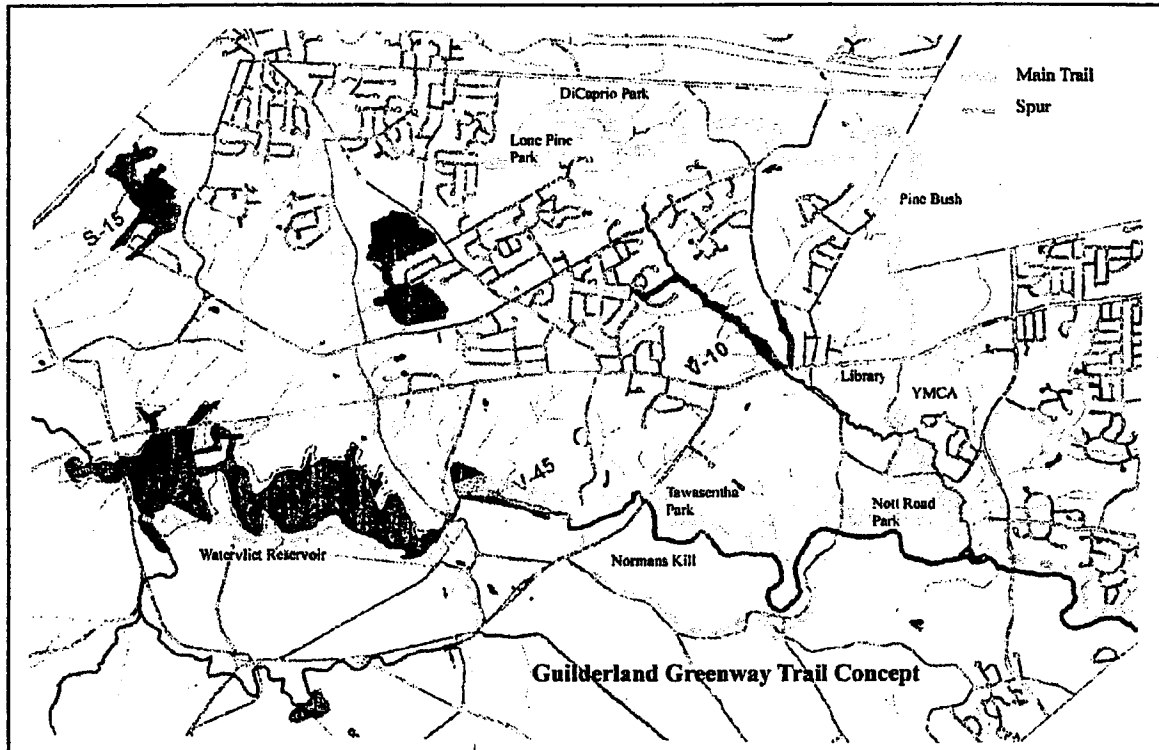


Appendix B
The Guilderland Greenway Concept
(submitted to the Guilderland Town Board as an appendix to a budget memo in
September, 2002)

Here is a map of the Guilderland Greenway concept, as of the summer of 2001:



As the map shows, the Greenway concept consists of a main loop trail connecting the Reservoir Dam, Nott Road Park, Guilderland Elementary School, the Pine Bush Preserve, DiCaprio and Lone Pine Parks, and Pine Bush School, with connections to Guilderland Center, the Westlawn neighborhood through or near Farnsworth Middle School, the Colonie Pine Bush Preserve over the Old State Road/Thruway bridge, and Lynnwood School, and Route 155 and the Dr. Shaw Road neighborhoods through Mill Hill.

The status of the various segments of this concept is detailed below.

North: Lone Pine Park to DiCaprio Park. This portion has a network of dirt roads connecting the two Town parks through the Lupe parcel and over a culvert across the west branch of the Hunger Kill. The Lupe parcel has come before the Town Planning Board for a residential subdivision on the northwest portion of the parcel, and the applicant is presently preparing a DEIS. The portion of the Lupe parcel containing the road network has been proposed for donation to the Town as part of the application.

DiCaprio Park to Guilderland Elementary School. This portion of the trail would go through the Pine Bush preserve. A proposed route has been mapped and partially

marked. The difficult portions are a crossing of the tributary of the west branch of the Hungerkill, at the southern end of DiCaprio Park, and a crossing of the East Branch of the Hungerkill. Locations for both crossings have been identified by the GPC, working with Pine Bush Commission Steward Joel Hecht, and a proposal for the trail was submitted to the Pine Bush Commission, where it has been set aside until the Commission develops a recreation management plan. Work on the recreation management plan is projected to begin this fall. Among the issues likely to be considered related to the proposed Guilderland Greenway trail are

- erosion in the two ravines the trail would cross
- over- and misuse of the Pine Bush Preserve by mountain bikes
- the lack of any official trails in the Guilderland portion of the Pine Bush Preserve.

Spur: a connection between the Guilderland and Colonie Pine Bush Preserves. This would connect the main GGT loop trail at Old State Road with the Colonie Pine Bush and a proposed Pine Bush greenway using the Old State Road Bridge over the Thruway and a NiMO right-of-way heading straight north from the Old State Road Bridge to Kings Road. The present bridge and approaches have very narrow shoulders hemmed in by guide rails and bridge railings that force pedestrians into the travel lanes of Old State Road. The Thruway Authority indicated that the bridge is projected to be renovated in 2005, and the GPC has contacted the Thruway Authority asking that the bridge be made pedestrian-friendly. Use of the NiMo ROW is problematical. NiMo has granted easements to municipalities (e.g. Niskayuna) for the use of power line rights of way as trails under several conditions: no use by motorized vehicles, free access by NiMo for maintenance of their power lines, no liability to NiMo, and no opposition from adjacent landowners.

An alternative route north of the Thruway bridge would be along Old State Road between the bridge and the old Kings Highway/Hellman parcel.

This spur would connect Guilderland to the old Kings Highway, which is an approximate location of the Pine Bush Greenway. The Pine Bush Greenway is proposed to go between the Kings Road portion of the Preserve and the Preserve east of Route 155 near the SEFCU building, and connect with the existing path near the Thruway between the SEFCU part of the Preserve, west of the landfill, and Fuller Road at Lake Rensselaer. East of Fuller Road the proposed Patroon Path would connect Lake Rensselaer with the Corning Preserve, roughly following Patroon Creek.

East. Pine Bush Preserve to Western Avenue. It appears that using the Guilderland Elementary School grounds to connect the trail in the Preserve to Western Avenue would be an acceptable use. However it is also feasible to locate the trail on Preserve lands west of the school grounds. There is at present no sidewalk along the north side of Western Avenue in this area. There is a pedestrian crosswalk at the intersection of Western Avenue with Winding Brook Drive and the entrance to Guilderland Elementary School.

Western Avenue to Nott Road Park. This portion of the trail would lie east of Winding Brook Drive and go through Fairwood Apartments. This portion would require the cooperation of three landowners: the owners of the Beltrone-Lucarelli parcel, the YMCA, and KAM, owners of the Fairwood Apartment complex.

The YMCA has already agreed to construct a sidewalk/path on its frontage at an appropriate time.

The Beltrone-Lucarelli parcel has come before the Town for proposed development several times during the past decade, but the proposals have required zoning changes that the Town was unwilling to grant. We anticipate that within the next few years this parcel will be developed, and that included in the development will be a sidewalk/bike path along Winding Brook Drive to connect Western Avenue with the YMCA parcel.

Fairwood has applied to the Town recently for additional development on its land. It would be hoped that any additional development on the Fairwood parcel would include provisions for a public sidewalk/path connecting the YMCA parcel with Nott Road.

Nott Road to Nott Road Park. A path in this area could run next to Nott Road between Fairwood and the roadway to the Sewage Treatment Plant/Nott Road Park, then follow that roadway to the Park. Alternatively, an off-road path could be located on the Danto parcel that surrounds the town lands in the area—the Danto parcel has been on the market in recent years and the Town considered it for purchase.

Spurs: Winding Brook Drive to 20 Mall. This spur would lie on the Beltrone and Lia parcels. The Lia parcels have been proposed for development in recent years.

Winding Brook Drive to Guilderland Public Library. This would be a very short spur on a Town-owned paper street immediately south of the Library building and on a piece of the Beltrone parcel west of Winding Brook Drive.

Beltrone/YMCA to Hiawatha Trails Golf Course. An old road connects the Beltrone property near the northeast corner of the YMCA with the 12th fairway of Hiawatha. Such a spur would not be appropriate as long as the Hiawatha property continues as a golf course, but the owner of the Hiawatha course has indicated that a possible long-term use of the golf course property might be as a nature preserve. In that case the road might be usable as a connector between the YMCA/Library and the Farnsworth Middle School.

Nott Road Park to Dr. Shaw Road. The developer of the Mill Hill senior complex has agreed to provide a public path between Route 155 at Dr. Shaw and the western boundary of the Mill Hill property, where the Blockhouse Creek separates the Mill Hill and Nott Road Park parcels. A bridge over the creek would be necessary. This spur could be the beginning of a much longer path paralleling the Normans Kill. The Town owns land along the Normans Kill in the Kennewyck development, and also land in the Vale of Normanskill development that could connect Dr. Shaw Road to the Normans Kill land. Such a path would be mostly on the height of land adjacent to the edge of the north side

of the ravine of the Normanskill rather than in the ravine. The in-ravine route would be preferable, but much of the land in the ravine on both sides of the Normans Kill east of Route 155 is part of the State Health Department's Griffin Laboratory, is fenced off, and may be inaccessible into the indefinite future (Griffin does work with rabies, among other dangerous diseases). East of the Griffin Lab property and west of Johnston Road, the Town-owned land is close to the rear yards of residences in Kennewyck, and NIMBY opposition is likely to be strong. It may be preferable to cross the Normanskill east of Griffin Lab and place a trail on the south side, where homes are not so close to the creek.

Nott Road Park to Westlawn/Prescott Woods/FMS. There is a sewer line that runs under a utility line between the roadway into the Sewage Treatment Plant and Route 155 and intersects Nott Road at the eastern end of the sharp curve closest to Route 155. East of Route 155 the sewer line runs along the Blockhouse Creek to a culvert crossing the Blockhouse behind Jefferson Court and the back athletic field of the Farnsworth Middle School. All of this sewer line ROW is mowed several times per year. Part of it, east of Route 155, is in a wetland. The land is owned, we believe, by Danto west of Route 155 (see above), and by Becker (next to Camp Nassau) and the School District east of Route 155. Immediately east of Route 155 the ownership is (temporarily) unknown, but the Baptist Church, adjacent to the easement to the north, indicated a willingness to consider a path on its property to connect Route 155 with the Becker property. The attitude of the owners of the Becker property concerning such a path is unknown. This path would cross Route 155 in the middle of a long straightaway with excellent site distance.

There is an existing path that connects the back field of FMS to Walden Pond Road in Prescott Woods over the above-mentioned culvert. The culvert is owned by a private sewer company, but the rest of the path is on School District property except for the easternmost portion, which lies on a Town-owned paper street connecting Walden Pond Road to the School District property. In 2000 the GPC proposed to the School District to develop this path, but the proposal aroused strong opposition from the adjacent landowners on Walden Pond Road, and the proposal was withdrawn.

The State is planning to install a sidewalk on the east side of Route 155 between Western Avenue and Dr. Shaw Road as part of the planned 2003 reconstruction of the highway. That sidewalk would connect the neighborhoods and apartment complexes along Route 155 with any available connection between Route 155 and Nott Road Park.

South. Nott Road Park to Grant Hill Road. There is a sewer easement and driveway on the Danto parcel connecting the sewage treatment plant and Grant Hill Road near the Normanskill. A pedestrian easement would have to be negotiated.

Grant Hill Road to Tawasentha Park. There are several possibilities.

The most feasible and least attractive route is to simply use Grant Hill, Wormer and Ostrander Roads, turning off Ostrander Road just east of Route 146 onto the southern edge of Town park land. The trail could then run on town parkland along the east side of Route 146 to the Normans Kill, then cross the Normans Kill on the highway bridge.

A possible medium-term route is to obtain an easement to run a trail along the southern boundary of the Pruszkowski farm between Grant Hill Road and the Western Turnpike Golf Club, then run a trail along the southern edge of the Golf Club, around the golf holes, to the top of the hill in front of the Performing Arts Center at Tawasentha Park. Such a trail would connect to the network of cross-country trails in the park. This route would place the trail high above the Normans Kill. The Town is presently negotiating the purchase of the Golf Club, so assuming that the purchase is completed, the Town should be able to find a suitable route. One can speculate that in the long run, the farm will be developed for residences, and any required open space is likely to be placed at the southern edge of the property, where the trail should be located.

The ideal long-term route is right through the National Guard Rifle Range between Grant Hill Road and the Golf Club. This route would place the path close to the creek, and would pass through the most spectacular stretch of scenery along the Normanskill in the Town. Such a route would only be possible with the closure of the Rifle Range, a possibility that may become a more viable consideration as nearby land is developed into residential uses that may be viewed as incompatible with the Rifle Range.

Tawasentha Park to Fuller Station Road north of the Reservoir Dam. There is ample room under the Route 146 bridge over the Normanskill for a trail on the north bank adjacent to the creek. West of Route 146 there is a private parcel, then the Drebitko parcel which is the site of the Battle of Normans Kill, then another parcel or two that contain wetlands near the creek. The Albany County Land Conservancy has made an offer for the Drebitko parcel, which has not been accepted, but the land is apparently still available.

Spurs:

From Fuller Station Road to Keenholts Park and Guilderland Center. This spur would cross the presently blocked French's Mill highway bridge over the Normanskill. The bridge has been closed to vehicle traffic for years, and last year Albany County proposed to demolish it. After a public outcry, the County agreed to rehabilitate the bridge for pedestrian and bicycle traffic and turn it over to the Town. The demolition was scheduled for 2003, so presumably the rehabilitation may occur then.

Between French's Mill Road and Keenholts Park. The French's Mill Road bridge over the CSX tracks is heavily blocked, forcing a mile-long detour along French's Hollow Road, Route 146 and French's Mill Road to cross the railroad tracks and reach Keenholts Park from the south side of the above-mentioned Normanskill bridge. It would be desirable to rehabilitate this bridge for pedestrian/bicycle use.

Between the Normanskill bridge and Route 146 (south side). If an easement could be negotiated from two private landowners on French's Mill Road near the dam, then Town-owned land obtained from the Elizabethfield development could be used to connect French's Mill Road near the dam to Town parkland containing the climbing barn and

community gardens on the northwest side of Route 146. This trail would provide an overlook of the Battle of Normanskill site, and could become part of a loop trail between Tawasentha Park and the Dam.

West. Between the Dam and Western Avenue. The trail would follow Fuller Station Road, which, south of Western Avenue is little-traveled since the closure of the bridge over the Normanskill.

Western Avenue to Pine Bush School. The roadbed of the old Fuller Station railroad line that connected Guilderland Center, Fullers and Schenectady in the 19th century is now owned by NiMo and used as a power line right-of-way. Some of it runs right next to Fuller Station Road, north of Old State Road, while near Williamsburgh, it runs behind homes on the west side of Fuller Station Road, some of whom have included the ROW in their back yards. The conditions imposed by NiMo to allow this ROW to be used as a trail would be challenging. Perhaps a combination of ROW and sidewalk along Fuller Station Road would be a feasible solution. The trail would reach Fuller Station Road where it bends east to meet Carman Road at a signalized intersection at Coons Road. A pedestrian-activated phase would be desirable at that intersection.

Pine Bush School to Lone Pine Park. This stretch is fully developed as residential subdivisions. Coons Road contains a sidewalk, and Gregory Lane and DiBella Drive are neighborhood streets that would be reasonably safe for pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Spur.

Fuller Station Road to Lynnwood School. A path in the Brenn-Breit subdivision off Fuller Station Road north of Western Avenue connecting to the school grounds has been included in a site plan recently approved by the Planning Board.

From the Dam around the south side of the Watervliet Reservoir. This spur, shown on the map, is probably no longer feasible because of security concerns.

Guilderland Pathways Committee, 9/10/02