

RESOLUTION #XX (2016) AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A RAIL TRAIL TASK FORCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEVELOPING MIXED-USE PEDESTRIAN TRAILS IN THE TOWN

WHEREAS, the Town recognizes the importance of preserving the Town's natural resources and rural character, and providing residents with more opportunities to observe and enjoy the natural beauty the Town offers,

WHEREAS, the Dryden Town Board recognizes the importance of developing mixed use recreational trails, as resources vital to improving the Town's economic base, tourism, property values, public health and fitness, and quality of life for Town residents,

WHEREAS, the Town encourages the use of non-motorized modes of transportation and recognizes the significant environmental and economic benefits of reducing automobile use,

WHEREAS, the Lehigh Valley Railroad abandoned the East Ithaca to Freeville and Cortland rail beds and the Harford to Dryden, Freeville and Groton rail beds by 1977,

WHEREAS, the Town's 4.2-mile Jim Schug Trail, is currently established and popular, and runs south on the abandoned rail bed from the Village of Dryden, passing by Dryden Lake, to the Harford town line,

WHEREAS, Cornell Design Connect produced a plan in 2015 which presented a blueprint for the creation of a 6.25-mile Varna to Freeville rail trail along the abandoned railroad corridor,

WHEREAS, the Town of Dryden Comprehensive Plan cites the development of a bike and pedestrian path, connecting Dryden, Freeville, Etna and Varna, as a transportation improvement,

WHEREAS, the Dryden Town Board desires a Rail Trail Task Force to be established to advise municipal leaders and residents on issues relating to the successful development of a 10.8-mile trail system connecting from the Jim Schug Trail in the Village of Dryden through the Village of Freeville and the hamlets of Etna and Varna to the East Ithaca Recreation Way at the Ithaca Town line,

WHEREAS, the Town Board encourages the Rail Trail Task Force to communicate with potential trail users including, runners, hikers, walkers, bicyclists, cross-country skiers, horseback riders, and nature enthusiasts; with landowners, trail neighbors and the business and agriculture communities; as well as with the media, sources of funding and other interested parties, to promote the development, use, and maintenance of a trail system within the Town, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Rail Trail Task Force shall be established and include 9 voting members and strive for diverse attendance and participation at meetings. Members shall include one representative from each of the Town's Agriculture Advisory Committee, Planning Board, Conservation Board, and Recreation and Youth Commission. The five other voting members shall be appointed by the Dryden Town Board.