



Suffolk County Legislator Sarah S. Anker

North Shore Rail Trail Update March 2020

Construction Continues on the North Shore Rail Trail

The North Shore Rail Trail, formerly known as the Rails to Trails Recreational Path, is an approximately 10-mile recreational path and is currently under construction on the former Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) right-of-way, owned by the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA). The trail runs from Crystal Brook Hollow Road in Mt. Sinai to Wading River Manor Road in Wading River, and parallels NYS Rt. 25A.



Currently, Suffolk County Department of Public Works (DPW) and DF Stone Construction have removed the topsoil from west (Crystal Brook Hollow Road, Mount Sinai) to east (Wading River Manor Road, Wading River) along the trail path and will continue to grade the area and lay down the sub-base within the upcoming months. DPW anticipates that it will begin laying down asphalt from west to east after April 15, weather permitting. Shrubbery has been removed to clear a handicap accessible path at the Town of Brookhaven Rose Caracappa Senior Center in Mount Sinai. The trail is estimated to be completed in the Fall of 2021.

The project was first suggested over 50 years ago by local civic members, and re-introduced in 2001 by advocates of bicycle organizations, the Setauket-Port Jefferson Greenway Trail and community residents. Many individuals and elected officials have assisted in facilitating the path that is funded by federal and state grants totaling close to \$10 million, with a \$500,000 match from Suffolk County. Suffolk County entered into a licensing agreement with LIPA to utilize the right-of-way for the trail. The engineering group NV5 was chosen by the Suffolk County Department of Public Works (DPW) to plan and design the trail. The final design was approved by Suffolk County DPW, New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in 2018.

In 2019, Suffolk County's DPW approved DF Stone Contracting to construct the trail, reducing the cost of trail construction by approximately \$2 million through the Request for Proposal process. The county will work with the Town of Brookhaven Department of Highways and NYSDOT for trail signage and lighting installation at road intersections. Maintenance of the trail will involve a partnership with not-for-profit organizations and Suffolk County Parks Department. Suffolk County Police and Parks Department will provide law enforcement oversight for the trail.

The trail will connect local recreational areas, schools, businesses, residential areas and athletic fields. It will provide a safer alternative for residents to walk, run and bike. The project will be a green transportation alternative that will reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and encourage healthier lifestyles. The trail's close proximity to many locally-owned businesses along NYS Rt. 25A will enhance the local economy and promote the ecotourism hub that includes the Tesla Science Museum, New York State RCA Park and downtown revitalization of Rocky Point.

Legislator Anker's office formed the North Shore Rail Trail (formerly Rails to Trails) Civic Advisory Roundtable in 2016. Each civic organization in the 6th Legislative District has designated a representative to attend the roundtable meetings to provide input in the development of the trail and to keep the community informed and involved in the design and construction of the project.

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