

**Dutchess County Planning Board
MINUTES – June 11, 2025**

Present

Gary Baright
David Barr
Dale Culver
Norma Drummond
Edie Greenwood
Hans Klingzahn
J. Patrick Lambert
Ken Migliorelli
James Nelson
Chris Pantano

Absent

James Fedorchak
Jill Way
J. Randall William

Jennifer Coccozza, *Staff*
Emily Dozier, *Staff*
Clayton Gurnett, *Staff*
Nina Leonard, *Staff*
Devin Rigolino, *Staff*
Dylan Tuttle, *Staff*
Ian Wickstead, *Staff*
Eoin Wrafter, *Staff*

Hudson River Valley Greenway Presenters:

Cody Arana, Regional Planner
Daniel Jeanson, Project Director
Andy Kitzmann, Executive Director

Hans Klingzahn called the meeting to order.

Approve Minutes from February 26, 2025, Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes from February 26, 2025, was made by Hans Klingzahn and the motion was seconded. With no nays, the motion passed, and the minutes were adopted.

Presentation: Hudson River Valley Greenway Compact Program

Andy Kitzmann, Executive Director; Daniel Jeanson, Project Director; and Cody Arana, Regional Planner for Hudson River Valley Greenway, presented on the Compact Program.

The Hudson River Valley Greenway is a unique state agency created to preserve the scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources of the Hudson Valley. Community planning programs are offered as well.

Historical background – There was a lot of environmental degradation in the Hudson Valley in the 60's and 70's, that lead to a ground swelling of public outreach. Many groups

were formed like Scenic Hudson and Clearwater. This led to several study commissions in the 80s to improve outcomes for communities in Hudson Valley. This led to the Greenway Act of 1991 which created Hudson Valley Greenway. A unique state program that partners with municipalities and non-profits to advance projects and initiatives that result in natural cultural resource protection, regional and economic development projects, public access to the Hudson River and heritage and environmental education. These are our five greenway criteria.

Greenway Area

Community compact program began in 1991 and started with ten model communities Beacon was one of them. These model communities were open to a new stream of funding that would advance the 5 Greenway criteria. By 2000 we had 100 Greenway communities out of 323 eligible and by 2025 with two new communities this morning we just approved. We have 187 out of 323. No communities have ever left the program.

The three main programs of Greenway include: Trail network, National Heritage Area and Regional Planning.

- Trail Network has a goal to have a trail network on both sides of the Hudson River between the Battery of NYC up to Albany. Later, expansion north to Whitehall in Washington County. In 2000 a water trail component was added along the same geographic area.
- National Heritage Program through the National Park Service was designated in 1996. Heritage education, tours and promotions are provided for this program.
- Regional Planning - Hudson River Valley Greenway Compact Program facilitates the development of a regional strategy to preserve its scenic, natural, historic cultural and preparational resources while encouraging compatible development and maintaining the traditional overalls in the Hudson Valley.

The planning process:

The first layer of Greenway planning is Greenway Communities. We work with communities to voluntarily pass resolutions by their municipal boards stating that they are going to do their best to abide by and achieve the goals of the Greenway criteria when updating planning documents and zoning laws. Becoming a Greenway Community is voluntary. We are not a regulatory agency. No community has ever left the program. Greenway Communities once they pass their resolutions, they are eligible for grant funding up to \$20,000 for projects on their own and up to \$30,000 if they're working with another municipality.

The next layer is **Greenway Compact** - After communities have passed a resolution to become a Greenway Community and then adopt their county compact. Once a compact

is created in a county, it is adopted by local municipalities. 29 of 30 local municipalities in Dutchess County have adopted their compact. By putting it into law it is legally binding, signaling to developers and the public the values and visions the community has for future development. Once the local municipality adopts the compact, it is sent off to implementation. After joining their compact communities update plans and zoning laws to reflect the principles outlined in the compact. These compacts are voluntary, respects home rule, relies on incentives and guidelines not any state or county requirements. Just like the community programs, no municipality has ever left the compact program. As with most planning endeavors these compacts should be updated every 5 to 10 years, it is a living document. Once the community becomes a Compact Community, they are eligible for up to \$50,000 in grants for projects that align with the Compact. Counties are eligible for up to \$100,000 to develop a new compact and \$75,000 to update existing compacts.

Community Compact Program is fundamentally set up as a smart growth strategy. Our goal is to support communities and the public to think about global growth patterns and some less developed strategies in their communities while thinking about priorities that they have in the Greenway criteria. Our main priority with the Community Compact Program is to help preserve the communities' resources. Communities are not forced to join Greenway programs. We encourage communities to make decisions that are efficient and are going to save local government money. We are all incentives and no regulations. We incentivize communities with funding and technical assistance. We're here to support their local planning decisions and work with them to create land use planning. Local government will make all the decisions. Our role is to guide them in the best way possible. There are no reporting requirements for being a Greenway Community or a Compact Community. There are reporting requirements if you have a grant with us.

Trails and Heritage - Trails and Greenways contribute to multiple aspects of community's wellbeing such as public health, economic development, transportation alternatives, environmental conservation and more. They enhance quality of life and make life more fun and healthier. Heritage has several similar benefits as trails. Preserving our heritage helps foster a sense of place and makes that place unique. Our state has some of the oldest cultures in the entire country so preserving that heritage is extremely important to us and the entire state.

Leveraging small scale projects – There is no minimum grant amount. Other Smart Growth strategies and programs have minimum grant amounts which are very restrictive for small communities. Smaller villages or towns that don't have a huge population may not have a comprehensive plan; we will work with them. With flexible funding we're not limited to economic development or nature and culture we are everything planning when it comes to our community's needs.

Community planning program benefits:

- Access to funding – Single community \$20,000 and \$30,000 multiple communities for projects.

- Greenway Communities are more competitive - Several State grant applications from OPRPHP ask if you are a Greenway Community or not? You get bonus points for being a Greenway Community.
- Branding – Several municipalities have included “A Hudson Valley Greenway community” on their signs. It informs the public that you are a community that is prioritizing the greenway’s goals, connecting green spaces, and local innovative ideas for issues that your community are having.
- Regional focus - Other Smart Growth strategies are statewide focused. You are competing on a statewide level for funds. Community Planning Program is regionally focused. It is less competitive and easier to obtain funds.
- Cooperation - Communities can share their goals, services and ideas beyond municipal boundaries. This saves tax dollars.
- Technical assistance - We help provide technical assistance to communities to not only apply for funding but also push for smart planning practices. If our program isn't the best fit for your project, we'll help you figure out another statewide program or regional program that might be the best fit for what you're looking to do.

Compact planning program benefits:

- Becoming a Compact Community is a step up from a Greenway Community.
- Higher funding amounts - \$50,000 as a single community and \$75,000 to update your compact.
- Community engagement – Dutchess County Compact is very user friendly. The public can easily understand it. The intention is to spark interest, engagement and guide that community. It is a great resource for conservation advisory councils, board of appeals and planning boards to provide them with planning principals.
- Streamlining reviews and historic preservation - Goals outlined in the compact could be prioritized during the SEQR review process. Once a community has a planning document they can help guide development and streamline those reviews. Making the process of evaluating environmental impacts faster more efficient and more predictable.
- Coordination – State agencies to the fullest extent practical coordinate their activities with compact communities. State agencies are required to take all reasonable and feasible steps to ensure coordination, to align their goals with the Greenway compact as much as possible.

Dutchess County Compact AKA Greenway Connections – Was created in 2000, five years before any other compact was created. There are 29 out of 30 communities in Dutchess County compact. That is 97% participation. There are no other counties that have this high percentage.

At the inception there were 18 guides that take readers through innovative smart strategies and ideas for community development projects. These guides are broken into five different topics:

- Protecting the Countryside
- Strengthening Centers
- Improving Suburbs
- Greenway Connections
- Site Specifics

In 2013, Dutchess County added seven more guides to the compact. In 2021, Dutchess County added two additional guides during the pandemic.

Eligible Projects – Municipalities are eligible to apply for:

Comprehensive plan update	Preservation plans
Zoning code update	LDWRP's
Natural cultural resources inventories	Scenic resource inventories
Beachfront access (restoring access to swimming)	

Currently there are two open community grants, four open compact grants, 11 trail grants and two heritage grants in Dutchess County totaling \$552,000. Community and Compact grants are funded with this program. Trail grants are funded through another state source. Environmental Protection Fund and Heritage grants are funded through National Park Service funds. The trail grants that come in through EPF have a half million cap on them and a \$250,000 award threshold.

Project Collaboration – Hudson Valley Greenway will fund other state funded projects that is different from other agencies. They may not fund other projects. We joined in with Orange County on the Spinnyma. OPRHP contributed a couple of million dollars, and we contributed \$250,000 to develop a trail there. The community compact has \$250,000 to give out annually. The trail grant program through the conservancy has \$500,000 to give out annually.

Commissioner's Update:

As of March 31st, the Department responded to 91 referrals, 23% of expected annual reviews, and our average days to respond is 10.6 compared to the statutory limit of 30.

Partnership for Manageable Growth (PMG)

No updates or changes since the last meeting. Correspondence
The Planning Board did not receive any correspondence.

Announcements

Next Planning Board meetings:

September 10, 2025, at 3:30PM

Adjournment

Hans Klingzahn made a motion to adjourn; Christopher Pantano seconded, the motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia B.-Lloyd

Question & Answers

Q - Where does funding come from?

A - Comes through the council, which is our state funding source.

Q - What is the annual budget?

A - For the Community and Compact programs, \$250,000 annually. This has doubled from two years ago. Each year it is increasing. One of our goals is to continue to go back to the Governor's office and demonstrate that we're making impactful progress. If communities continue to utilize the funds, we can advocate for more funds.

Q - How many compacts?

A - 5 total -Dutchess, Orange, Rockland, Westchester and Putnum

Q - Have any of the other ones been wholesale updated?

A - No they have not

Q - Any other state entity that does this outside of their govt.?

A - The community must hold the state accountable

Q - Does Greenway have lawyers, or do they use Dutchess County lawyers?

A - Greenway has insurance; it does not have a legal team. Other agency's lawyers may be used for advice not representation.

Q - What is an example of a Heritage Grant?

A - National Heritage programs are focused mostly on like programming at historic sites or marketing endeavors for projects that usually last a full tourism season. It could be a museum setting up a new exhibit or an educational program.

Q - Can Trail grants go toward acquisition of property (i.e. parking lot for trail visitors)?

A - Trail Grants cannot be used for land acquisition. It can be used to construct a parking lot. Construct a portion of the trail or an amenity found to be needed. Confirmation of the applicant's stake in the land, whether they own the land or have the landowner's support is done before a grant is awarded.

Q - Where can the community go to get an application?

A - It is on our website. It is an online portal.

Q - How often are grants awarded?

A - Twice a year. Next round opens September 8th and is due October 31st.

Q - Under your mission of regional planning, have you given guidance on ways to integrate raising vacancy factors and allowing for workforce housing and accessory dwelling units?

A - No. We have guidance documents that focus on our trail program. One example is guidance on how a private landowner can put a trail through their property. Another example, park greenway

connections plan to identify new trails that connect with other regional trails. Organizations such as Pattern for Progress as well as other regional groups are looking at housing quite a bit.

Q - How many counties are you working with?

A - 14