



VILLAGE OF COLD SPRING
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Village of Cold Spring Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
May 25, 2022

The Board of Trustees of the Village of Cold Spring held a Meeting on Wednesday May 25, 2022 at Village Hall and via videoconference as per Chapter 1 of Local Laws of 2022. Present were Mayor Kathleen E. Foley, Trustees Laura Bozzi, Cathryn Fadde, Eliza Starbuck and Tweeps Phillips Woods. The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Mayor Foley.

Moment of Silence

K. Foley asked for a moment of silence to remember the lives lost in the recent mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas.

Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail (HHFT)

K. Foley introduced MJ Martin, Director of Development & Community Engagement and Amy Kacala, Executive Director with Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Inc.

A. Kacala took the Board and audience through a presentation (attached) that provided information on the HHFT project including background, the Master Plan, project updates, design elements and ways for the community to stay involved and informed. Key points included:

- Initial discussions began in 2006 with the goal of providing safe walking route along Route 9D from Cold Spring to Breakneck Ridge
- Traffic study conducted in 2006 and Hike/Bike study in 2007
 - Led to the formation of a steering committee and development of a Master Plan (2015)
- Trail Stewards Program introduced in 2014
- Breakneck Connector, providing access to trails from the Metro-North Breakneck Ridge station, began in 2017
- SEQRA review completed in 2016 (Negative Declaration) with Town of Fishkill as lead agency
- Generic Environmental Impact Statement review began in 2017
 - Consultant hired (AKRF)
 - Lead agency declared (Parks)
 - Scoping document prepared
- Public frustration mounted with increase in foot and vehicular traffic since 2019
 - New consultants brought in
 - Public workshops held
- Master Plan updated in 2020

- Improve landscape, access and safety
- Focus on ecology and rising sea levels
- Manage visitation
 - Purchased Dutchess Manor for use as a parking area and visitor center
 - Plan for resting spots along the trail
 - Add restrooms and garbage bins along the trail (to be maintained by HHFT)
- SEQRA underway for updated Master Plan
 - 30-day public comment period will begin upon completion of SEQRA draft
- Construction on upper overlook to begin Fall 2022
- Legal swimming area w/lifeguard being explored for Little Stony Point
- When completed, HHFT will provide a walking/biking/hiking trail from Cold Spring to Beacon

Board Comments

K. Foley commented that crowds and parking are already unmanageable. The trail will only exacerbate the situation. How will traffic from the Metro North Train station and Dockside Park be managed?

- A. Kacala said a Parking Management RFP was being issued that will address these concerns

E. Starbuck expressed concern that adding hundreds of new parking spots in new lots would increase the vehicular traffic going through the corridor of the Village (the only southern entrance by road to the Fjord Trail). She suggested that they reconsider that plan and instead reduce parking for cars which is an opportunity to reduce vehicular traffic to the Village and trails.

- A. Kacala commented that perhaps Philipstown Climate Smart can partner with Metro North and HHFT to develop alternate solutions (i.e., drive to Croton and then take the train to trails)
- MJ Martin added that HHFT is forming a Sustainability Group and invited E. Starbuck to join

C. Fadde asked at what point does foot and vehicular traffic become unmanageable and what can be done to prevent that?

- A. Kacala said that the issues and routes need to be identified and options for mitigation addressed
- MJ Martin added that there are limited alternate routes out of the village and these need infrastructure improvements

L. Bozzi commented that planning for traffic is a main concern for the Village. She also asked:

- How can the Village be an active participant in the Environmental Impact Study (EIS), especially since Dockside has changed, due to the agreement with the Village and shoreline sustainability initiative, since the initial Master Plan was developed? A. Kacala commented that there will be opportunity for the Village to participate.
- Is access to little Stony Point part of the EIS? A. Kacala replied that it is

T. Woods said she is glad there is a management plan and asked about the availability of any press releases. MJ Martin directed T. Woods to the HHFT website for all press releases. T. Woods also asked about traffic mitigation on 9D as well lower speed limits through the area. A. Kacala stated that these are concerns that need to be addressed with DOT. K. Foley discussed the need for the trail, the 9D corridor and the Village to be addressed as one interconnected traffic system.

C. Fadde inquired if HHFT has considered additional public bathrooms in the Village? A. Kacala replied that the plans call for the addition of bathrooms at Dockside Park.

K. Foley asked that as part of determining the permitting process under SEQRA, Parks undertake a balancing test. She argued that this project should not have full exemption from local land use regulations and permitting. A. Kacala stated that the Village will be involved.

Public Comment (See attached for written comments submitted to the Board)

K. Foley noted that the following rules for public comment will apply:

- Comments are limited to 3 minutes
- Asked that comments previously addressed and/or questions answered not be repeated
- Comment period is not meant for debate

Irene Pieza (6 Paulding Avenue) asked if management of river traffic has been addressed and will there be gates to limit after-hours access to the trails? She also suggested that an emergency response station be considered on the west side of the train tracks for faster response when traffic is heavy in the upper Village. A. Kacala commented that these have not been addressed.

James Hartford (5 Furnace Street) commented that access to Dockside Park is over private property (easement exists) and that any water and sewer hookups at Little Stony Point will need to be to the Village system. He also inquired about continuing shoreline access for cleanups.

Sean Conway (18 Morris Avenue) asked the following questions:

- Will HHFT be counting passengers departing at the Breakneck Ridge station over Memorial Day weekend? A. Kacala replied that there are no plans but agreed that baseline data is needed.
- Will shuttle service be available for the 6/25 event at Dutchess Manor? No, per A. Kacala and MJ Martin
- Will trails be lit? A. Kacala replied that they will not be lit

Jane Timms (5 Rock Street) commented that Dockside Park is pristine and that she hopes nothing changes that

Rebecca Ramirez (13 Church Street) made the following comments:

- She is in favor of improved access to the water, keeping people on the trails and adding public bathrooms
- Nothing presented or discussed will help make Fair Street or 9D safer. Sidewalks are needed to make these safer
- Increasing capacity for cars is bad and negatively impacts non-vehicular traffic

Richard Shea (53 Morris Avenue and former Town Supervisor) commented that residents need to be realistic because the HHFT is going to happen. Amenities are what the Village and residents should be campaigning for at this point. He also reminded residents that this is a process that takes time and everything can be addressed.

Karen Mashke (7 Forge Gate Drive - President of Forge Gate Condo Association), stated that the impacts of increased traffic is real for the residents of Forge Gate and asked that the HHFT be mindful of private property. A. Kacala replied that workshops will be held to address traffic behaviors.

Randi Schlessinger (Forge Gate resident) suggested that daily limits on parking and hiking permits issued could help mitigate traffic issues. She also advocated for no parking along 9D.

Phil Heffernan (9 Garden Street) suggested that traffic can be diminished by requiring public transportation in order to access the trails.

Michael Reisman (30 Rock Street) commented that there is a parking problem in the Village, but categorized it as a problem of convenience. He also commented that the Village's Comprehensive Plan and LW RTP need to be considered in the planning for HHFT.

Ethan Timms (Nelsonville resident) asked if Nelsonville and Cold Spring could work cooperatively in addressing access to the trails. K. Foley commented that this is an issue that should be brought to the Philipstown Trail Committee. L. Bozzi added that Nelsonville should be included at the table because of the Nelsonville Trail System. The Village boundary does not limit the impact.

Claudio Marzollo (Lane Gate Drive and owner of 75 Main Street) agreed with Richard Shea's comments and reiterated that the HHFT is going to happen.

K. Foley thanked A. Kacala and MJ Martin for their time.

Adjournment

K. Foley made a motion to adjourn. C. Fadde seconded the motion and it passed by a vote of 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:02pm

Prepared by: J. Vidakovich

Jeff Vidakovich, Village Clerk-Treasurer

Date



Village of Cold Spring - Planning Board

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May 18, 2022

Dear Mayor Foley and Trustees:

Pursuant to Sec 21.9 of the Village Code, the Planning Board has begun a review of the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail (HHFT) and its potential impact on future planning and development in the village. HHFT has shared little detailed information with the public, although work on the project has been on-going for the preceding 5 years. These comments are consequently of a general nature.

The Planning Board wishes to bring the following concerns to your attention:

1. HHFT has evolved from a conservation and public safety project to a high-profile purpose-built destination project designed to draw thousands of additional tourists to the area using Cold Spring as a "gateway." HHFT has neither shown credible need for the scale of the new project nor the practicality of what may be the obsolescing concept of a linear park. What is likely, however, is the potential of the new concept to disrupt the daily life and essential character of our village.
2. One immediate result will be an unsustainable demand on the Village's infrastructure and services to visitors and residents alike. The Village is struggling to manage tourism at current levels with insufficient bathrooms, pedestrian rights of way and inadequate parking capacity. HHFT will further stress our delivery of public safety, sanitation, and medical services which must have a dramatic and unpredictable impact on the Village budget and taxpayers.

HHFT has failed to recognize these issues as primary matters of concern which must be addressed before the onset of construction at Breakneck Ridge and, as far as we know, there has been no meaningful consultation to correct these planning flaws with the Village or its residents.

We urge the Trustees to take a strong, public stand on the potential negative impacts HHFT poses to Cold Spring's special character, its control over its budget and the rights of its citizens to determine the kind of environment in which they wish to live. We recommend that the Village seek legal and environmental advice.

Respectfully,


Jack Goldstein, Chair

Yaslyn Daniels, Member

Matt Francisco, Member

Sue Meyer, Member

Lara shihab-eldin, Member