

3.2 Fishkill Creek Crossing

The Tioronda Bridge was decommissioned in the 1980s, and demolished in 2006. Before it deteriorated, it accommodated two-lanes of vehicular traffic. Recently, this location was used as a crossing for utility pipes, but they are not designed to support any additional load. A new self-supporting bridge deck would need to be constructed above the utilities to make use of this crossing for the trail and/or vehicles. Getting to the Tioronda Ave Bridge crossing from the Brickyards Parkland (Route Segment 3.1B) would, however, require aligning the trail along the entire length of the utility easement that parallels the creek, and would require additional negotiations with private property owners on whose land this easement exists. Several of these homeowners commented on this proposed trail alignment expressing serious concerns.

3.2A - Metro-North Causeway: There are two causeway bridges crossing the mouth of the Fishkill Creek, however both active tracks use only the western bridge. The remaining bridge may be available for the use of the trail, with a physical barrier separating the trail from maintenance vehicles, which occasionally use the causeway to access portions of the tracks south of the Fishkill Creek. Metro-North is reviewing this request with respect to safety concerns and operational requirements.

3.2B - Bridge Across Wetlands: In order to avoid using private property, a short section of the utility easement would be used to go as far east as possible on publicly owned land. This land does not extend far enough to reach the point at which the creek narrows, so the bridge would have to cross along the edge of the wetland area. Supports would be placed where there is some stable ground for landings as shown to the right. This bridge would provide visual access to a very unique habitat.



Metro-North Causeway bridges over the mouth of Fishkill Creek with two parallel bridges side by side

3.2C - Bridge Across Fishkill Creek Mouth: To minimize shading and wetland impacts to the creek, a shorter span could be used to cross at the mouth where the creek narrows. This would require an easement across one of the privately owned parcels along the creek, but would not extend beyond the first private parcel. A shorter span in this location would reduce the environmental impacts.



Fishkill Creek crossing options. Property lines shown in purple are approximate and not to scale.

3.2D - Tioronda Bridge via Utility Easement: This graded land is an old railroad bed and runs through what today is private property. It is currently used as a utility easement for Central Hudson's power lines, and is cleared wide enough for a trail. This would provide an off-road alternative to the 2 mile climb to the Mount Beacon trailhead to cross Fishkill Creek over the Route 9D/Wolcott Ave Bridge, which does not connect directly to the existing trail in Madam Brett Park. Negotiations with private property owners would have to take place in order to align the trail through the easement.

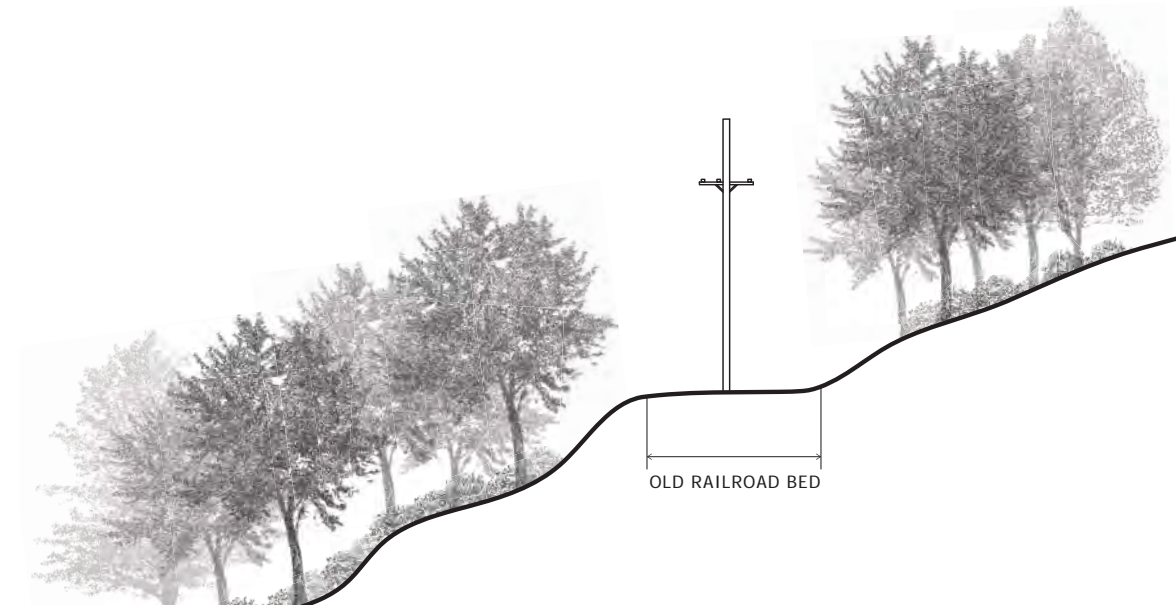
Utility easement runs directly behind this house



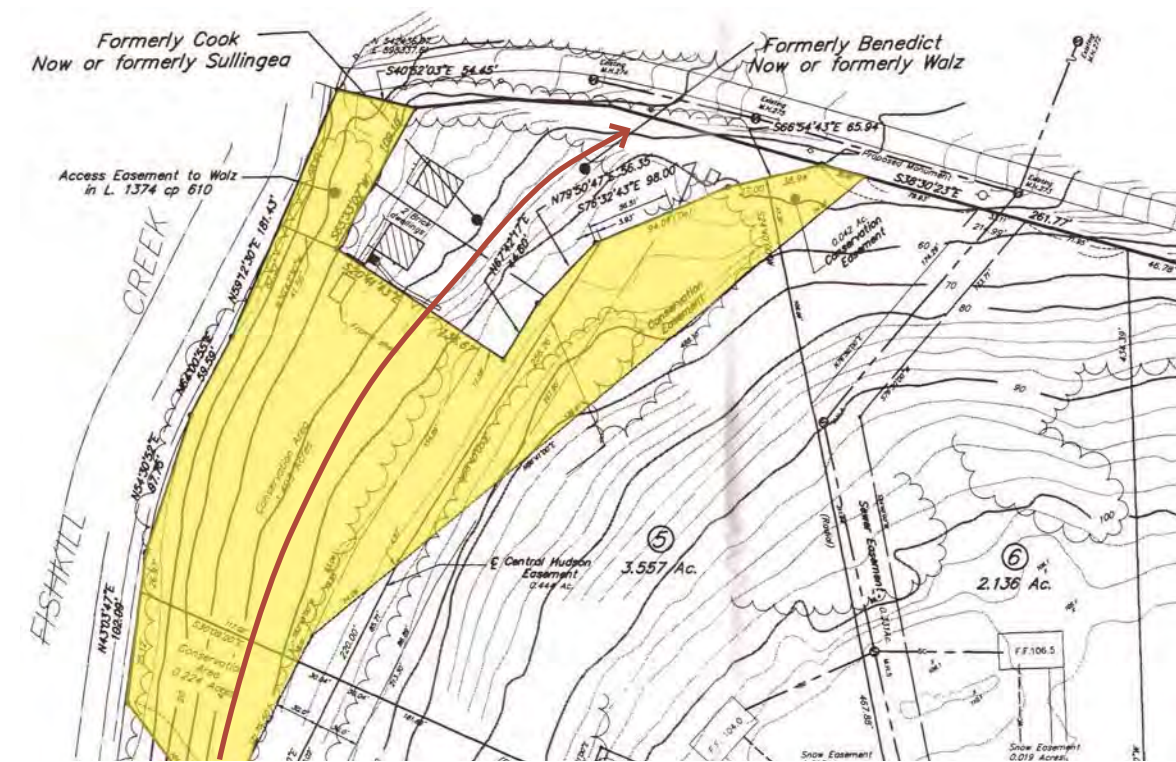
Private property on the south side of Fishkill Creek, Tioronda Bridge (left)



Tioronda Bridge looking north



Old railroad bed/current utility easement facing east



Approximate centerline of utility easement shown in red, yellow shading indicates conservation easement which is unrelated to utility easement

Summary Evaluation

GOALS

SAFETY

3.2A Metro-North Causeway

Active railroad tracks in close proximity. Coordination required with Metro-North.

RECREATION

This alignment would keep trail users closer and visually connected to the river, and is already ideal for biking and walking due to its smooth, level-graded surface.

HIGHLIGHT & RETAIN NATURAL BEAUTY

These causeways are between the river and a delicate environment in the creek's delta, which would not be accessible from the trail. Eagles have been observed in the vicinity of these causeways, which may impact wintering bald eagles and could require seasonal closings of this route.

CONSTRUCTION FEASIBILITY

Active railroad tracks in close proximity. Further review and coordination with Metro-North (owner), DEC and other governing bodies must take place, and necessary agreements must be executed before a trail can be implemented at this location.

**P R E F E R R E D
R O U T E**

3.2B Bridge Across Wetlands

Off-road bridge would be very safe from a technical perspective.

This bridge would bring trail users close to a unique environment.

While this bridge would highlight the natural beauty of the area, there would be impacts to the existing wetlands and other habitat.

This bridge would be challenging to design and build without major impacts to the ecosystem. Supports would be placed where there is some existing land to reduce impacts.

3.2C Bridge across Mouth of Fishkill Creek

Off-road bridge would be very safe from a technical perspective.

This bridge would bring trail users close to a unique environment.

This bridge would bring trail users across at a quiet location with views of the unique delta environment without adversely affecting the habitat aside from shading and minor disturbance on the slopes of the creek embankment.

This connection would have moderate impacts and would require the use of one private parcel. However, the creek crossing would be significantly shorter and less expensive to implement compared to the Bridge Across Wetlands.

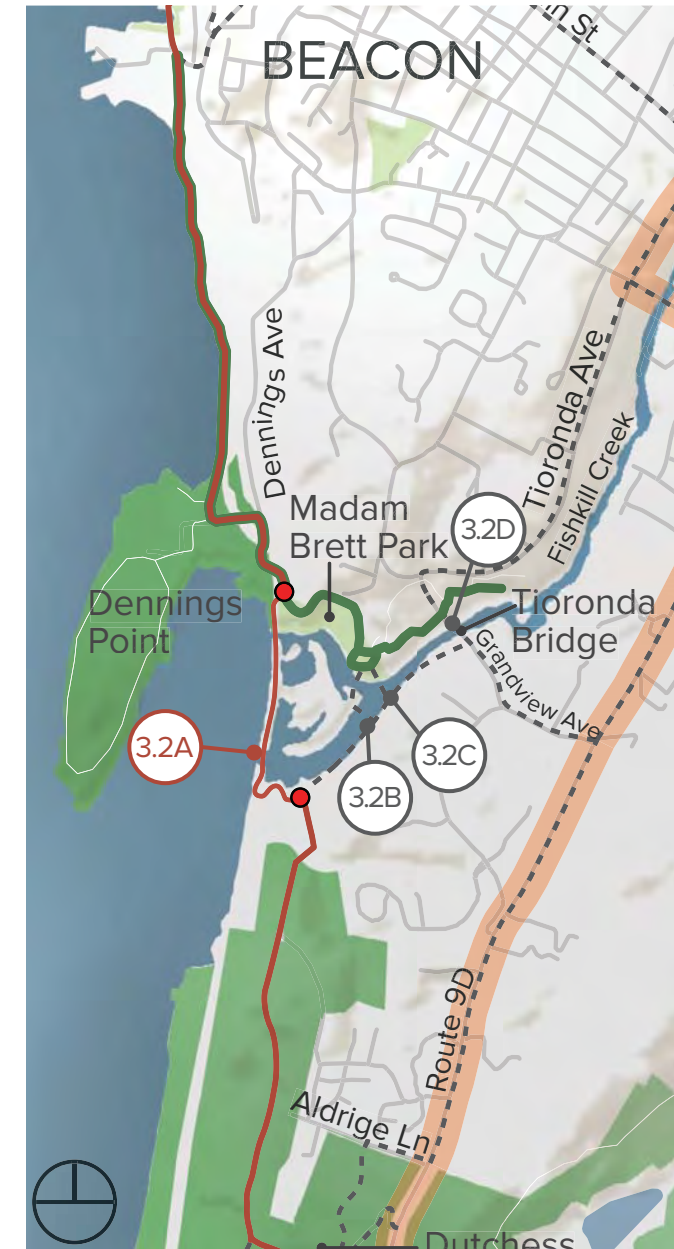
3.2D Tioronda Bridge Crossing

Off-road and along a graded right-of-way, this trail would be very safe from a technical perspective.

Crossing the Fishkill Creek via the Tioronda Bridge would bring trail users to Madam Brett Park and the waterfall that can be found up the creek from the bridge crossing.

This utility easement has power lines overhead but is otherwise surrounded by trees and the steep slope along the Fishkill Creek, with some obstructed views of the creek. This trail routing option would pass within just a few feet of several private homes.

While the grading remains from the abandoned railroad corridor that passed through this area, it sits on private property. Where the utility easement meets Grandview Avenue, there are two homes within very close proximity of the trail. The issue of access to private property would need to be negotiated with property owners for this alignment to be able to be considered further. One of these two homeowners uses this property to access his home, and as an outdoor work space. This connection also comes within close proximity of Mount Beacon and was desired by the community.



Map 3.2 - Fishkill Creek Crossing

Legend

- Preferred Route
- Change in route segment
- - - Alternate Route
- Proposed Route 9D Corridor safety improvements
- State Parks