

Planning Committee Meeting (Virtual)

Wednesday, August 27, 2025

10:00 a.m.

— Meeting Summary —

1. **Introductions** – Emily Dozier (DCTC) welcomed everyone to the meeting, led introductions (see attached list), and briefly reviewed the meeting ground rules. The meeting was also recorded.
2. **Announcements**
 - a. [Funding Opportunities](#)
 - i. [Bridge Investment Program \(BIP\)](#): Limited to bridge projects of at least \$100 million.
 - b. State Updates
 - i. The FFY 2026-2029 State Transportation Improvement Project (STIP) will soon be available for public comment.
 - c. Industry Update: [Rising Construction Costs](#)
 - i. The Eno Center for Transportation released a white paper on rising construction costs, outlining that post-pandemic, elevated costs are the new normal due to supply chain disruptions, labor market shortages, high material and input costs, and higher borrowing costs. Mark Debalda (DCTC) shared a graph from FHWA showing that highway construction costs have increased much more than the consumer price index.
 - ii. Emily explained that concrete costs have gone up in New York because the State is requiring a new climate-friendly mix, but few facilities are making it. Mark added that it will be essential to account for these higher costs when developing cost estimates, including for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), which are expected to open in Fall 2025.
3. **Partner Updates**
 - a. Chris White (C/Beacon) shared that the paving for the Fishkill/Teller Ave project is complete, to be followed by water and sewer work. He thanked DCTC for their support.
 - b. Amanda Sammon (DCPT) thanked Chris for helping find an alternate route for the buses so they could maintain service during the road work.
4. **Old Business – none**
5. **New Business**
 - a. Transportation Plan update: The Transportation Plan is one of our core products, updated every five years. It looks ahead 25 years to set long-term goals for the county's transportation system and set policies and priorities for future federal funding. The 2021 Plan, [Moving Dutchess Forward](#), is a completely online product and the 2026 update will

follow the same format. The 2026 plan will have a planning horizon year of 2050.

- i. Public Engagement: Highland Planning is managing public engagement for the 2026 plan.
 - They will hire two Community Ambassadors with strong local connections and an interest in transportation to help ensure the public outreach is impactful. The roles are part-time, and we're accepting applications until September 19th, either through the [online application](#) or a [fillable PDF form](#).
 - We're also conducting pre-engagement interviews with various agencies to hear about their experience communicating with the public to ensure that our public engagement is targeted and meaningful. Any hot button issues that could come up at a public event, transportation-related or not, can be relayed to us.
 - A video, fact sheet, online survey, and website update are also underway and will be released as part of the plan update announcement this fall.
 - Rosemary Grabowska (Resident, C/Poughkeepsie) suggested involving the local colleges since they rely heavily on transit system.
 - Lisa Kaul (DC Legislature) asked whether the plan would include microtransit for areas not served by public transit. Mark replied that microtransit will be discussed in the new plan. Emily added that the Village of Rhinebeck is pursuing its own Microtransit system, which will be a helpful test case since it can be challenging to find enough demand to support the high cost, while not duplicating existing services. Amanda shared that the high cost of microtransit is also driven by the price of ADA-compliant vehicles. Karen Smythe (V/Red Hook) added that Rhinebeck intends for the program to connect people to the hospital and grocery store and that there has been some success with similar programs in Putnam County.
- ii. Plan Structure: As with the 2021 plan, the introduction will be followed by an overview of the region and transportation system. After that, there are four sections organized by our goals: 1) Learn, 2) Assess, 3) Advocate, and 4) Invest. The overall emphasis is on barriers to safety, reliability, and access and the policies and investments that will prepare the county to face the transportation challenges of the future.
- iii. Goal 1: Learn - The first piece of the plan describes trends related to demographics, travel behavior, housing, our economy, freight, climate change, and transportation technology. We are reviewing the trends from the 2021 plan to see if they still resonate. The committee discussed the draft 2026 trends; key comments are listed below:
 - Demographic Trends
 - a. Lee Kyriacou (C/Beacon) asked if the population gains in Fishkill and East Fishkill also hold true for Beacon. Mark replied that the numbers presented are from 2020 census data and don't account for dynamics during and after the pandemic.
 - b. Amanda commented that the decline in the age 17 and under population is likely due to housing prices, as families are leaving the county to buy more affordable

homes elsewhere. Rosemary added that the transportation system also contributes to the whether families decide to stay in the county.

- c. Chris asked if DCTC could send Beacon School District's K-12 enrollment data.
- d. Stephen Gill (DC DPW) commented that although the general population isn't growing, tourism seems to be increasing. He has noted more people are visiting on the weekends to see things that are unique to Dutchess. Emily agreed that tourism plays a large role in our economy; this is supported by recent data from Destination Dutchess showing that tourists account for more than half of all retail and restaurant sales.

- Travel Trends

- a. Karen commented that some people in Red Hook commute to New York City a couple days a week and then work from home the rest of the time.
- b. Chris noted that based on parking utilization, it seems that Metro North use in Beacon has increased since the pandemic but not completely recovered. Amanda added that the peak hours for the Beacon Loop bus have shifted, since workers have more flexibility in their hours.

- Housing Trends

- a. Karen noted that there was no housing for sale in Red Hook a few years ago, but that now there are some houses on the market.
- b. Stephen commented that there will be an increased need for senior housing given the aging population. Emily added that the housing market is impacted by the growing number of seniors aging in place.

- Economic Trends

- a. Nick D'Alessandro (T/East Fishkill) noted that a lack of labor is a huge concern for businesses wanting to open in East Fishkill.
- b. Rosemary added that transportation access can be a barrier for connecting youth with employment and apprenticeship programs. Kim Henrichs (North East Community Center) commented that access to transportation is a barrier in rural areas like Millerton.

- b. Mid-Hudson Valley TMA Federal Certification: Our Transportation Management Area (TMA), shared with Orange and Ulster County, will undergo a certification review this year. This happens every four years. This review is scheduled for the week of September 22nd and will be the subject of the September 24th planning committee meeting. Ahead of the review, the TMA sent a joint response to FHWA and FTA addressing recommendations from the previous 2021 certification. A public survey will be launched to gather feedback on DCTC's work. Gautam Mani (FHWA) encouraged participation from planning committee members and invited them to join the in-person session with the TMA agencies on September 25th.

6. Planning Updates

- a. [Safety Action Plan](#): This week there will be field investigations at seven locations identified for safety improvements, to be followed by concept renderings. All the municipal priority locations, along with one county and one state location, will also undergo a desktop review with a map, summary of the data, and potential improvement options. There was a virtual public meeting on August 19th, and the final report is anticipated by the end of the year.
- b. [Beacon-Hopewell Rail Trail Feasibility Study](#): The final advisory committee meeting was held in mid-August. A virtual public meeting was also held to discuss the draft recommendations. It was well attended and there is a groundswell of support for a future trail on the corridor. DCTC is accepting comments on the draft final report until September 12th, 2025. The draft can be found on the [study website](#).
 - i. Lee expressed his gratitude to DCTC for the study and added that it is a priority for Beacon to see the Beacon-Hopewell Rail Trail come to fruition.
- c. [Coordinated Plan](#): This plan, focused on the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities, is moving forward with continuing advisory committee meetings, a public survey, and a provider survey. The next steps are continued outreach: in-person listening sessions at North East-Millerton Library, Red Hook Friendship Center, and Town of Poughkeepsie Senior Center, and interviews with key agencies and providers.
- d. [Traffic Count Program](#): The 2025 counts are underway: our contractor is taking video counts on trails and at complex intersections. Volunteer pedestrian/bicycle counts will take place September 20th-27th. Volunteers can still [sign up for a two-hour count session](#) at various locations either on a Saturday or a weekday.
- e. Lee asked if the long-range plan will address the I-84 corridor. He shared that Beacon is in communication the NYSDOT about improving the congestion at the interchange of I-84 and 9D, and invited DCTC to take part in those meetings.

7. Upcoming Meetings:

- a. Planning Committee (Virtual) – September 24, 2025 at 10 am

8/27/2025 Meeting Participants:

Name	Organization	Address or Email	Phone
Mark Debald	DCTC	mdebald@dutchessny.gov	845-486-3600
Emily Dozier	DCTC	edozier@dutchessny.gov	845-486-3600
Lee Kyriacou	C/Beacon	mayor@beaconny.gov	845-838-5000
Chris White	C/Beacon	cwhite@beaconny.gov	845-838-5009
Shelly Johnston	Creighton Manning Eng.	sjohnston@cmellp.com	518-689-1814
Stephen Gill	DC DPW	sgill@dutchessny.gov	845-486-2928
Stephen Caswell	DC Legislature	scaswell@dutchessny.gov	845-518-7236
Lisa Kaul	DC Legislature	lkaul@dutchessny.gov	845-309-4507
Amanda Sammon	DC Public Transit	asammon@dutchessny.gov	845-473-8643
Guatam Mani	FHWA	gautam.mani@dot.gov	518-431-8860
Jesse Vogl	LaBella	jvogl@LaBellaPC.com	
Kim Henrichs	North East Community Center	kim@neccmillerton.org	
Robert Mortell	NYMTC	robert.mortell@dot.ny.gov	845-431-5710
Shawn Jackson	NYS DOT	Shawn.Jackson@dot.ny.gov	
Melanie E Dupuis	Pace	edupuis@pace.edu	
Rosemary Grabowska	Resident, C/Poughkeepsie		
Nicholas D'Alessandro	T/East Fishkill	dalessandron@eastfishkillny.gov	845-221-4303
Karen Smythe	V/Red Hook	mayor@redhooknyvillage.org	845-758-4715