

## Essex County Ice and Iron Greenway Project Aims to Create an 11-mile Greenway

BY GEORGETTE GILMORE | WEDNESDAY, SEP 23, 2015 9:00AM | COMMENTS (4)



If a group of local residents have their way, the old Boonton Line unused rail corridor will be transformed into the Ice & Iron Greenway, an 11-mile recreation trail connecting Montclair, Glen Ridge, Bloomfield, Bellevue, Newark, Kearny, and Jersey City.

Along its route, the [Ice & Iron Greenway project](#), which is now under the leadership of [New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition](#) (NJBWC), will connect parks, schools, hospitals and retail, in addition to providing an integral active transportation link enabling commuters to bypass some of New Jersey's most congested roadways. It will provide recreation for thousands living along this corridor, providing them access to exercise and the ability to walk or ride a bike to destinations in a car-free environment. It is hoped that commuters will be able to use the Greenway to ultimately reach Manhattan via Jersey City from points west in Essex County and from the towns along the corridor.



*Artist rendering of what the proposed Greenway would look like.*

NJ Transit closed the line to passenger traffic in 2002, following the opening of the Montclair Connection near Bay Street Station. The section of the line in Glen Ridge, Bloomfield and Kearny was sold to Virginia-based freight railroad Norfolk Southern.

Rutherford and East Rutherford are currently in negotiations with [Norfolk Southern](#) to buy a 1.4-mile strip of land containing a disused rail bed, with plans to create a Rutherford “Highline.” NJBWC sees this as a very positive accomplishment.



Montclair resident David Wright is the NJBWC Project Manager for the Ice & Iron Greenway Project. He has spearheaded this project from its inception as a community volunteer and is optimistic about the developments.

“The past achievements that directly promotes our optimistic outlook include Rutherford’s progress in negotiating with Norfolk Southern on acquiring their track, our inclusion in the winning HUD project, Rebuild by Design, that included our greenway through the Meadowlands and our collaboration with the East Coast Greenway (ECG)

to how their trail can best leverage some of the Ice & Iron Greenway’s route,” Wright tells Baristanet.

Wright says NJBWC’s next steps are:

- Continue with outreach
- Setup Meeting with Senator Corey Booker’s Chief of Staff
- Work with the Montclair Transportation Committee (Don Ziff) to get their recommendation for Montclair to sign onto the Inter-Local Agreement

The longer goal, if the Greenway is built, is to link it to the New Jersey section of the East Coast Greenway: a multi-state recreation trail that runs from Florida to the Canadian border in Maine.