



Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail
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Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail Presents Alternative Route Analysis Review and Shoreline Trail Concept Design *Attendees Ask Questions and Share Feedback on Current Plans*

BEACON, NY — On the evening of Monday, March 11, planners, engineers, and landscape architects working on the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail presented, received public input, and answered questions on the alternative routes that were explored for the trail’s Master Plan, as well as an overview of the Shoreline Trail concept design at Dutchess Manor. Over 200 people registered for the event, which was facilitated by the Consensus Building Institute.

Michael T. Doherty, of SLR Consulting, the firm hired by HHFT to analyze potential routes for the 7.5-mile trail connecting the City of Beacon and the Village of Cold Spring, provided a comprehensive review of the route alternatives and the criteria used by SLR to evaluate each one.

Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail Inc. (HHFT) Executive Director Amy Kacala noted that, as the result of public input, an additional alternative route that would allow train riders to directly exit the Cold Spring Metro-north train platform onto the trail is now being considered. “The route would run along the west side of the Metro-North Railroad (MNR) tracks in the Village of Cold Spring, directly connecting the Cold Spring MNR station to the northeast side of Dockside Park, thereby eliminating the need for any pedestrian traffic through the lower village neighborhood west of the tracks,” said Amy Kacala.

Additionally, the Mayor of Cold Spring and the Village’s appointee to the HHFT Visitation Data Committee, James Labate, have expressed interest in Alternative Routes 2 and 3, which would run along the east side of the MNR tracks, and either follow the interior of the Dockside causeway to Little Stony Point, or pass through private property, and adjacent to the sewage treatment plant, then traverse Mayor’s Park to Fair Street. In order for either route to be viable, Metro-North would need to allow for a setback of less than 25 feet.

“We are listening and responding to the community and exploring whether this new route is a

viable option. Should the current setback requirement be reduced, we would be happy to discuss routes 2 and 3 again in that new light,” Kacala said.

Gena Wirth, of SCAPE Landscape Architecture, the design lead for the Fjord Trail project, presented the concept design for the Shoreline Trail, the two-mile section of the trail that would connect Breakneck Ridge with the Village of Cold Spring. Matt Carter, lead engineer at Arup and members of his team were also on hand to answer constructibility questions.

“It’s important to note that, should Dockside Park be the southernmost entry point for the Fjord Trail, HHFT would cover the cost of additional infrastructure improvements, including along Fair Street, as well as much-needed amenities like public restrooms,” said Amy Kacala. HHFT would also be fully responsible for trash collection, restroom maintenance, and clean-up of storm-related events at Dockside Park, removing this burden from Village Highway Department staff. Kacala said that planning and implementation of these additional improvements could begin as soon as the project’s environmental review is completed – well before the anticipated completion of the Shoreline Trail, which is projected for 2031.

“HHFT would need the collaboration and approval of the Cold Spring Village Board of Trustees on any projects taking place on Village streets, so cooperation will be key to a successful outcome,” said Kacala.

Following each presentation, participants were given the opportunity to write down a question for the presenters on provided index cards, which were collected and randomly drawn and answered by the panelists. The panelists also answered attendees’ questions one-on-one after the meeting concluded.

An interactive presentation tool was also used to collect live feedback from the audience, on topics including how they might use the Shoreline Trail, construction material options, and which aspects of the Fjord Trail they felt needed further study. The full results of the live survey will be posted on the hhft.org website.

The session was recorded in its entirety and will be available on HHFT’s website, as will the slide decks presented by SLR and SCAPE.

HHFT, Inc. will hold its next public session, “Visitor Projection & Visitation Management Strategy,” on Wednesday, April 3, at Dutchess Manor, with presentations by ORCA, HHFT’s visitation management consultants. Registration through the Fjord Trail’s website is required: <https://qrco.de/4-3-24>.

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About HHFT

Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Inc. (HHFT) is a subsidiary nonprofit of Scenic Hudson, Inc., an organization devoted to sustaining and enhancing the Hudson Valley’s inspirational beauty and health for generations to come. HHFT is responsible for the planning and construction of the Fjord Trail, which is slated for completion in 2031. HHFT’s mission is to create and steward a 7.5-mile linear park along the Hudson River that solves existing safety concerns around visitation, provides welcoming access to people of all abilities, restores and protects natural resources, and enhances quality of life for local communities. The Fjord Trail will add organized parking, public restrooms, trash/recycling collection, and distribute users of the park along a 7.5-mile route with six main access points. For more information, news, and timely announcements on the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, visit hhft.org.