

PLAN ON IT

A Dutchess County Planning Federation Newsletter

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Blending Neighborhood and Regional Planning

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Land use and transportation planning disciplines often operate on separate paths. Such specialization works well at the micro level – a single site plan or stretch of road – but loses value as the focus expands to a community or region.

The inverse relationship holds true when we take a regional plan and try to apply it to a small patch of ground. Unfortunately, broad policy statements and worthy planning goals often fail to overcome realities on the ground, which brings us to one of planning's many challenges: how to simultaneously plan at the regional and local levels, across multiple disciplines, in a way that produces results.

Neighborhood-scale plans are one approach to meeting this challenge. A neighborhood's size lends itself to supporting regional and local planning goals.

In Dutchess County, the recently completed [Route 9 Land Use and Transportation Study](#) (*Route 9 Study*) provides a good example of how a neighborhood-scale plan bridged the regional/local planning gap. The study focused on the Fairview area in the Town of Poughkeepsie — a neighborhood that includes a college, hospital, park, shopping center, state psychiatric center, and a large private mixed-use development proposal. Fairview is also home to a segment of NYS Route 9 that carries over 30,000 vehicles and supports 4,000 pedestrian crossings on a typical day. These conditions posed a set of land use and transportation challenges too detailed to address in a regional plan, but also too complex to deal with at the site plan level.



A key intersection in the Fairview study area.

Photo credit: Mark Debald

Enter the *Route 9 Study*, which was influenced by work done for two county-wide plans, a draft town plan, and a pedestrian safety study.

The Regional Perspective

The *Route 9 Study* relied on principles from [Greenway Connections](#), a planning guidebook created by the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development that presents policies and site specific design guidelines that promote sustainable development. Its guidance on strengthening centers, creating walkable communities, encouraging mixed-uses, and improving connections was integral to the *Route 9 Study*.

The study was also influenced by policies contained in the Poughkeepsie-Dutchess County Transportation Council's long-range transportation plan, [Connections 2025](#), which sets the direction for future transportation investment and resources. This plan focuses on transportation issues such as infrastructure maintenance, mobility and congestion, safety, and bicycle and pedestrian activities.

Other Key Planning Efforts

When the *Route 9 Study* began, the Town of Poughkeepsie was drafting an update to its master plan and zoning ordinance. A key component of the new plan includes the identification of emerging centers along Route 9, where the Town envisions a village-like pattern of development and associated transportation links.

The 2003 *NYS DOT Route 9 Pedestrian Safety Study* provided data on pedestrian use of the Route 9 corridor near Marist College including pedestrian counts, a pedestrian origin-destination study, traffic counts, speed observations, and a review of accidents. Such detailed information would have been difficult to gather in a wider planning effort.

Planning for the Fairview Neighborhood

Recommendations from these plans and studies were included in the *Route 9 Study*, and many of their authors/sponsors participated on the *Route 9 Study*'s advisory committee. Their inclusion on the advisory committee, along with key stakeholders from the neighborhood, allowed for a blend of regional and local perspectives.

After six committee meetings and two public workshops, the *Route 9 Study* identified 21 land use and transportation recommendations for the Fairview neighborhood, addressing five general issues:

1. Future land development
2. New transit and road projects
3. Intersection improvements
4. Pedestrian safety
5. Implementation of the Town's Fairview center concept from the Draft Town Plan.

This mix of recommendations, developed through a consensus building process and influenced by regional and local planning goals, has proven sufficient in detail to warrant action – the proposed pedestrian bridge over Route 9 being a prime example.

Want More Information?

[Route 9 Land Use and Transportation Study](#)
[Greenway Connections](#)
[Connections 2025](#)

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