

Port Jefferson to Wading River Bicycle and Pedestrian Path

FACT SHEET

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Port Jefferson to Wading River Bicycle and Pedestrian Path comprises a ten-mile strip of abandoned Long Island Rail Road right-of-way presently owned by the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA), which utilizes it as an electrical distribution right-of-way. The land as it currently exists travels through areas of residential and commercial development and exhibits grass areas with moderate to heavy natural vegetation in most locations that serves to screen the path visually from surrounding neighborhoods. The project area comprises six hamlets in the Town of Brookhaven, including Port Jefferson Station, Mount Sinai, Miller Place, Sound Beach, Rocky Point, and Shoreham as well as Wading River in the Town of Riverhead. The LIPA right-of-way runs in the east-west direction and parallel to Route 25A approximately 300 to 500 feet to the north.



PROJECT HISTORY

The project was reportedly initiated in 2001 by Mr. Mike Cosel, a 40 year resident of Setauket and an activist responsible for initiating the Setauket-Port Jefferson Greenway Trail (recently constructed by the NYSDOT). Mr. Cosel presented this idea to the then-Legislator Martin Haley who was in favor of the plan and organized the initial meetings with LILCO. The County then secured \$2 million under a federal grant to help finance the project. The successive County Legislator Daniel Losquadro continued with advancing the project, taking an active role in the negotiations between Suffolk County and LIPA. Congressman Timothy Bishop, was able to transfer/secure part of the \$10 million in unused federal money set aside more than a decade ago for East End scenic bikeways for use on the Port Jefferson to Wading River Bicycle and Pedestrian Path.

CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS

From 2006 to 2011 there have been various issues concerning the contractual obligations of all parties involved including County, LIPA and FHWA/NYSDOT.

In January 2009, the Long Island Power Authority and Suffolk County finalized an agreement. LIPA will allow Suffolk County to build the 10-mile path along the abandoned Long Island Rail Road track on the company's property. The County would assume liability for injuries on and off the trail from dawn to dusk and for injuries on the trail at all times. In exchange, LIPA would allow public access. The County would plan and build the trail and maintain it with help from volunteers.

With the LIPA/County agreement in-place, the next step is the preparation of a contract between Suffolk County and NYSDOT/FHWA to obligate the federal funding. During the final stages of this contract, one issue has arose. The FHWA wanted the County to have an absolute right to the property, and LIPA has stated that they cannot legally give that away. The solution was for the County to accept the very small risk that they may have to pay back the FHWA funds used in a portion of the project if something completely unexpected happened that somehow made a portion of the path impassable. This is not likely since LIPA requires an open, access path for their own use in maintaining their facilities. However, if LIPA needed to completely block off the 100' +/- right-of-way width to accommodate a structure related to their facilities, the County would be required to acquire a short

piece of right-of-way to get around the blockage or construct an alternate route segment i.e. relying on an existing, parallel on-road route. Currently, the County has indicated they are accepting of the risk.

ENGINEERING & PLANNING

In September 2005, SCDPW solicited proposals from qualified engineering firms for planning and design services for the construction of the 10-mile path. SCDPW selected The RBA Group of Melville, NY to provide the necessary surveying, planning and engineering services consisting of the following scope:

- Conduct a complete topographic survey of the project area
- Survey and field verify utilities
- Establish existing property line information and prepare easement maps
- Develop conceptual design alternatives
- Implement community outreach program and solicit feedback on alternatives
- Prepare Design Report and Environmental Assessment Form
- Prepare preliminary plans for the preferred alternative
- Prepare construction cost estimates
- Attend CEQ meeting and conduct public meetings as needed
- Prepare final design plans and contract documents

The County and the consultant reached an agreement and the contract was prepared for County Executive approval in November 2009.

PROJECT BUDGET

The project is being funded by the Federal Highway Administration (80 percent) with a local match required by Suffolk County of 20 percent. The funding source is listed as "Miscellaneous Federal Aid". The funding breakdown is shown on the attached New York Metropolitan Council Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) dated March 2012. In summary, the funding for the various design and construction phases is as follows:

Phase	Total	Federal	County
• Detailed Design	\$449,000	\$359,000	\$90,000
• Construction Inspection	\$625,000	\$500,000	\$125,000
• Construction	\$7,462,000	\$5,970,000	\$1,492,000
TOTAL	\$8,536,000	\$6,829,000	\$1,707,000

*Attachments: NYMTC TIP, March 2012
Project Location Maps 1 and 2*

PROPOSED PORT JEFFERSON-WADING RIVER RAILS TO TRAILS PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE PATH



PROPOSED PORT JEFFERSON-WADING RIVER RAILS TO TRAILS PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE PATH



