

Policy Adoption Fact Sheet: Walking/Biking Path from the Village of Rhinebeck to the Hamlet of Rhinecliff

2020 Comprehensive Plan Review | David Chernack, Joint Environmental Committee Intern

Why is this action important? Pedestrian and bicyclist safety are of the utmost importance. Two of Rhinebeck’s primary amenities—its public transportation access to New York City by rail and its downtown Village—are not currently connected by a sidewalk or walking path. Establishing one will add a recreative way to bike or walk between the Village and the Hamlet without needing a car, thus reducing emissions.

How is this action implemented? A walking path from Rhinebeck to Rhinecliff would be paved, be about two miles in length, and cross several private properties. In order to establish such a path, zoning variances would need to be passed, and close work would need to be done with landowners. The Town and Village governments would also need to engage with local contractors and suppliers.

What does the Comprehensive Plan say about it? [The Town’s 2009 Comprehensive Plan](#) specifically calls for the construction of such a path in order to decrease Rhinebeck’s residents’ dependency on cars, ensure easier access to Rhinecliff’s businesses and Amtrak station, and provide easy access to the Hudson River. Although the Plan does not mention reducing emissions from transportation, bettering the health and recreative opportunities of Rhinebeck’s people are both cited as reasons to pursue this project.

What departments will it involve? The Town and Village Planning Boards, Boards of Trustees, and the Joint Environmental Committee would be involved in this relatively intensive project.

What will it cost? This project will inevitably be very expensive. Construction of more than two miles of walking and biking pathway will likely cost more than one million dollars, although grant availability for this sort of project—an intermunicipal project that will improve recreation and access to public transportation—is likely to be very high. Preliminary research has already been undertaken by Alta to understand the right-of-way implications of potential routes from the Village to Rhinecliff.



Rhinebeck-Rhinecliff footpath quick facts:

CSC points: 2 points (PE6 Action: Planning & Infrastructure for Bicycling & Walking)

Benefits to Rhinebeck: wonderful, intermunicipally beneficial amenity; better access to Rhinecliff and the Hudson River

Cost: medium; hiring consultant

Relevant agencies: Town/Village planning boards, Highway Departments, etc.