

2.2 Brickyards Parkland to Dutchess Junction Park

2.2A - Brickyards Parkland to Dutchess Junction Park (eastern upland route): The wooded slopes north of the privately owned land in sub-area 2.1 are mostly owned by OPRHP and are part of Hudson Highlands State Park. Dutchess Junction Park sits within the northern portion of the Brickyards Parkland. This former Town of Fishkill park is surrounded by the state parkland and is therefore maintained by, and treated as, part of the State Park.

Upon reaching the boundary between the private property and the Brickyards Parkland, the trail can veer away from the Route 9D right-of-way and enter the Brickyards Parkland. The trail would run with the contours of the land and stay near the road to cross the water courses at the most favorable locations where they are constrained to cross under Route 9D, while also reducing construction impacts and cost.

The entire Brickyards Parkland area shows many signs of the human settlement and industry that once existed here, although most of the structures have been demolished. Graded roads traverse the area, mostly connecting the river to upland

areas. These roads are not blazed as official trails, but are accessible to the public and used informally. There are also wetlands that are adjacent to, and were created by, the construction of the railroad.

The proposed alignment follows the contours of the land roughly parallel to Route 9D. The trail crosses two year-round water courses, Wade's and Gordon's Brooks. By staying close to the road, the trail will cross these brooks where they are narrowest, minimizing the length of any bridges that would be required. The brooks' beds narrow to cross under the roadway, and then quickly widen out as they head downhill away from Route 9D towards the river.

Once the second brook is crossed, the trail would follow an old graded roadway and connect to Dutchess Junction Park. This connection is largely in place, with some additional grading and site preparation needed to address steep sections of roadway and to smooth smaller ditches and gullies formed by water runoff.



Graded roadway in the Brickyards Parkland



Wetlands in the Brickyards Parkland

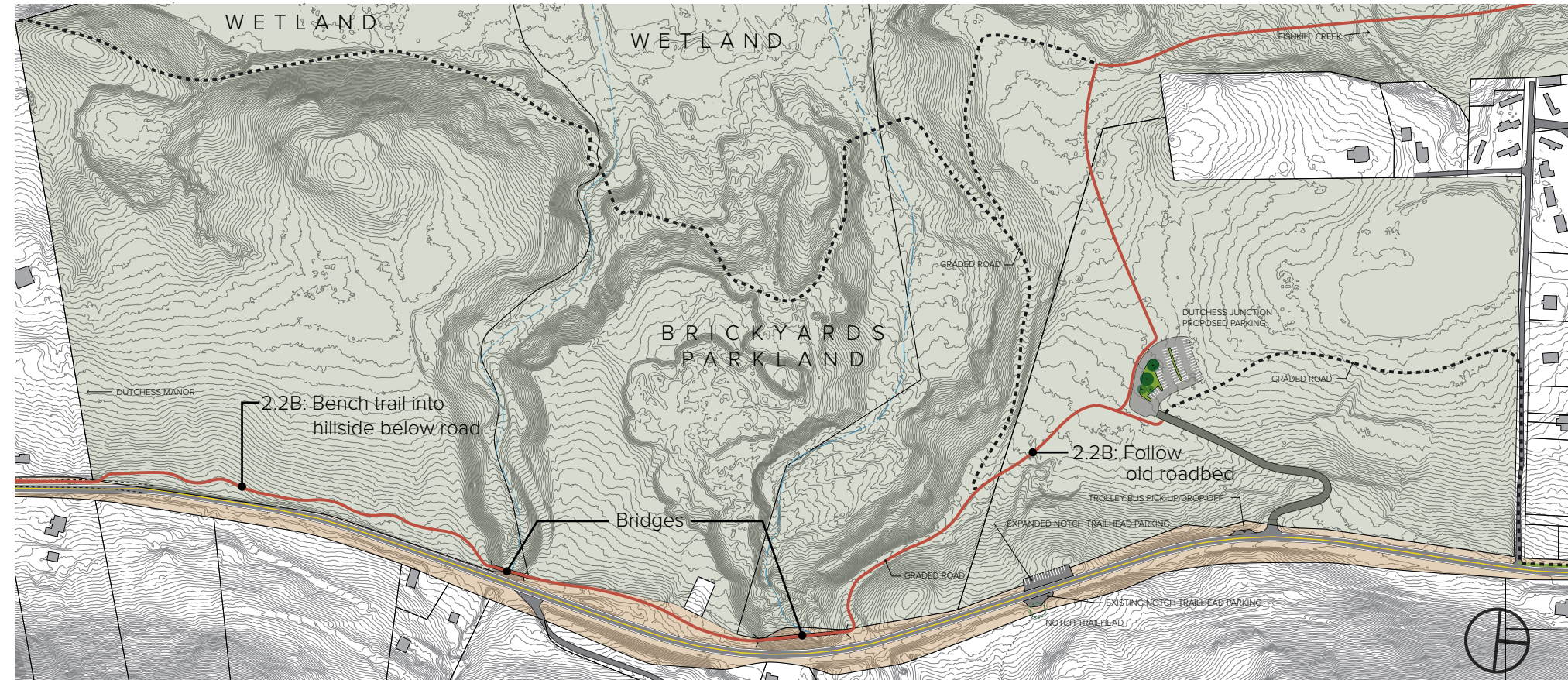
2.2B - Brickyards Parkland to Dutchess Junction Park (western lowland route):

Just north of the wetlands and private property in sub-area 2.1 is a drastic change in elevation. This would require several switchbacks and possibly a ramp structure to connect the trail that runs between the wetlands and private property with this high point within the Brickyards Parkland. Moving northward, the trail would follow existing graded roads that remain from when the Brickyards were in operation. To cross Gordon's and Wade's Brooks, and the ravines and gullies they have formed, would require significantly more infrastructure and disturbance than crossing the same brooks uphill closer to the roadway where the brooks are constrained, as proposed for sub-area 2.2.

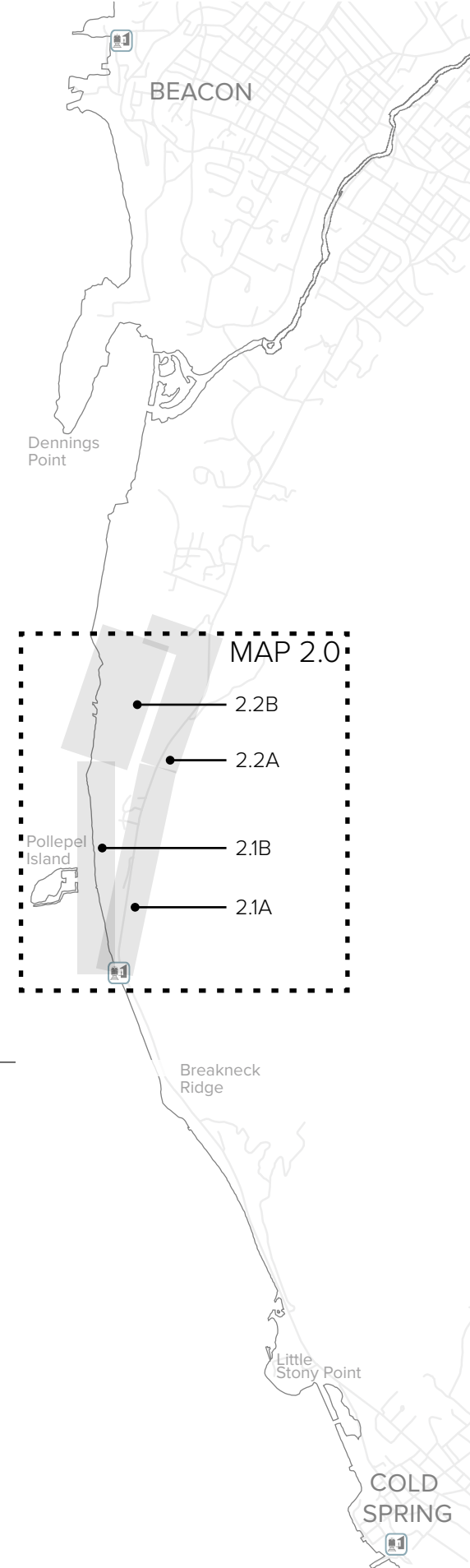
In addition to the challenge of traversing this complex terrain, much of this area is considered to be udorthents (potential historic fill area), as well as potentially archaeologically and culturally significant from both the brickyards era and pre-Contact settlement. There are also wetlands between the Metro-North tracks and the rising

parkland terrain, similar to the larger wetland area adjacent to the private property in sub-area 2.1. All of these conditions present potential permitting challenges, however, as discussed during the second public meeting, they also represent an opportunity for historic and ecological education.

While these rugged conditions make this alignment infeasible for an easily navigable multi-use trail, a footpath along this alignment should be considered as a supplement for able hikers. Furthermore, to strengthen the draw to Dutchess Junction Park as a node, a network of hiking and/or mountain biking trails should be planned and developed as resources become available and NYNJTC volunteers are identified. Using the existing graded roadways and other passable connections, a loop system could be cleared and blazed by volunteers. A welcome area at this location strengthens the feasibility of introducing this new node to the Route 9D recreational corridor by activating this section of parkland and bringing other amenities to Dutchess Junction Park. For additional details, see "Repurposing Dutchess Junction Park" on p. 57.



Brickyards Parkland map



Summary Evaluation

PROJECT GOALS	
SAFETY	Most of this segment will be off-road, though adjacent to and fully visible from Route 9D.
RECREATION	This portion of the trail will follow contours through the wooded area adjacent to the roadway. The northern section would follow an existing graded, but abandoned, road alignment to connect to Dutchess Junction Park. Walking and bicycling would be easier compared to 2.2B.
HIGHLIGHT & RETAIN NATURAL BEAUTY	While visible to the roadway, the trail would be within a transformational forest environment, back from and below the road. By following existing contours, environmental degradation (cutting and filling) will be minimized. This land has been subject to light infiltration and degradation caused by the roadway cut above and to the east. Construction disturbance will have less impact compared to deeper in the woods while addressing invasive species.
CONSTRUCTION FEASIBILITY	This alignment crosses the two streams where they have already been channelized to pass under Route 9D, making the spans required to cross them significantly shorter than would otherwise be required in lowland areas. Otherwise, the trail follows existing contours and/or existing graded roads. Being closer to Route 9D, construction will be easier, with less distance to transport materials. The property is already owned by OPRHP, but more importantly this alignment connects directly to trail segments that can also be implemented on public land.

2.2A Brickyards Parkland to Dutchess Junction Park - Upland route set back from Route 9D

P R E F E R R E D R O U T E

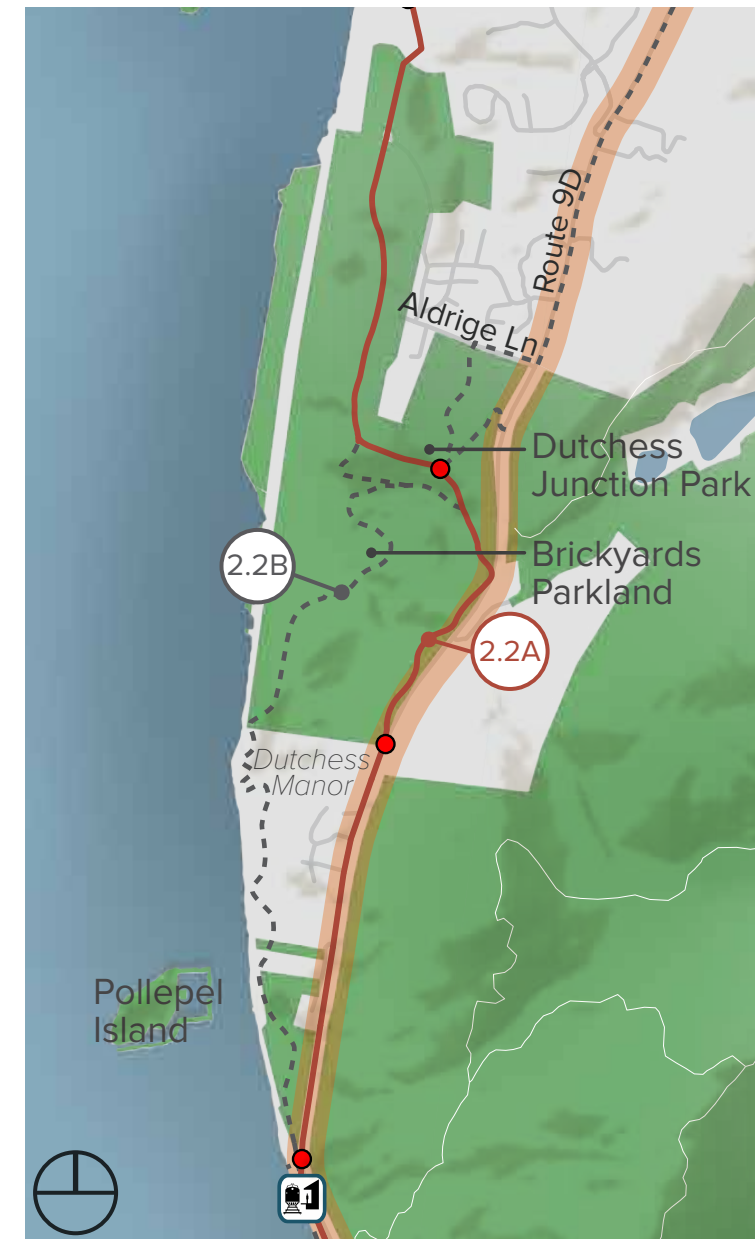
2.2B Lowland Route - within Brickyards Parkland

This route segment would have to be built over very challenging terrain, which could limit accessibility for some populations. Located deep in the woods, this route would be visually and audibly isolated.

This alignment would also connect to the Brickyards Parkland, but would be more technically challenging to use and would require a longer distance to connect to the same points as the preferred route.

This alignment would bring trail users closer to the river and Pollepel Island through rugged densely wooded terrain regularly crossed by streams and drainage channels. It would not provide direct views to the river. The trail would be indirect, requiring construction of bridges and/or culverts at streams and boardwalks over wet areas.

Significantly more infrastructure (longer bridges and structures over wet areas) would make the overall cost significantly higher and result in greater disturbance to the surrounding natural environment. As this is a low lying area and mapped as potential historic fill, there are many areas that are wet for part or all of the year. Accessing the site with construction vehicles would also increase the cost in comparison to the preferred route. The likelihood of encountering historic artifacts is also greater in this area.



Map 2.2 - Brickyards Parkland to Dutchess Junction Park

Legend

- Preferred Route
- Change in route segment
- - - Alternate Route
- Proposed Route 9D Corridor safety improvements
- State Parks

Repurposing Dutchess Junction Park

The open space shown below was once a Town of Fishkill park and playground (of which remnants remain), which was closed in response to low usage and perceived safety concerns. This parkland may be part of the solution to the parking problem 2-3 miles to the south. The access road is navigable for a bus-style trolley that could be used to create a park-and-ride operation, although the possibility of a roadside pick-up location may also be explored to maximize efficiency. The access point to Dutchess Junction Park from Route 9D happens to be conveniently located directly across the road from the Notch trailhead, a popular trail which has very limited trailhead parking (4-5 cars max.)

Dutchess Junction Park could be redesigned to provide much needed parking and a welcome area for the growing visitor population, with frequent, reliable trolley service bringing them to the popular trailheads to the south. The loop trail network discussed in sub-area 2.2B and other amenities such as food trucks and stewardship information could be considered to further activate this new hub. By activating this area with a park-related use that is off-site and removed from the existing hub of activity between the Breakneck Ridge Station and Breakneck Ridge itself, as many as 50-100 vehicles could be accommodated with little impacts to trees.

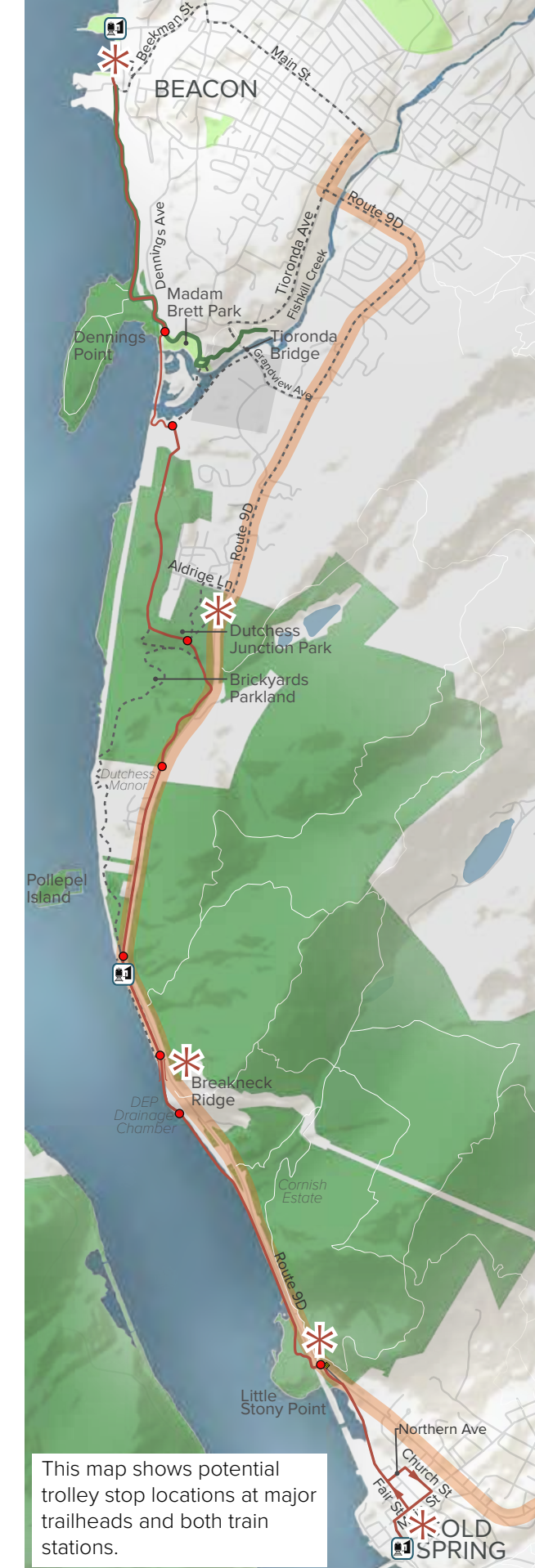
The trolley that serves downtown Cold Spring and the Boscobel Historic House and Gardens, could be expanded during peak hiking season to travel as far north as Dutchess Junction Park to pick up hikers and bring them down Route 9D to the Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve trailheads. Hikers setting out for extended days are best suited to take advantage of this welcome area.



Trolley in Cold Spring, NY



Dutchess Junction Park panoramic view



This map shows potential trolley stop locations at major trailheads and both train stations.

* Potential trolley stop