

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the existing conditions and discusses the Proposed Action’s potential effects on and consistency with land use, zoning, and public policy within the Fjord Trail South Corridor, an approximately two-mile section of the Fjord Trail. An evaluation of the proposed Fjord Trail North is provided in Chapter III.A, “Land Use and Zoning – Fjord Trail North,” of this DGEIS.

This chapter provides a description of existing conditions, and an assessment of the future conditions with and without the proposed Fjord Trail South. This chapter describes existing land uses along the Fjord Trail South Corridor and assesses compatibility of the Proposed Action with existing and future land uses along the Corridor. In addition, this chapter evaluates consistency of the Proposed Action within Fjord Trail South with applicable zoning ordinances and public policy documents specified in the Final Scoping Document. As demonstrated in the following sections of this chapter, the Proposed Action within Fjord Trail South would have no significant adverse impacts related to land use, zoning, or consistency with adopted public policies.

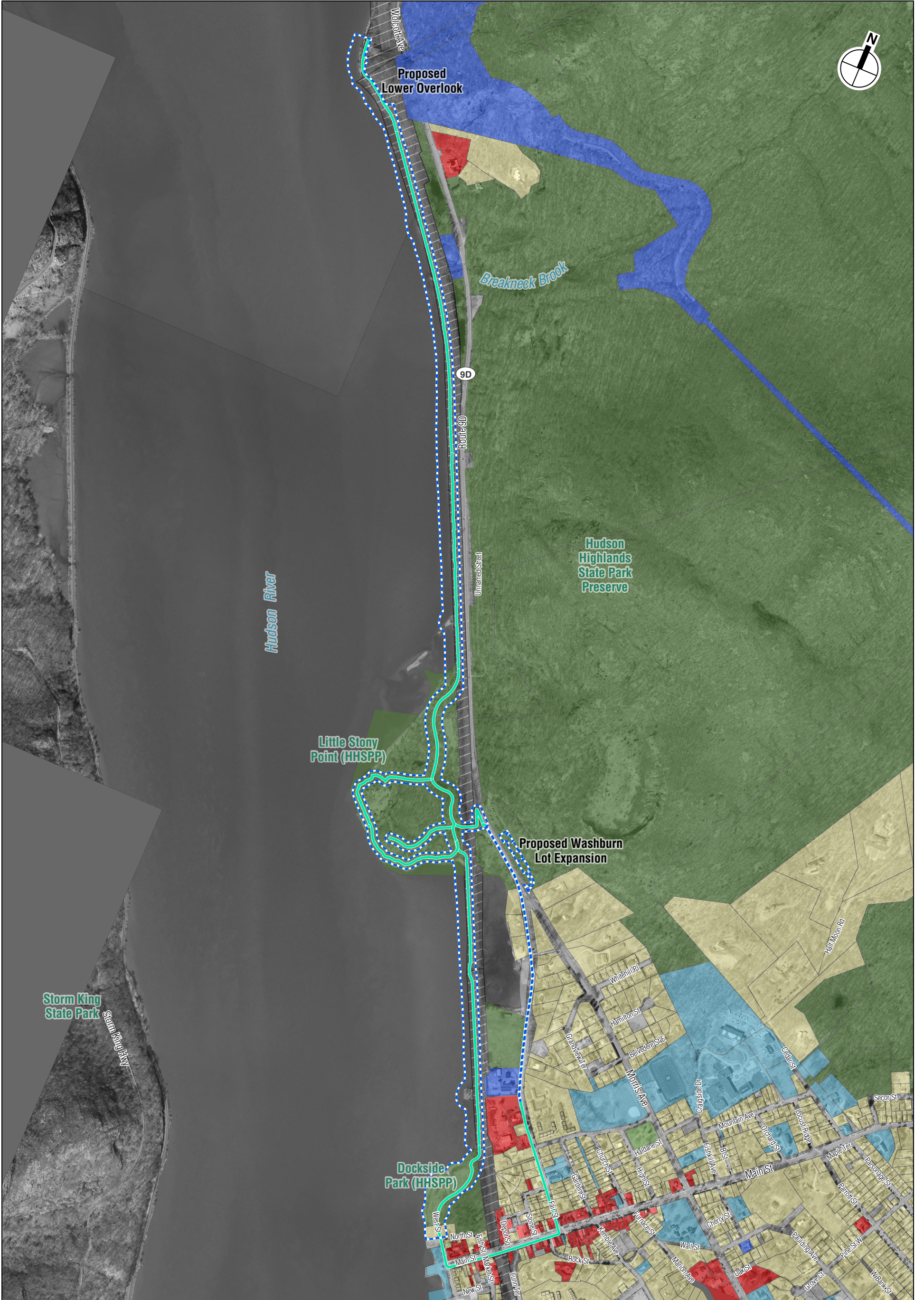
B. EXISTING CONDITIONS**LAND USE**

This section provides an overview of existing land uses along the Fjord Trail South Corridor. Existing land uses along the Fjord Trail South Corridor are shown in **Figure IV.A-1**. As described in Chapter II, “Project Description,” the Fjord Trail South Corridor would include approximately two miles of Main Trail, roughly 1.5 miles within the Town of Philipstown and 0.5 miles within the Village of Cold Spring, both of which are in Putnam County. Approximately 1.5 miles of the Fjord Trail South Main Trail is proposed to be located within the Metro-North Railroad (MNR) right-of-way, with the remainder within land of the Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve (HHSPP) (including Little Stony Point and Dockside Park).

The Fjord Trail South Corridor is largely on a constricted section of land and causeway between the MNR tracks and the Hudson River or over the Hudson River shoreline. NYS Route 9D parallels the MNR tracks to the east for much of this section. Land along this section east of NYS Route 9D is largely undeveloped and forested, as part of HHSPP, which contains an extensive network of hiking trails. Development increases along NYS Route 9D where it enters the Village of Cold Spring.

At the northern end of the Fjord Trail South Corridor, on the east side of NYS Route 9D are several single-family homes and the former Chalet/Inn Credible Caterers building (which is now owned by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation [OPRHP]).

To the south, the Fjord Trail South Corridor passes through Little Stony Point, a forested peninsula along the Hudson River within HHSPP with existing trails and a narrow sandy beach. At the entrance to Little Stony Point on NYS Route 9D are new and retrofitted buildings housing the Little Stony Point Citizen’s Association and an HHSPP park office. A parking lot on the east side



 Trail Corridor - Fjord Trail South
 Fjord Trail South

- | | |
|---|--|
| Commercial | Residential |
| Community Services | Vacant Land |
| Public Services | Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands, and Public Parks |
| Recreation and Entertainment | Railroad Right-of-way |

0 2,000 FEET

Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail

of NYS Route 9D and informal, unpaved parking on the west side of NYS Route 9D in this area provide parking for Little Stony Point and the Washburn Trail. The Washburn Trailhead parking lot was paved and expanded in 2017 to accommodate approximately 48 vehicles. The informal parallel and pull in parking on the west side of NYS Route 9D accommodates approximately 30 cars.

South from Little Stony Point, the MNR tracks continue on a causeway along the Hudson River. Fair Street, which parallels the MNR causeway in this area, is developed with a variety of land uses, including single-family homes, the Spring Brook Condominiums, the Riverview Restaurant, a metered municipal parking lot, Mayor's Park, and the Village of Cold Spring's Wastewater Treatment Plant and Highway Garage.

At the southern terminus of the Fjord Trail South Corridor is Dockside Park, which is also part of HHSPP and managed and maintained by the Village of Cold Spring. Dockside Park comprises open areas of maintained lawn and an existing dirt and stone path/access road. A narrower stone path travels closer to the Hudson River shoreline. Dockside Park sits near downtown Cold Spring where there is more dense residential and commercial development. On the east side of the MNR tracks near Dockside Park is a residential neighborhood on Northern Gate Road. South of the park are businesses and additional residential uses on North Street, West Street, and Main Street.

LOCAL ZONING DISTRICTS

To the extent applicable, this section provides an overview of existing local zoning districts on or adjacent to the Fjord Trail South Corridor, as shown on **Figures IV.A-2a to IV.A-2b**.

TOWN OF PHILIPSTOWN

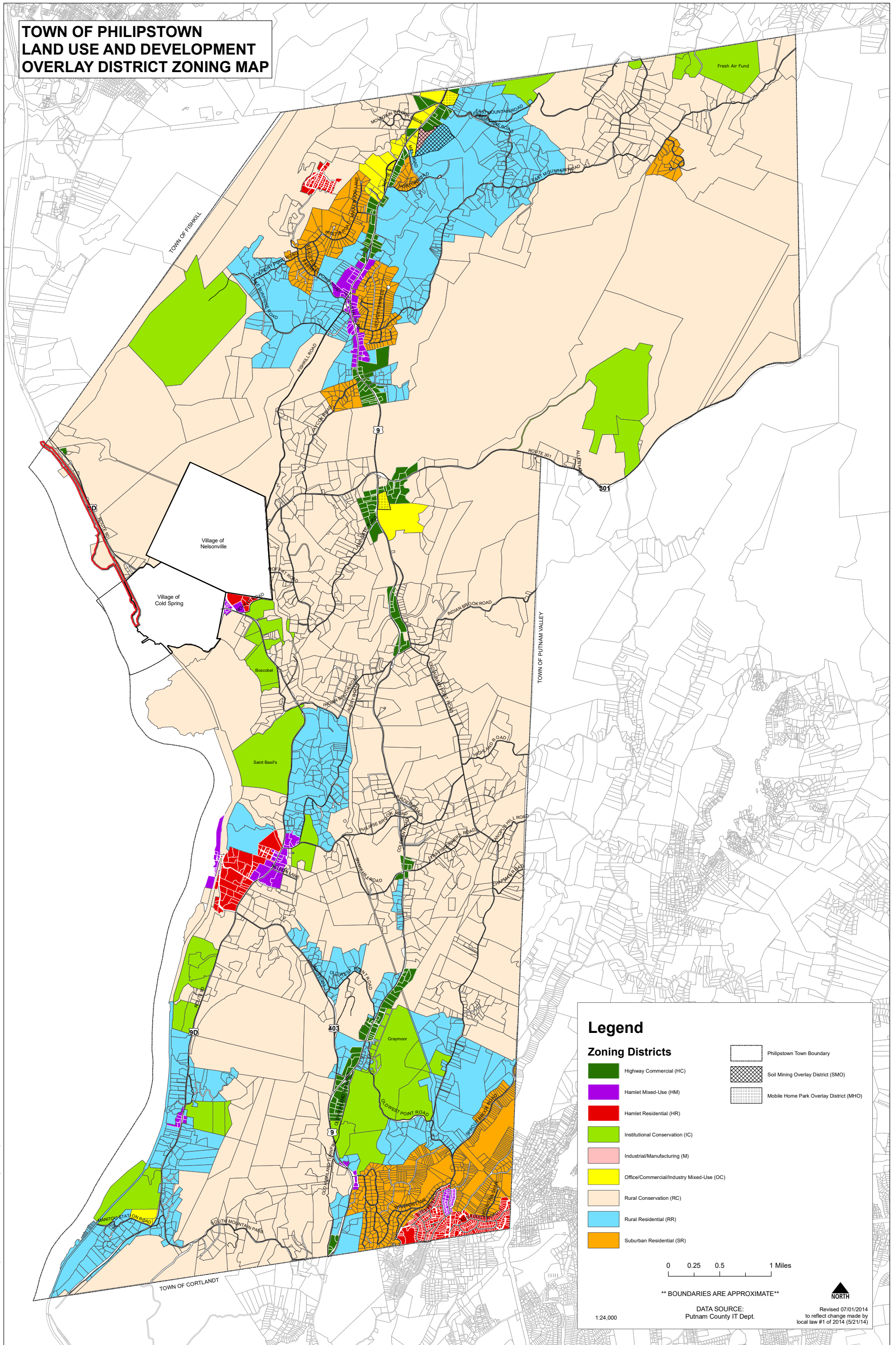
Within the Town of Philipstown, the Fjord Trail South Corridor passes through the Rural Conservation (RC) Zoning District, as defined and delineated by the Town of Philipstown Zoning Code (Chapter 175 of the Town Code) and Zoning Map. The RC District is intended to promote land conservation, agriculture, forestry, recreation, and the preservation of open space, as well as other compatible rural uses. The maximum density in the RC District is five acres per dwelling unit for conservation subdivisions, and a minimum lot size of 10 acres for conventional single-family residential development. Uses permitted by right in the RC District are limited to single-family dwellings and agricultural uses.

VILLAGE OF COLD SPRING

The Village of Cold Spring adopted a new Zoning Code in June 2023, Chapter 134 of the Village Code, to incorporate recommendations from the Village's Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2012 (discussed in "Public Policy" below). Within the Village of Cold Spring, the Fjord Trail South Corridor passes through a Transportation (T) District, which is generally mapped along the MNR right-of-way corridor, and a Parks & Recreation (PR) District mapped on Dockside Park. The end of the Fjord Trail South Corridor is within a Newer Residential Neighborhoods (R-N) District on North Street.

Permitted uses in the T District are limited to railroad operations. According to the Zoning Code, the PR District is mapped in areas that "provide opportunities for the enjoyment of the environment including proximity to water, recreational opportunities, opportunities for relaxation, and the opportunity to enjoy the scenery." Uses permitted in the PR District include athletic fields, conservation areas, parks and playgrounds, and wildlife refuges, with incidental commercial uses allowed with site plan approval, and other related uses such as visitor centers allowed by Special Use permit. The maximum permitted building height is one story or 15 feet.

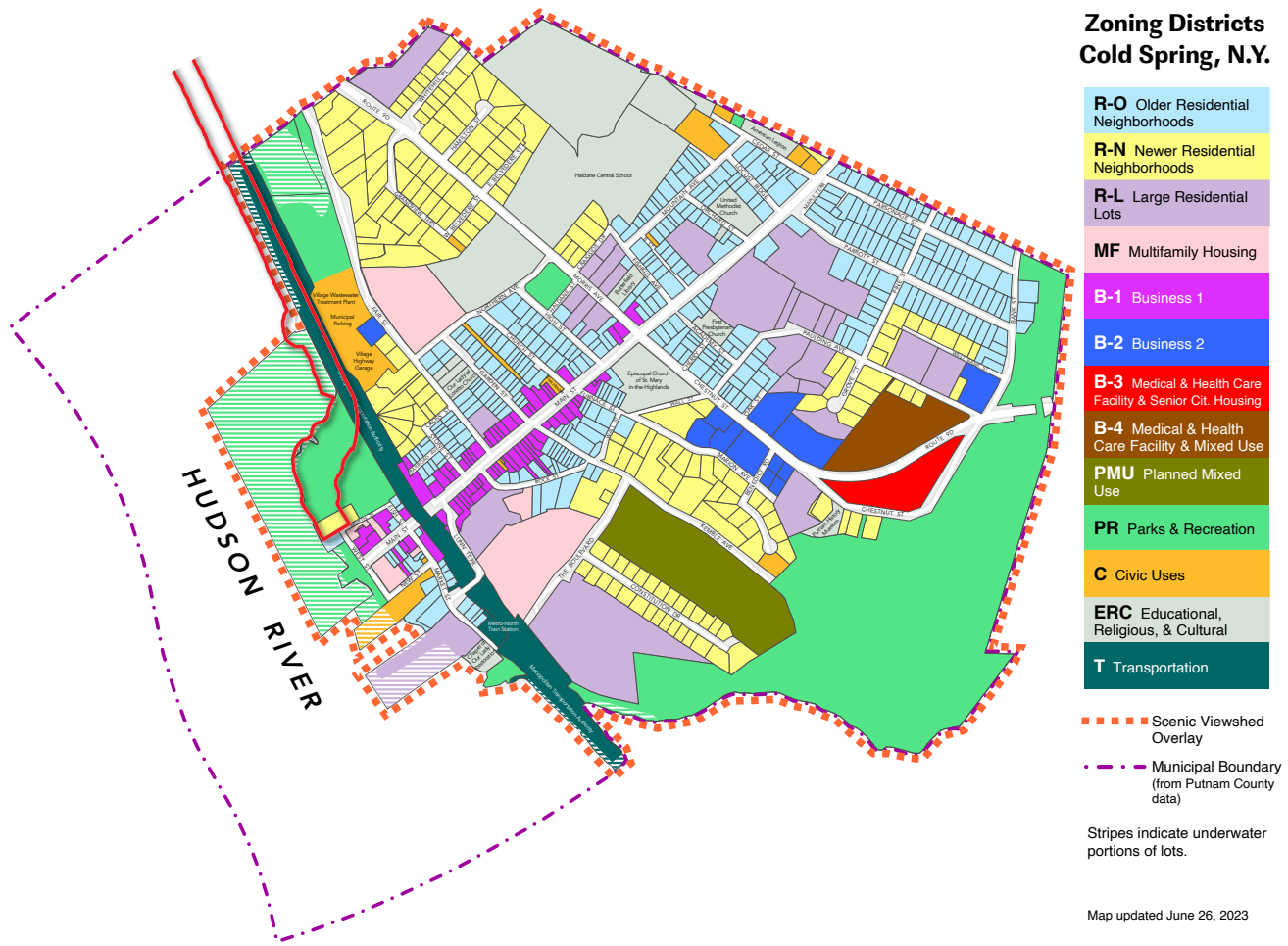
TOWN OF PHILIPSTOWN LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT ZONING MAP



Source: Town of Philipstown, Putnam County IT Dept.

Trail Corridor
HUDSON HIGHLANDS FJORD TRAIL

Existing Zoning - Philipstown
Figure IV.A-2a



Zoning Districts Cold Spring, N.Y.

- R-O** Older Residential Neighborhoods
 - R-N** Newer Residential Neighborhoods
 - R-L** Large Residential Lots
 - MF** Multifamily Housing
 - B-1** Business 1
 - B-2** Business 2
 - B-3** Medical & Health Care Facility & Senior Cit. Housing
 - B-4** Medical & Health Care Facility & Mixed Use
 - PMU** Planned Mixed Use
 - PR** Parks & Recreation
 - C** Civic Uses
 - ERC** Educational, Religious, & Cultural
 - T** Transportation
- Scenic Viewshed Overlay
 Municipal Boundary (from Putnam County data)
 Stripes indicate underwater portions of lots.
- Map updated June 26, 2023

Trail Corridor

The R-N District is a low- to medium-density residential district consisting predominantly of one-family houses. This district permits residential uses up to 2½ stories on lots of 7,500 square feet or larger, as well as parks and playgrounds, schools, libraries, and municipal uses.

In addition, the entire Village of Cold Spring, including the Fjord Trail South Corridor, is mapped with a Scenic Viewshed Overlay (SV-O) District, which the Zoning Code notes is pursuant to New York State’s designated Hudson River Valley Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance (SASS), Cold Spring Subunit of the Hudson Highlands SASS (see Chapter IV.G, “Scenic Resources – Fjord Trail South” for more information). As stated in the Zoning Code, the SV-O District is intended to “protect the scenic beauty of the Village and surrounding areas,” “to protect public views from public viewing locations,” and “to protect views from within the Village of designated Scenic Areas outside the Village.” The Zoning Code defines an inventory of protected scenic views, which includes Dockside Park, through which the Fjord Trail South Corridor passes, and views from Dockside Park across the Hudson River and south to the southern boundary of the Village. The overlay district applies to applications for subdivision of property, applications that require Site Plan review or a Special Use Permit, and applications for building permits requesting to increase the height or width of a structure. For those applications, the Planning Board must determine “that the proposed action is not likely to impair the scenic beauty of the elements, parcels and Structures listed in the Inventory.” The Zoning Code details requirements related to building design and placement and lighting, among other features.

PUBLIC POLICY

This section identifies governmental public policies relevant to land use and the proposed Fjord Trail South as identified in the Final Scoping Document.¹

FAHNESTOCK/HUDSON HIGHLANDS MASTER PLAN/EIS (2010)²

The Fjord Trail South Corridor travels through Little Stony Point and Dockside Park (both within HHSP). In 2010, a Final Master Plan/Final EIS for Clarence Fahnestock Memorial State Park and HHSP (Final Master Plan) was adopted by OPRHP. The overall goal of the *Final Master Plan/Final EIS* is to “achieve a balance between recreation and the protection of natural and cultural resources of these two parks.” Among its recreation goals, the plan includes goals “to provide year-round facilities,” “to expand the trail system for hiking, horse-back riding, biking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing,” and “to identify recreational activities that are compatible with the natural and cultural resources of both parks; and provide appropriate support facilities for those activities to meet the recreation demands for the region.” The Final Master Plan designated the entirety of Hudson Highlands State Park as a Park Preserve. The Park Preserve Law (Article 20 of the Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Law) provides for designation of park land containing wildlife, flora, scenic, historical and archeological sites that are unique and rare in New York State. Designating the Park as a preserve provides legal protection to all of the park’s resources—natural, historic, and archeological. In 2010, the majority of HHSP was also designated as a Bird Conservation Area (BCA)—which provides recognition of its elevated importance for bird habitat, particularly for migratory waterfowl, neo-tropical migratory songbirds

¹ In addition to the public policy documents identified in the Final Scoping Document, the Applicant reviewed relevant policy documents that were subsequently adopted, such as the Town of Philipstown 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

² <https://parks.ny.gov/documents/inside-our-agency/Masterplans/ClarenceFahnestockHudsonHighlandsStatePark/CFHHStateParkMasterPlan.pdf>

Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail

and state listed species—and as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA), defined at Article 5, Title 11, Section 0539 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law, which allows for the dedication of state-owned lands with rare species and/or significant natural communities. These designations have been considered during planning efforts for the proposed Fjord Trail. They are discussed in more detail in Chapter IV.E, “Biological Resources – Fjord Trail South.”

In addition, the OPRHP’s Native Plant Policy is being used to help guide the planning of the Fjord Trail design and alignment where it is proposed within HHSP.

*TOWN OF PHILIPSTOWN 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2021)*³

The Town of Philipstown adopted the *Town of Philipstown 2030 Comprehensive Plan* on November 17, 2021.⁴ One prominent goal of the Plan is to “[e]xpand the Town’s capacity to meet current and future demand for recreation, while providing a wide range of activities serving all ages at an affordable cost” recognizing that “[r]ecreation pulls different sections of the community together and encourages people of all ages to improve their health and well-being.” To achieve that goal, the Comprehensive Plan identified the strategy of “facilitat[ing] visual and physical access to the Hudson River.” The Comprehensive Plan further identifies “Action Items” to achieve that strategy, including “[s]upport the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail Project and remain engaged in discussions around Fjord Trail mapping, design, and implementation...[and] create connections from the Fjord Trail to key Village and Town locations and ensure there is adequate parking.”

*VILLAGE OF COLD SPRING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2012)*⁵

The Village of Cold Spring, NY adopted the *Village of Cold Spring Comprehensive Plan* in 2012. The Plan includes discussion of the Village’s land use, natural environment and energy, economy, and community services. Goal 3 of the Plan’s seven goals states: “Take full advantage of our location on the Hudson River,”⁶ with supporting objectives that include the following:

- Improve boat access to the Village at the Main Dock;
- Develop a RiverWalk to improve access to the river for pedestrians and bicyclists;
- Develop and implement a plan for Dockside Park; and
- Encourage community events at the riverfront.

*VILLAGE OF COLD SPRING DRAFT LOCAL WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (2014)*⁷

The Village of Cold Spring prepared a Draft *Village of Cold Spring Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (Draft LWRP)* in 2014, which has not yet been adopted. The Draft LWRP emphasizes the necessary balance between economic growth and natural resource protections, to “permit the beneficial use of waterfront resources in the Village without adverse impacts to coastal

³ <https://cms3.revize.com/revize/philipstown/Documents/Advisory%20Committees/2022-03-30-Philipstown-Comprehensive-Plan-FINAL.pdf>

⁴ Town of Philipstown, NY Comprehensive Plan, adopted November 17, 2021 (<https://philipstown.com/tb/2022-03-30-Philipstown-Comprehensive-Plan-FINAL.pdf>).

⁵ https://www.coldspringny.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf416/f/uploads/12-07-2011_draft_comp_plan.pdf

⁶ Village of Cold Spring, NY Comprehensive Plan, adopted January 10, 2012.

⁷ https://www.coldspringny.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf416/f/uploads/lwrs11-10-2011_0.pdf

resources of the Hudson River and adjacent upland areas.”⁸ The Cold Spring Draft LWRP Policies include the following: Development of Waterfront Policies, Natural Waterfront Policies, Public Waterfront Policies, and Working Waterfront Policies. A recommended Public Waterfront Policy is to “Improve public access to the waterfront and recreational use of public lands.”

RAILS WITH TRAILS: BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED (2021)

The Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Highway Administration released the publication *Rails with Trails: Best Practices and Lessons Learned* in May 2021. The Report documents the current state of rails-with-trails and effective practices for each phase of a rail-with-trail project, including development, design, construction, operation, and maintenance. A rail-with-trail is a shared-use path or trail located on or adjacent to the rights-of-way of an active railroad or rail transit corridor. The Report states that a successful rail-with-trail design “delicately balances the operational, maintenance, and safety requirements of a railroad with the specific needs and characteristics of trail users and the surrounding community.”⁹ The Report notes there are no national standards or guidelines for rail-with-trail design, and offers design guidelines related to setbacks, separation, at-grade crossings, grade-separated crossings, accommodating future tracks, and access to stations.

AMERICA’S RAILS-WITH-TRAILS (2013)

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy assists rail-trail projects throughout the country and serves as a national voice for supporting the growth and development of rail-trails. The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy produced the report, *America’s Rails-with-Trails* in September 2013. The Report is a resource for planners, agencies, and advocates for trails located adjacent to active rail lines providing updated information on national rail-with-trail trends. The Report includes liability reduction and risk management tools stating that rails-with-trails demonstrate a strong safety record, and often include a barrier between the trail and the active railway and carefully planned intersections if the trail crosses tracks.

PUTNAM COUNTY’S GREENWAY COMPACT

Putnam County is a member of the New York State Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council’s Greenway Compact, and the Town of Philipstown and Village of Cold Spring are individual Greenway Compact Communities. The Greenway Communities Council works with local and county governments to enhance local land use planning and has developed the voluntary regional Greenway Compact to further Greenway Criteria. The Greenway Compact intends to further the Greenway Criteria, including improvement of public access to the Hudson River.

The Putnam County Greenway Compact promotes public access to the Hudson River through riverside parks and developing the Hudson River Valley Greenway Trail System. The Compact also identifies waterfront access and enhancement as a tool for economic development, by drawing tourists and revitalizing communities.¹⁰

⁸ Village of Cold Spring, NY Draft Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, completed November 2011 and completion deferred May 2013 pending revisions.

⁹ *Rails with Trails: Best Practices and Lessons Learned*, prepared by the Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Highway Administration, May 2021.

¹⁰ Putnam County Pathways Compact, accessed at <https://hudsongreenway.ny.gov/community-planning>

C. FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION

In the future without the proposed Fjord Trail South, overall land uses along the Fjord Trail South Corridor would be expected to remain substantially the same as in the current condition. Just north of the Fjord Trail South Corridor, HHFT, Inc. is advancing the Breakneck Connector and Bridge Project (BNCB), which will include improvements that would provide safer access to the Breakneck Ridge Trail in HHSP, including new parking areas along NYS Route 9D, restroom buildings, new platforms at the MNR Breakneck Ridge station, upgrades to the Breakneck Ridge Trail, and a 0.6-mile off-road shared-use path connecting these amenities.

No substantial zoning changes within the Fjord Trail South Corridor are anticipated.

In the future without the proposed Fjord Trail South, the goals in the above policy documents that generally reference recreational and trail improvements, and the goals that specifically reference the development of the Fjord Trail and the Fjord Trail South section, would not be met. In addition, without the proposed Fjord Trail South, the stated goals in the various public policy documents that reference necessary safety and accessibility improvements would not be fully met, specifically regarding the existing safety hazards to pedestrians and vehicles along NYS Route 9D and Fair Street in Cold Spring. While the BNCB just north of the Fjord Trail South Corridor would include improvements that would provide safer access to the Breakneck Ridge Trail in HHSP through new parking areas and an off-road path, improved pedestrian and bicycle connections between the Village of Cold Spring and HHSP trailheads would not be addressed without the proposed Fjord Trail South.

D. FUTURE WITH THE PROPOSED ACTION

To the extent applicable, the analysis below addresses the proposed Fjord Trail South's consistency and compatibility with the project area's current land use, zoning, and governmental public policies.

LAND USE

The proposed Fjord Trail South would expand the trail network in the Town of Philipstown and Village of Cold Spring. The additional trails (Main Trail and Meanders) would augment passive recreation opportunities for residents and visitors, expand public access to the Hudson River waterfront, and create new off-road biking and hiking linkages to local and regional destinations. Fjord Trail South would be primarily located within HHSP land or MNR right-of-way. The Trail would be consistent with other existing recreational trails within HHSP, and the Trail would be separated from MNR tracks in compliance with MNR requirements to ensure safety of trail users and to avoid any impacts to railroad operations. As such, Fjord Trail South would be consistent and compatible with existing adjacent land uses by providing a safe place for walking and bicycling that does not interfere with railroad and vehicular use.

Fjord Trail South would incorporate existing paths in Dockside Park for the Main Trail and a proposed Meander. The Proposed Action would also include restroom buildings and a bike repair station in Dockside Park. These amenities would enhance services at the park for trail and park users. At the south end of Dockside Park, Fjord Trail South would cross a residential property in Cold Spring that contains a single-family house, which is consistent with the existing path in Dockside Park; OPRHP and the private property owner have agreed to modify the existing park access easement to allow for a public trail crossing. As the design of Fjord Trail South advances, the specific location of park amenities, including restroom buildings, seating, and signage would be further refined.

Parking to access Fjord Trail South would be available at Breakneck Ridge, Little Stony Point/Washburn Trailhead and the MNR Cold Spring Train Station, which requires payment on weekdays and is available free of charge to the public on weekends and designated holidays. The Proposed Action would include an expansion of the Washburn Trailhead parking lot from its current 48 spaces to a total of about 96 spaces. While the parking lot would be expanded southward closer to a private residential property, a wooded buffer would remain between the parking lot and the residence. Additional parking nearby but not directly associated with the Fjord Trail is located at Mayor’s Park, at a paid lot to the south of Mayor’s Park, and on public roads in the Village of Cold Spring. For additional details related to existing and proposed parking along the entire Fjord Trail corridor, refer to Chapter III.L, “Traffic and Transportation – Fjord Trail.”

To help alleviate the need for additional parking, a shuttle would be incorporated into the operations of the Fjord Trail. The proposed shuttle service would transport visitors between the noted parking lots, multiple trailheads and several Fjord Trail access points, potentially including the MNR Beacon Train Station, Long Dock Park, Beacon Housing Authority, Mount Beacon, the Notch, Dutchess Manor, Breakneck Ridge, Little Stony Point/Washburn Trailhead, and the MNR Cold Spring train station. The shuttle would run in a loop between the designated Fjord Trail parking areas and trailheads, reducing the need for pedestrians and cyclists to use heavily travelled and narrow roads to reach their destinations. The proposed shuttle service route is shown on **Figure IV.A-3**. Additionally, parking facilities at the Boscobel House and Gardens just south of the Village of Cold Spring may be available for Fjord Trail users, pending further coordination with the owners of that site, which could also be served by the shuttle.

Fjord Trail South is not anticipated to result in any adverse land use impacts.

LOCAL ZONING DISTRICTS

To the extent applicable, the proposed Fjord Trail South does not propose, nor require, zoning changes in any of the municipalities through which it would traverse to facilitate its implementation. As such, Fjord Trail South is not anticipated to result in any significant adverse impacts related to zoning.

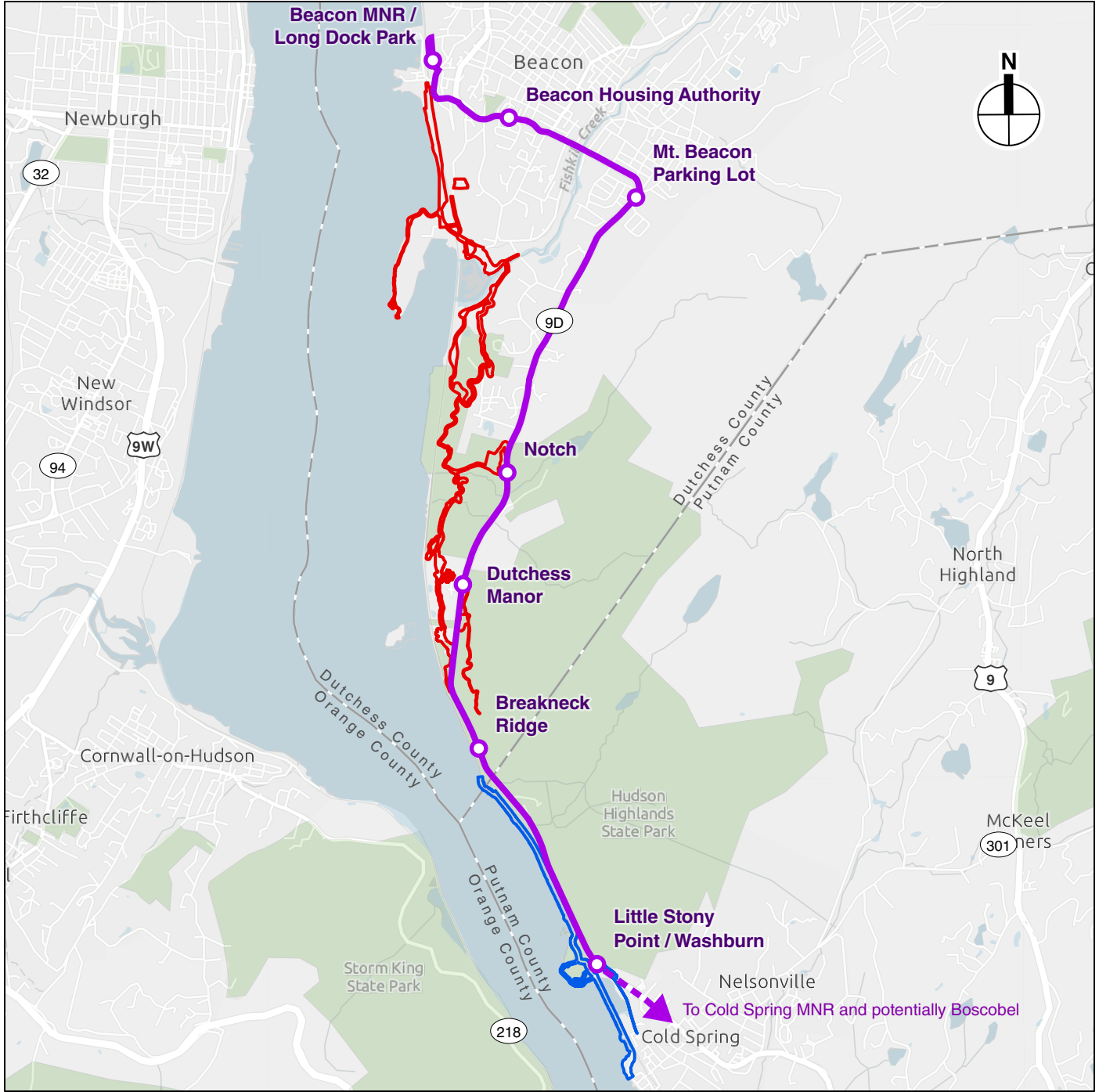
PUBLIC POLICY

This section analyzes the consistency of Fjord Trail South with relevant governmental public policies on land use. Fjord Trail South would expand the trail network in Putnam County, in the Town of Philipstown, and the Village of Cold Spring.

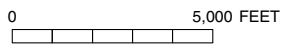
A common theme throughout the public policies assessed for this DGEIS is the importance of protecting open space resources, augmenting recreational hiking and biking amenities, and protecting rare and vulnerable plant and animal species and natural communities. Fjord Trail South would be consistent with many of the goals and objectives established through local, regional, state, and federal public policies.

FAHNESTOCK/HUDSON HIGHLANDS MASTER PLAN/EIS (2010)

The proposed Fjord Trail South would expand hiking and bicycling opportunities and amenities (e.g., restrooms and parking) within and near HHSP while being designed to limit its footprint and disturbance area to the extent possible, consistent with goal of the *Fahnestock/Hudson Highlands Master Plan/EIS* to “achieve a balance between recreation and the protection of natural and cultural resources of these two parks.” With respect to goals related to biodiversity conservation or conservation of rare and vulnerable plant and animal species and natural communities, Fjord Trail South would be consistent with the goals and legal protections identified



- Trail Corridor - Fjord Trail North
- Trail Corridor - Fjord Trail South
- Shuttle Route
- Proposed Shuttle Stop



Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail

in Article 20 of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law (PRHPL), which applies to environmentally sensitive parkland that is additionally designated as “park preserve.” Efforts were made to incorporate the vision and management goals identified in the *Final Master Plan/Final EIS for Fahnestock State Park and HHSPP* (OPRHP 2010) for providing opportunities for passive recreation and connection with the Hudson River while protecting native plants and animals (see Chapter IV.E, “Biological Resources – Fjord Trail South,” for further discussion).

TOWN OF PHILIPSTOWN 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2021)

One of the goals of the *Town of Philipstown 2030 Comprehensive Plan (2021)* is to “[e]xpand the Town’s capacity to meet current and future demand for recreation.” To achieve that goal, the Comprehensive Plan identified the strategy of “facilitat[ing] visual and physical access to the Hudson River,” by “[s]upport[ing] the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail Project.” The Fjord Trail South section would develop, within the Town of Philipstown, a recreational trail that connects to other existing and recreational uses, helping the Town meet future recreational demands. As such, the Fjord Trail South section would be consistent with the *Town of Philipstown 2030 Comprehensive Plan*.

VILLAGE OF COLD SPRING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2012)

Implementation of Fjord Trail South would be consistent with the recommendations set forth in the *Village of Cold Spring Comprehensive Plan*. The Plan recommends improving public access to the riverfront; Fjord Trail South would convert lands adjacent to the MNR rail line into an active recreation space. A goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to take advantage of the Village’s riverfront location, recommending strategies such as improving boat access, developing a RiverWalk, improving Dockside Park and encouraging community events at the waterfront. Dockside Park would serve as the southern entrance to the Fjord Trail and would benefit from additional use of and the connection to the HHSPP trailheads to the north. Fjord Trail South would include an Accessible Meander in Dockside Park, providing access to the Hudson River waterfront and building upon an ongoing sustainable shoreline pilot project at the park.

VILLAGE OF COLD SPRING DRAFT LOCAL WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (2014)

Fjord Trail South and programming at Dockside Park would be consistent with recommendations in the Village of Cold Spring *draft Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (draft LWRP)*. While not yet adopted, the draft LWRP recommends improving access to the waterfront and recreational use of public lands. In the Village of Cold Spring, Fjord Trail South would convert a portion of a rail corridor to a recreational trail and connect the Fjord Trail and other existing and proposed recreational uses to the north to Dockside Park within the Village.

RAILS WITH TRAILS: BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED (2021)

The Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Highway Administration’s *Rails with Trails: Best Practices and Lessons Learned* presents design guidelines for rails-with-trails. The report states that rails-with-trails should be set back from railroad tracks as much as reasonably possible. The separation between the two uses can take the form of fencing, ditches, berms, vegetation, or a combination of these options. Where Fjord Trail South would share the right-of-way with MNR, the Trail would be set back from the centerline of the railroad tracks 25 feet or more wherever possible. For the safety of all users, a protective fence, as required by MNR, is included in the project design establishing the desired separation between uses and consistent with the best

practices set forth in the document. HHFT, Inc. will continue to coordinate with MNR with respect to project elements along the MNR right-of-way.

The report recommends overcrossings or undercrossings as a more preferable solution to at-grade railroad crossings. The existing bridge over the MNR tracks at Little Stony Point would be used to connect Fjord Trail South to NYS Route 9D and the Washburn Trailhead and parking lot. No other traversing of the railroad is proposed within Fjord Trail South, at grade or otherwise.

Consistent with the dimensions recommended in the Rails with Trails Best Practices Guide, the Main Trail portion of Fjord Trail South would be designed to be an Accessible shared-use path, 10-14 feet wide, excluding shoulders.

AMERICA'S RAILS-WITH-TRAILS (2013)

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's "America's Rails-with-Trails" report addresses safety concerns for rails-with-trail, specifically related to railroad collisions. The Report recommends a barrier between the trail and the active railway and carefully planned intersections at points where the trail crosses tracks. As noted previously, Fjord Trail South design would maintain required separation distances, in coordination with MNR, and establishes barriers noted in the report.

PUTNAM COUNTY'S GREENWAY COMPACT

Fjord Trail South would further the goals of the communities through their adoption of their respective county's Greenway Compact. The Greenway Compact intends to further the Greenway Criteria, including improvement of public access to the Hudson River. Fjord Trail South would be located between the MNR tracks and the waterfront, offering continuous views of the Hudson River. The Main Trail of Fjord Trail South would be designed to be an Accessible, shared-use path.

Fjord Trail South would also improve public access to the Hudson River at both Little Stony Point and Dockside Park by providing new and improved trails, seating and viewing areas, and connection to kayak launches.

E. CONCLUSION

The proposed Fjord Trail South would be consistent with the existing land uses and conform with the public policies that guide development in the area by providing connections to existing and new recreational opportunities, increasing access to the Hudson River and other natural and cultural resources, and incorporating protection measures to avoid impacts to the MNR tracks. Fjord Trail South is consistent with existing land use, zoning, and adopted public policies. As a result, no related adverse impacts are anticipated, and mitigation is not required. *