

Report to the Board of the Riverdale Nature Preservancy
by the Preservancy Greenway Committee

The Greenway committee has met three times to date. Following is a report on the work that has been accomplished.

Riverdale Nature Preservancy Principles and Values

The committee agreed to articulate principles that respond to the concerns and values of the Riverdale Nature Preservancy, and recognized that these principles may also apply to other neighborhoods affected by the Greenway planning effort. The committee also recognized that the Greenway is in a very early planning stage, and that it is too soon to endorse any specific proposal/route because plans are still in a conceptual stage.

The committee engaged in a brainstorming session through which it identified the following general principles for use in evaluating proposals for the Greenway:

- The Greenway plan should preserve the important resources of the community. These resources include:
 - Residential character
 - Natural features
 - The Hudson and Harlem Rivers
 - Scenic views
 - Trees
 - Rock outcrops
 - Soils/grades
 - Parks and open space
 - Cultural features
 - Historical
 - Architectural
 - Archaeological
 - Landscape
- The Greenway plan should provide opportunities to apply suitable mechanisms to forestall future undesirable development, thereby increasing and preserving open space.
- The Greenway plan should promote linkages to other Greenways to the north and south of Community District 8 and to other trails and bikeways being planned for the Bronx.
- The Greenway plan should promote access to the Hudson and Harlem Rivers, access meaning physical access to the shore.

- The Greenway plan should identify the fundamental values and needs of each community along the waterfront and respond to them.
- The Greenway plan should make investments in all parts of the community, thereby providing incentives for all parts of the community to participate in its formulation.
- The Greenway plan should present costs and benefits of the various recommendations.
- The Greenway plan should provide access based on walking and biking, should discourage automobiles, should evaluate impacts on traffic and parking in the community, and include design elements that ensure that neighborhood streets are not overrun with parked cars and traffic.
- The Greenway plan should define a governance structure that has strong community participation.
- The Greenway plan should provide maintenance and security through government agencies.
- The Greenway plan should take pedestrian and bicycle safety into account.

The committee supports further study of:

1) The waterfront

Alternate A

A *walking only* trail that will run along the waterfront from the city line to W. 254th Street, cross the tracks at the Riverdale rail station, enter Riverdale Park at W. 254th Street and travel on an improved walking trail through the park alongside Wave Hill, leave the park at Spaulding Lane, follow Palisade Avenue to either Kappock or Independence Avenues, where the trail will connect to the entrance to the walkway on the lower level of the Henry Hudson Bridge.

Alternate B

A *walking only* trail along the waterfront that will run from the city line to the Amtrak swing bridge at Spuyten Duyvil, and across the swing bridge.

Alternate C

A *multi-use* trail that will accommodate both walkers and bicyclists along the waterfront and that will run from the city line to the Amtrak swing bridge at Spuyten Duyvil, and across the swing bridge.

None of these alternates recommends designating Palisade Avenue for use by bicycles.

2) Points of access to the waterfront

Multiple regulated access points, including handicapped access, to the rivers at the Ludlow, Riverdale, and Spuyten Duyvil railroad stations. Study of additional access points at Dodge Point, or at other locations, should be postponed until the community can evaluate the impact of establishing the initial access.

3) Palisade Avenue

The committee is opposed to designation of Palisade Avenue as a regional or Greenway bicycle route.

(We oppose designation of Palisade Avenue because the road is too narrow between 254th Street and 261st Street and has several sharp bends -- and we would oppose any widening or straightening. Also, the road up and around Wave Hill is narrow and steep and therefore bicyclists will continue through the park causing sever damage.)

The committee supports study of improvements along Palisade Avenue that will create an improved walking and jogging path between the park and the road; bury the utility cables; improve storm drainage, to hold the water on the land; refinish the road and install traffic calming devices; consider removing the parking at the corner of Spaulding and Palisade; and coordinate with the \$13 million DEP project to renovate the pump houses and force mains under Palisade Avenue and in Riverdale Park.

4) Routes outside the RNP Area

The Putnam Line: Cleanup of the Putnam Railroad right-of-way and development of a Greenway plan which builds access to the river and creates a park, and is based on the work of a community design committee. Our elected officials should work together to expand the definition of the Greenway and Waterfront Area. We recommend further study by the DEP to evaluate the drainage for Tibbetts Brook and the storm water runoff along the railroad line including the Hudson and Harlem Rivers.

The Old Croton Aqueduct: Completion of the Old Croton Aqueduct Greenway

On-Street routes on Riverdale Avenue and Broadway, and east-west interconnections between all the north-south routes: We recommend further study by the appropriate government agencies to evaluate impact on parking spaces and traffic and evaluate safety issues.

Conclusion

The committee has not finished its work. It is in the process of bringing together a unified statement which will express the above ideas and draw upon the two attached drafts.

Respectfully submitted,
Ned Ames, committee chair
Dick Baldwin
Peter Davies
Paul Elston
Gil Kerlin
Eric Seiff