

Town of Guilderland Pathways Master Plan

Draft update, May 10, 2009

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Introduction

On September 15, 2005, the Guilderland Pathways Committee presented to the Town Board the Town of Guilderland Pathways Master Plan, the last of four planning documents the GPC submitted to the town between 2000 and 2005, (The others were the Town of Guilderland Preliminary Sidewalk Master Plan (April, 2003), Walkable Destinations in Guilderland (May, 2004), and Biking in Guilderland (May, 2004).

It is a basic principle of planning that all planning studies need to be updated regularly as needs and circumstances change. This document attempts an update to the Pathways Master Plan. A number of mostly positive changes have occurred during the past 3½ years. It is worthwhile to compile these changes and point out further opportunities for progress in the coming years.

The Pathways Master Plan organized its recommendations by regions of the town. This draft update will follow that layout.

The regions are

- McKownville (p. 2)
- Westmere (p. 4)
- Route 155 (p. 6)
- Guilderland Hamlet (p. 7)
- Lone Pine (p. 10)
- Hartman's Corners (p. 11)
- Fullers (p. 12)
- Fort Hunter (p. 13)
- Guilderland Center (p. 14)
- Altamont (p. 15)
- Rural Guilderland (p. 15).

“Two Schools” Path

The Pathways Master Plan included a “Two Schools” path, an off-road foot/bicycle path that would connect Farnsworth Middle School and Guilderland High School, mostly following the Normans Kill and passing through Nott Road Park, Tawasentha Park, the Battle of Normans Kill site, the Watervliet Reservoir Dam area and Keenholts Park. Such a trail would become a uniquely attractive recreational asset for the Town.

Discussion concerning independently desirable pieces of this concept is found in the Westmere, Route 155, Guilderland Hamlet, Hartman's Corners, Fullers and Guilderland Center sections of this update.

The Town is far closer to having the ability to make this path a reality than it was four years ago.

Recent actions by the Planning Board in connection with subdivision applications should lead to paths on the Bohl parcel, the Grant Hill Estates parcel and the Das parcel. The Bohl path provides a critical link between the Drebitko parcel (Battle of Norman's Kill site) and French's Mill Road near the Dam. The Grant Hill Estates path provides a critical link between Grant Hill Road and Nott Road Park. The Das sewer line easement provides a critical piece of a path connecting Nott Road Park to Route 155.

The most critical private land remaining as potential obstacles are the Danto-Harder parcel, east of the Nott Road access road, and the Drebitko parcel. Both parcels have been offered for sale to the Town within the past decade, and both parcels have been or are now currently available for purchase.

Also of importance for the through trail are Pruszkowsky's farm and the two parcels with narrow frontage on the north bank of the Normans Kill between Tawasentha Park and the Drebitko parcel.

The Town Board and the Planning Board should be vigilant in pursuing opportunities to make this trail possible.

McKownville

Improvements

Since 2005 McKownville has seen significant improvements in the pedestrian environment.

- A sidewalk was constructed by the Town along the west side of McKown Road between Western Avenue and Woodscape Drive.
- A sidewalk was constructed on the south side of Western Avenue between McKown Road and Schoolhouse Road.

These two sidewalks complete a safe, attractive pedestrian loop between Western Avenue and Abele Park, utilizing the southern dead-end of McKown Road, the path connecting McKown Road and Abele Park, Strawberry Lane, and the sidewalk on the east side of Schoolhouse Road.

- A sidewalk was constructed by the County on the east side of Schoolhouse Road to connect the existing sidewalk between Western Avenue and (South) McKown Road to Krum Kill Road in North Bethlehem.

This sidewalk connects North Bethlehem to Abele Park and Stuyvesant Plaza.

- Pedestrian improvements have been made to the intersections of Western Avenue and Fuller Road, McKown Road/Norwood Street and the University entrance (?)
- Soon to begin (as of May, 2009) is a reconstruction of Fuller Road, which will include a sidewalk on the east side of Fuller Road between Western Avenue and the southernmost University entrance, and an extension of the sidewalk along the west side of Fuller to and past Washington Avenue.

Opportunities

Recommendations in the Pathways Master Plan to improve the pedestrian environment in McKownville included:

- Formalize the existing path between Stuyvesant Plaza and UA's Freedom Quad and CESTM along the gas line/power line;

Possibly this could be included as part of further improvements to CESTM, or possibly this recommendation will become obsolete with the extension of the Fuller Road sidewalk to Washington Avenue.

- Develop a path along the Krum Kill between Western Avenue and McKown Road.

This could possibly be included as a fringe benefit to the badly needed project to dig up the Krum Kill culverts to alleviate the regular flooding of Western Avenue at Stuyvesant Plaza during heavy rains.

New opportunities

- Formalize the path that connects Vaughn Drive to the North Bethlehem Park.

Subdivision of the Chainyk parcel on Vaughn Drive presents an opportunity to formalize a very pleasant existing path that starts on Vaughn Drive by the power line ROW, goes along the edge of the ROW on the Chainyk parcel, then crosses the ROW into the western end of North Bethlehem Park.

- Develop a pocket park along the banks of the McKownville Reservoir with a walking trail around the Reservoir.

This proposal has been the subject of grant applications. The success of such a park depends in part on solving the lack of capacity of the culverts that drain the Reservoir, leading to the frequent flooding noted above.

Westmere

Improvements

Not much has happened in Westmere since 2005, but substantial change will occur soon.

- The Town Center/Price Chopper constructed a sidewalk on the east side of Johnston Road between Western Avenue and the Westmere School entrance.
- The reconstruction of Johnston Road by the County is now underway. This project includes a sidewalk along the east side of Johnston Road between Western Avenue and Covington Woods.
- Improvements to the pedestrian environment at intersections of Western Avenue with Church Road, the Crossgates English Couplet (at the cemetery) and (hopefully) Johnston Road are included on the most recent TIP list. Presumably this project will include improved access to/egress from CDTA busses near Johnston Road.

Opportunities

Recommendations in the PMP to improve the pedestrian environment in Westmere included

- Develop a path connecting Kraus Road and Johnston Road/Chainyk Drive.

Land north of Oxford Heights between Kraus and Chainyk was donated to the Town for a Westmere Park. There remains a potential opportunity for a path through the park between Kraus Road and Johnston Road on other undeveloped land n/f of Armand Quadrini, but when the issue came up in connection with a zoning change related to a development proposal by Oxford Heights Apartments, there turned out to be wetland issues that made the proposal unattractive.

- Reopen the blocked path connecting Priscilla Lane and the eastern end of the Westmere School grounds

Opportunity for such a path remains, but await reconciliation of the major differences between the Town and the present owners of the undeveloped parcel between Priscilla Lane and the school.

- Connect the sidewalk fragments on the south side of Western Avenue between Johnston Road and Kraus Road and on the north side between Johnston Road and Gipp Road.

Just five gaps remain from completing a continuous sidewalk on the south side, and a similar number remain on the north side. This stretch should be a credible project for a grant application, but when the north side was previously bid out, the cost turned out to be very high for the length of sidewalk actually needed.

- Complete the sidewalk along the south side of Western Avenue east of Johnston Road.

This may be part of the TIP proposal. This project makes particular sense between Church Road and Alton Road, because by far the safest place in the town to cross Western Avenue is at the Crossgates English Couplet, an intersection that is likely to be improved soon. Most of the sidewalk exists; some work is needed to connect the sidewalk fragments.

- Add a sidewalk along Church Road to connect Harmony Hills and Deer Run to the Johnston Road sidewalk.

This project will make sense when the Johnston Road project is completed. Drew Cathell appeared to have no serious objection to a sidewalk on his frontage on the north side of Church Road when he came in for a subdivision several years back.

- Create a bicycle/pedestrian path (at least, if not a local road) between Windsor Court and Dr. Shaw Road through lands n/f of Tate.

Windsor Court has been built with a sidewalk in anticipation of an ultimate connection to Dr. Shaw Road.

- Complete the sidewalk on the north side of Western Avenue between Rapp Road and the Crossgates English Couplet

Particularly notable is the lack of sidewalk immediately east of the Johnston Road/Rapp Road intersection, where CDTA drops and picks up passengers.

- Build a sidewalk on the south side of Western Avenue between Fletcher Road and Highwood Circle

This is not an opportunity as a frustration. There remains no safe, viable way for pedestrians to walk between the western portion of Westlawn (between Van Wie Terrace and Fletcher Road) and the Route 155 area without crossing Western Avenue and using the sidewalk on the north side. But the only signalized intersection on Western Avenue between Route 155 and Gipp/Palma is at Witte Road, east of Van Wie, and access to

Witte Road from Van Wie is through Robinson Hardware's parking lot. Dr. DeRook's parcel is up for sale, so perhaps that will yield a sidewalk fragment to connect Fletcher Road to the east end of the Blockhouse Creek gorge.

Every possible route south of Western Avenue across the Blockhouse Creek has been blocked by development except a sidewalk along the south side of Western Avenue and a path between Parkington Place (the stub street off Walden Pond Road) and Presidential Way through the Farnsworth Middle School grounds. Both routes have major difficulties (cost and socioeconomic, respectively).

Westmere is the only region of the town that has not had a separate Master Planning process. It remains the least walkable part of town. The only bright spot is the Johnston Road sidewalk, which, among other things, will end the distinction of Westmere School (shared with Guilderland Elementary School) as a school to which no child can safely walk.

Route 155

Improvements

- The pedestrian friendliness of the Western Avenue/Route 155 intersection was completed by Walgreen's.

Opportunities

- Complete a sidewalk on the south side of Western Avenue between SEFCU and the Guilderland Public Library.

The Glassworks Village proposal only one formal step left before being completely approved by the Town. It is evidently on hold because of the economy. If completed, GWV will provide the desired sidewalk.

- Develop a path along the Blockhouse Creek between Farnsworth Middle School and Route 155 where the sewer line crosses under the highway.

This is a long-term proposal that would follow any development of the sewer line path west of Route 155 (see Guilderland Hamlet, below). The path would mostly lie on the existing sewer line, most of which is on lands of the school district and the YMCA (Camp Nassau). During the approval process for the access road from Route 155 to Camp Nassau, the YMCA indicated that they would have no problem with the path on their property. The path near Route 155 would be on land of Grace Baptist Church, which at one point also suggested that they would be cooperative.

The eastern end of the path could be accessed from the end of the parking lot to the southwest of the Middle School, or from the southern edge of the playing fields.

Lost opportunity

- Extend a sidewalk on the east side of Route 155 between Western Avenue and Gladwish Avenue.

This sidewalk makes good sense now that the Western Avenue/Route 155 intersection is quite safe to cross. The recent repaving and restriping of Route 155 north of Western Avenue apparently was not a significant enough road reconstruction to include this needed sidewalk.

For discussion on connecting the Route 155 area to neighborhoods to the east, see Westmere.

For the situation near the Normans Kill, see Guilderland Hamlet.

Guilderland Hamlet

Improvements

- This area was the subject of a local area Master Plan. Such planning documents help support grant applications for infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks and paths.

Opportunities

Paths in the Nott Road Park area:

- Construct a sidewalk along the east side of Winding Brook Drive to connect Western Avenue and Nott Road.

Glass Works Village would construct this sidewalk between Western Avenue and the YMCA parking lot entrance. If so, the YMCA in the past has committed to extending the sidewalk along its frontage. Fairwood Apartments has in the past floated a proposal for additional apartment units on land east of Winding Brook Drive and the Hunger Kill. Such a development could be linked to an extension of the YMCA sidewalk south along Winding Brook Drive far enough to terminate on little-traveled low speed apartment roadways, leaving a safe walk to Nott Road.

- Develop a path between Fairwood and Nott Road Park.

A cul-de-sac subdivision off Grant Road north of the Normans Kill was approved by the Planning Board. This subdivision provided for a donation to the Town of the eastern

portion of the parcel, which includes the sewer line connecting the Nott Road entrance way and Nott Road just east of the blocked Fairwood access. The sewer line slices a corner off the easternmost lot on the south side of Nott Road near Fairwood. With minimal rerouting around that lot, the sewer line makes a nice path connecting Fairwood (and by extension the YMCA and the rest of Winding Brook Drive) to the Nott Road access road (and by extension, Nott Road Park). The sewer line path requires virtually no maintenance other than the current occasional mowing.

- Develop off-road pedestrian/bicycle connections between Nott Road Park and Route 155.

At present, the only access to Nott Road Park from the Campus Club neighborhood and the Route 155 area (and its sidewalks) is to walk along Nott Road. The straight eastern end of Nott Road, east of the sharp curves, is tolerable (but could use wider paved shoulders for walking/bicycling), but the curves themselves are dangerous, with virtually no shoulder between the pavement and the Hunger Kill on the south side.

In 2008, as part of the approval of the Das subdivision, the Town obtained an easement on the portion of the sewer line on the Das parcel, east of the culvert where the sewer line crosses the Hunger Kill. This was of vital importance, because that culvert provides the only viable pedestrian crossing of the Hunger Kill south of Nott Road. The Danto-Harder (formerly Nott) parcel east of the Nott Road Park access road has been for sale for years and is a key to pathways in the Nott Road Park area. The parcel was once offered to the Town, but was (unfortunately) declined.

If the Town controlled the Danto-Harder parcel, possible would be

- An off-road path on the sewer line that connects the sidewalk on Route 155 to the Nott Road Park access road. Nearly all of the sewer line lies on either the Danto-Harder parcel or the Das parcel. Capital improvements would be limited to a fairly short bridge over the Kaikout Kill, and (I believe) a minor rerouting of the path around the corner of a residential lot on Nott Road east of the curve.
- Access to Nott Road Park from the Campus Club neighborhood, utilizing the straightaway on Nott Road and the sewer line through the Das parcel and the western end of the Danto-Harder parcel.

Also, a related opportunity:

- Develop a (highly) scenic path along the banks of the Hunger Kill and Normans Kill between the sewer line culvert crossing the Hunger Kill and the outlet of the sewage treatment plant near the southwest corner of Nott Road Park.

In addition to an easement on or ownership of the (probably undevelopable) portion of the Danto-Harder parcel west of the Hunger Kill, this idea needs lands north of the Normans Kill owned by Albany Country Club. In the past ACC has expressed no particular interest in retaining that land, which is in the flood plain, undevelopable, and

separated by the Normans Kill from the other lands of the Club. The next time ACC comes in to subdivide a portion of its land (e.g for Weatherfield IV), the Town should negotiate adding that land to Nott Road Park.

- Build a canoe launch facility at Nott Road Park.

The Normans Kill is usually fairly safe for canoeing upstream from Delaware Avenue. Nott Road is a desirable location for a launching facility because it is a short distance downstream from the Rifle Range. In the Pathways Master Plan we propose to call the canoe trail down Normans Kill the Ewart Bancker Water Trail, following the historic marker located on Route 146 opposite Tawasentha Park that marks Mayor Bancker's country home.

- Develop a path between Nott Road Park and Tawasentha Park near the Normans Kill.

The Grant Hill cul-de-sac subdivision, noted above, included on the land dedicated to the Town a path that connects the eastern end of the cul-de-sac to the Nott Road Park access road. That path, plus the cul-de-sac itself, connects Nott Road Park to Grant Hill Road.

Between Grant Hill Road and Tawasentha Park are the Rifle Range land, Pruszkowsky's farm, and Western Turnpike Golf Course. The GPC at one time was told that the Rifle Range might consider a request for a pedestrian easement through Rifle Range land north of the Normans Kill, on the dirt road that runs from Grant Hill Road up the hill to an open area once used for tank maneuvers near the golf course. If so, or if a route through the farm becomes available, the main obstacle is the golf course.

Routing a trail through or around the golf course as the course is presently laid out, presents difficulties. Because of the location of the green of the fourth hole of the white course, immediately adjacent to the edge of the Normans Kill gorge, there is no room to place a path around the golf course without placing the path part way down the gorge. Such a location would be difficult because of erosion problems.

Placing a path through the course might be feasible if it ran parallel to White #4 and then passed between the fourth tee and the third green. But that is a rather narrow space to place pedestrians who are not familiar with the behavior of golfers of average skill.

Paths north of Western Avenue:

- Connect Guilderland Hamlet to the Pine Bush Preserve.

The GPC proposed a path through the preserve to connect Guilderland Elementary School and DiCaprio Park, and submitted the proposal to the Commission in 2002. That proposal now has seven years of dust on it. The Commission set it aside pending a proposed Recreational Master Plan.

A draft of the Recreational Master Plan was circulated several years ago that severely restricted official paths in the Pine Bush, contained virtually no paths in the Town of Guilderland, proposed no official access to the Preserve from Guilderland Elementary School, and omitted all through paths, both the path proposed by the GPC and a Pine Bush Greenway path, once proposed by the Commission itself, that would have connected Fuller Road and Kings Road. The eastern portion of the Pine Bush Greenway was constructed along the Thruway from west of Rapp Road (near the Polish Community Center) east to Fuller Road, where it could connect to the Patroon Path planned between Fuller Road and the Corning Preserve.

That Recreational Master Plan was met with widespread criticism. To my knowledge, it was set aside indefinitely.

Lone Pine

This region was examined in the Carman Road/Fort Hunter planning study.

Improvements

- A sidewalk has been built on the south side of Lydius Street between Traber Road and DiCaprio Park

This connects the northern Lone Pine neighborhood to the park.

- A large area of land on the Lupe parcel was donated to the Town for the Pine Bush Preserve

This tract contains a network of dirt roads that connect Lone Pine Park and DiCaprio Park, across an existing culvert over the Hunger Kill, making DiCaprio Park accessible by bike or foot from the southern portion of the Lone Pine neighborhood. The only concern is to make sure that a path connecting the two parks is not suppressed by the Pine Bush Commission, which has seemed to be unsympathetic to through paths in the Preserve in the recent past (see Westmere, above).

- An off-road path connects the eastern end of Spawn Road to Lone Pine Park.

By extension, this path connects Spawn Road to DiCaprio Park as well.

- A continuous sidewalk was constructed on the east side of Carman Road between Lone Pine Road and Coons Road.

Opportunities

- The Carman Road study calls for completing the sidewalk on the east side of Carman Road, especially south of Lone Pine Road and north of Coons Road.

Both stretches contain sidewalk fragments constructed by businesses. Where these fragments are separated by non-commercial uses without sidewalks, the Town should feel some obligation to complete a continuous sidewalk connecting the commercial fragments, as it did between Coons Road and Lone Pine Road. Otherwise the businesses could justifiably feel that their investment in a sidewalk fragment that is unusable was a wasteful expenditure of money.

Hartman's Corners

Improvements

- A sidewalk was constructed on the east side of Carman Road to connect Old State Road and Sunset Lane.

This important sidewalk extended a "poster child" sidewalk fragment. The completed sidewalk enables residents near and south of Spawn Road to access Carman Plaza.

- A sidewalk was constructed on the west side of Route 146 from Stewarts south to Halfmoon Drive.

This facilitates walking to the nearest convenience store from Windmill Estates.

- Several miles of hiking trails have been opened up in all three sections of Tawasentha Park, connected by the pedestrian bridge over the Normans Kill.

Opportunities

- Expand and extend the Tawasentha Park trail system.

There are several possible options:

- One is to take advantage of a recent subdivision proposal on Ostrander Road adjacent to the WRA of the Park to add the small pond and a couple of hundred feet upstream from the pond to the WRA. This pond feeds into the deep gorge that separates the southern and middle portions of the WRA, and is just outside the boundary of the Park. A spur trail could then be added to the existing hiking trail to access the pond.
- Another is to expand the hiking trail in the Garden section of the park to include an informal trail (marked with tape) that runs along the top of the bank of the Normans Kill.

- Another is to add a spur from the lower end of the WRA east and around a knoll to a handsome pine woods at the top of the knoll in the southeastern corner of the WRA.
- Another is to extend the trail downstream from the main park to the edge of the Normans Kill at the end of the rough dirt road running from the golf course to the stream below the Golf Course (along a route marked with tape.) Longer term it would be desirable to find a suitable connection to Grant Hill Road (see Guilderland Hamlet, above).
- Another is to extend the main park trail under the Route 146 bridge to the Battle of Normans Kill site. This would require purchase of the site plus easements from a couple of landowners in between. (see Fullers, below).

Problems noted in the Sidewalk Master Plan remain difficult.

- Tawasentha Park remains inaccessible except by car or bike (riding on the shoulders of route 146).
- The Willow Street area remains isolated from every other neighborhood in the Town.
- A sidewalk along the south side of Old State Road between Maywood Ave. and Carman Road is needed to connect the Acre Drive neighborhood to the Shave Road neighborhood and to Carman Plaza

Fullers

Improvements

- The 20 West development across Western Avenue from Town Hall, essentially approved by the Planning Board, should contain sidewalks and a trail connecting that development to the path between Vosburgh Road and the Battle of Normans Kill site.
- The Bohl parcel on the southeast side of French's Mill Road, conceptually approved by the Planning Board, should contain paths that would connect the 20 West development and the Drebitko parcel to French's Mill Road.

Opportunities

- The Battle of Normans Kill site (Drebitko) remains undeveloped.

If the Drebitko parcel is obtained and the Bohl and 20 West developments are completed, then the entire north bank of the Normans Kill between the Battle of Normans Kill site and the highly scenic French's Mill pedestrian bridge area will be accessible by safe footpaths from Town Hall and the neighborhoods north of Western Avenue. If easements for a path between Tawasentha Park and the Battle site can be obtained, the result could be a continuous path along or near the Normans Kill from near the Rifle Range upstream to the Dam.

- Lynnwood School remains unsafe for foot access.

Sidewalks are needed on the south side of West Old State Road between Regina Drive and Pinewood Drive (to connect the Parkview Drive neighborhood to Lynnwood School) and between Gardenview Drive and Carman Road (to connect that neighborhood to Carman Plaza). These sidewalks were supported by a neighborhood petition drive in 2002.

- The sidewalk along the west side of Carman Road between Old State Road and Western Avenue should be completed, to connect Morningside Drive to Carman Plaza and McCormack's Corners.
- A clearly evident path should be constructed on the existing pedestrian easement that connects Spring Farm Lane to the Lynnwood School grounds.

Fort Hunter

This area was part of the Carman Road-Fort Hunter planning study. We note the most important ideas.

Opportunities

- The Empire Avenue sidewalk and bike lane should be extended with Empire Avenue itself to the Coons Road/Carman Road intersection, to connect the existing development along Empire Avenue area to the Pine Bush School grounds and to Lone Pine Park, DiCaprio Park and the Pine Bush to the east.
- An off-road bike path could be developed between Empire Avenue and Fuller Station Road at Old State Road, to help connect the Empire Avenue area (as well as Williamsburg and Georgetown Square) to Lynnwood School and to the Dam area of the Normans Kill. One possible route could be to use the National Grid/Fuller Station rail bed from Old State Road north to the Rose property, then

locate the path on an old farm road through the Rose property, south and west of Williamsburg, to the Hamman parcel and then north around the west end of Williamsburg and Georgetown to reach Empire Avenue.

- Bikeable shoulders and a sidewalk should be constructed along West Old State Road west from Regina Drive to Fuller Station Road, and beyond along West Old State Road as development occurs.
- Bikeable shoulders should be added to Fuller Station Road between Western Avenue and Carman Road, to facilitate safe biking from the Lone Pine/Fort Hunter area to the French's Mill bridge and beyond.
- The gaps between sidewalk fragments on the west side of Carman Road between Old State Road and Spawn Road should be filled in, with a crosswalk at the Carman Road/Spawn Road intersection.

Guilderland Center

This is the subject of a planning study currently in progress.

Opportunities

- A sidewalk along Route 146 between Depot Road and Van Buren Drive is on the TIP list.
- A clustered subdivision, Dutchman Acres, in the Black Creek/School Road/Depot Road triangle should provide a public trail along the Black Creek and around the Moak Farm between School Road and the junction of Depot Road and Route 146. This trail, together with the new Route 146 sidewalk, and the existing sidewalk on School Road, would make a very nice walking loop in the hamlet.
- A bike path should be formalized to connect Main St. (the extension of School Road across Route 146 into Park Guilderland) with the main entrance road to Keenholts Park across Park Guilderland land. (No doubt people walk or ride across the level, open land between Main Street and Keenholts Park now.)
- The French's Mill Road bridge over the CSX tracks should be rehabilitated for pedestrian and bicycle use. The Elizabethfield/French's Hollow neighborhood and the Fullers area north of the Normans Kill are presently cut off from Keenholts Park by the closed bridge. If reopened, the bridge would cut nearly a mile off the trip between the Dam and Keenholts Park.

Altamont

Opportunities

- The Village Park (Bozenkill Park), to our knowledge, is not safely accessible by foot or bicycle from the Village. A sidewalk along the length of Gun Club Road would be desirable to connect the sidewalk on Main St. to the Park.

Rural Guilderland

Improvements

- The Helderberg Hudson Rail Trail, between Voorheesville and the Port of Albany, is on the TIP list and is scheduled for a public hearing in June 2009.

With the development of the rail trail and its connection to the regional off-road bicycle network, much of Guilderland will be within reasonable biking distance of the Voorheesville end of that trail

Reopening the closed French's Mill railroad bridge would connect the Fullers area with Depot Road via School Road in Guilderland Center.

Opportunities

- Include suitable paved shoulders for biking on county and local roads that would feed the Rail Trail.

. Guilderland Center could connect to the Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail via Depot Road, Stone Rd. and Grant Hill Road/South Main Street (County Route 201) or via Depot Road and Prospect Street; and Altamont could connect via Route 156, County Route 208 and Prospect St. These roads could become commuter routes for bicyclists employed in or near downtown Albany. The safety of cyclists should be included in any future plans for these roads.

- Seek the rest of the Delanson-Port of Albany rail line to extend the Rail Trail if it is abandoned (as it almost was in the 1990's).

An extension of the Helderberg-Hudson rail trail from Voorheesville to Altamont and then up the Bozen Kill to Delanson, would be a major recreational asset for rural Guilderland.

To further enhance the recreational value of the extended trail, an effort could be made to revive, via some route, the historic Indian Ladder Trail that connected Meadowdale Station with Thacher Park a century ago. The original Indian Ladder Trail still exists west of the upper end of the private Indian Ladder Drive (which serves Indian Ladder

Estates off Route 156). The lower portion of the original route is no longer viable because of the development of Indian Ladder Estates, but perhaps some other route could be found, for example immediately to the north of the Indian Ladder Estates development, to connect the upper part of the original trail to Route 156 and then beyond to the extended Helderberg Rail Trail.