TOWN OF WOODSTOCK TOWN BOARD MEETING 7:00 PM APRIL 9TH, 2024

TOWN HALL 76 TINKER STREET

RESOLUTION 96-2024
U&D CORRIDOR
Offered by Supervisor McKenna, seconded by Councilmember Ricci:

WHEREAS, the County-owned property known as the U&D Corridor (the "Corridor"), which stretches from the City of Kingston to the Town of Shandaken, roughly parallel to NYS Route 28, includes a portion that lies within the Town of Woodstock; and

WHEREAS, in 2015 the County completed a thorough evaluation of the best-and-highest use of the Corridor, which resulted in the unanimous passage of Resolution 488 of 2015 ("Establishing A Policy For A "Rail With Trail" Along The County-Owned Ulster And Delaware Railroad Corridor"); and

WHEREAS, the County's policy did not determine a best-and-highest use for the section of the Corridor between MP 8.33 and Basin Road, nor did it authorize any permits, licenses or other allowances for the use of this section, but it did state that this section "will require further investigation on the future feasibility of rail with trail and shall be the last segment to be altered or converted on the east side of the Ashokan provided that trail connectivity co-located on the corridor shall be preserved;" and

WHEREAS, since passage of Resolution 488 in 2015, the completion of the Ashokan Rail Trail, the expansion of the Catskill Mountain Railroad's Kingston-based operations, and the addition of rail-bike excursions offered by Rail Explorers in Mount Tremper have significantly increased visitation to the Corridor; and

WHEREAS, recent hit-and-run fatalities in New Paltz, Saugerties and Marlborough, as well as local, state and federal policies aimed at reducing carbon emissions to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change, highlight the importance of establishing safe, accessible non motorized transportation connections within the Town of Woodstock and to communities and destinations elsewhere in the County; and

WHEREAS, since 2015 a series of unprecedented and transformational trail initiatives and projects including the Empire State Trail, River2Ridge Trail, Kingston Point Rail Trail, Kingston O&W Rail Trail, Hudson River Brickyard Trail have brought the vision of a unified county-wide shared-use trail system closer to realization; and

WHEREAS, the U&D Corridor represents the only locally-controlled option to establish a safe and accessible non-motorized connection from the Town of Woodstock to the Ashokan Rail Trail and points west and to the City of Kingston and points south, via the County's growing network of multi-use trails; and

WHEREAS, all of these factors contribute a sense of urgency for the County Legislature, upon due consideration, to update its policy in order to facilitate the further development of the U&D Corridor between Woodstock and Kingston;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Woodstock hereby requests the County of Ulster to

a) re-evaluate the section of the Corridor between MP 8.33 and Basin road to determine - based on all available facts and circumstances and with due consideration of economic, fiscal, health, safety and environmental costs and benefits to the residents of the County - the best-and-highest use of this segment,
b) update its 2015 policy regarding this segment to clarify its position with regard to future uses of the Corridor,
c) fulfill the specific mandates in the policy to preserve and realize trail connectivity between the City of Kingston and the Ashokan Rail Trail, and

effect any necessary resolutions, executive orders, applications, permits, licenses or other actions necessary to accomplish the County's updated policy.

All voted 5-0:

Supervisor McKenna - aye
Councilmember Cortis -aye
Councilmember Ricci -aye
Councilmember Ratcliff – aye
Councilmember Conte – aye

Councilmember Ratcliff said he feels the first step is great but needs to be followed by second step – trail from Woodstock to extend to Rail Trail. Councilmember Ricci feels the first step is necessary to solidify the second step, which is already being considered.