail line runs north for about 2 miles, then combines again with active CSX line just south of Schoolhouse Road; rail trail would have to end before this point – would need access trail back to 9J before this point.

Swyer Preserve

- ✓ Boardwalk has undergone repairs, with more permanent footings for elevated sections; should help stabilize.
- ✓ Same technique might be useful for developing trail segments along shoreline.

Ken Hummel Memorial Park

- ✓ Trail loop of 0.6 mile now complete.
- ✓ Kiosk will be built on volunteer basis.
- ✓ Location on Sharptown Road is close to Allendale Road and possible connection to Stuyvesant Falls for cyclists.

Stuyvesant Falls-Lindenwald

- ✓ Unlike National Grid ROW, this would have to be developed.
- ✓ Several large parcels have conservation easements with specific public recreational trail right-of-way; helpful for developing.
- ✓ Trail may not be feasible in flood plain areas.
- ✓ Lindenwald administration working on their own trails and eager to collaborate.

National Grid ROW: Kinderhook-Stuyvesant Falls-Stockport

- ✓ Most sections fairly passable; company does maintenance.
- ✓ Municipality signs “licensing agreement” with National Grid – not need for separate easements with adjoining property owners.
- ✓ Could link many historic and natural resources.

General comments/concerns from attendees

- ✓ Snowmobile, ATV, dirt bike use on existing, undeveloped trails is a problem – would have to be controlled if trails are refined and developed (Kathy Schneider, Robert Bisson)
- ✓ Allendale Road could connect Stuy Falls with Sharptown Road; Scenic Hudson easement on Allen Farm could help facilitate connection (Mike Naegeli).
- ✓ Riparian rights along riverfront — if you’re on the shoreline within the tidal limit, it’s public land. (Cal Burch).

Next steps

- ✓ Monthly meetings on second Tuesday at 7 pm.
- ✓ Tentatively scheduled walking tour of riverfront trails for Saturday, Nov. 7 at 10 am. Sean will contact DEC Forest Ranger Chris DiCintio for permission/escort.