

**Amending Resolution No. 275 Of 2014, Establishing A Policy For A
“Rail With Trail” Along The County-Owned Ulster And Delaware
Railroad Corridor**

Referred to: The Laws and Rules, Governmental Services Committee (Chairman Richard Parete and Legislators Donaldson, Greene, Roberts and Ronk)

The U&D Corridor Advisory Committee (Chairman Tracey Bartels and Legislators Archer, Belfiglio, Donaldson, Greene, Litts, Maloney, Provenzano and Ronk) offers the following:

WHEREAS, the County of Ulster purchased the 38.6-mile Ulster and Delaware Railroad (U&D) corridor in 1979 to promote economic development through expanded tourism and to provide recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Legislature determined that it was critical to establish a policy for the future uses of the U&D Corridor following the termination of the current lease on May 31, 2016; and

WHEREAS, via adoption of Resolution No. 275 of 2014 the Ulster County Legislature established a policy to support a segmented “rail with trail” plan to convert the U&D corridor to a trail only in the segment between Kingston and Boiceville, and continue operation of a tourism railroad west of the Ashokan Reservoir; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 155 of 2015 established the Ulster & Delaware Corridor Advisory Committee for the purposes of conducting a thorough reexamination and study regarding the optimum use of the full U&D Corridor, and to recommend possible modifications to the existing policy to ensure the Corridor would be utilized for the greatest benefit to the residents and tourists of Ulster County; and

WHEREAS, the U&D Corridor Advisory Committee successfully retained the services of an independent consulting firm, Stone Consulting & Design, P.C., to advise the Committee on recommendations for the highest and best use for various segments of the Corridor; and

WHEREAS, the Committee met frequently, completed field visits, interviewed stakeholders, reviewed existing reports and available data, and vetted the recommendations of Stone Consulting; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 387 of November 2015 authorized the U&D Corridor Advisory Committee to report its findings to the Legislature before December 31, 2015 and the findings of the Advisory Committee are reported herein, and

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WHEREAS, the Committee has determined that the segmented approach to the Corridor, which includes railroad only segments , trail only segments, and rail with trail segments will maximize the public benefits of the Corridor; and

WHEREAS, the Committee recommends several modifications to the established segmented “rail with trail” policy that would help the County realize the maximum benefits from the Corridor and accommodate both railroad and recreational trail uses; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, the segmented “rail with trail” policy shall be amended to convert to trail only on the segment between Cornell Street and the east side of the Kingston Plaza to enhance quality of life and improve public health in the City of Kingston, provided sufficient track shall be left to load passengers at Kingston Plaza; and be it further

RESOLVED, the “rail with trail” policy shall include an increased available railroad segment, co-located with public trail wherever feasible, in the segment from the east end of Kingston Plaza to MP 8.33, which would increase the potential for possible future tourism theme trains without sacrificing trail connectivity from Kingston to the Ashokan Reservoir; and be it further

RESOLVED, the segment between MP 8.33 and Basin Road will require further investigation on the future feasibility of rail with trail and shall be the last segment to be altered or converted on the east side of the Ashokan provided that trail connectivity co-located on the corridor shall be preserved; and be it further

RESOLVED, the segment from Basin Road to Route 28A in Boiceville, which includes all of the U&D Corridor within New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) lands, shall be converted to a public recreational trail; and be it further

RESOLVED, from Route 28A in Boiceville to Bridge Street in Phoenicia shall be designated as railroad segment with a co-located trail where it is found to be feasible; and be it further

RESOLVED, the segment from Bridge Street in Phoenicia to the Ulster County line in the Town of Shandaken shall be utilized as a recreational trail with a co-location of a possible rail station and rail connection to Delaware County immediately near the County border at Highmount; and be it further

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RESOLVED, within 90 days from the effective date of this Resolution, Ulster County shall release a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) for potential tourism railroad operators to begin following the expiration of the current U&D lease on May 31, 2016 for the segments designated as railroad segments pursuant to this policy; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature requests that the County Executive submit a revised plan outlining projects in compliance with this policy, including secured funding sources to advance planning and design for the segmented rail with trail conversion, as well as on-going maintenance;

and move its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

Passed Committee: Laws and Rules, Governmental Services on December 14, 2015

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE