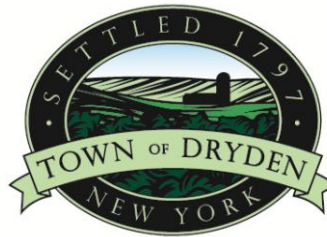


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## PRESS RELEASE

Thursday, July 13, 2017.

Dryden Town Board Celebrates an Important Phase of Its Planned 'Rail Trail,' Thanks to William George Agency and Landowners' Contributions.

The Town Board of Dryden is celebrating an important addition of land to its recreational 'Rail Trail' project. The trail will now fully connect the Village of Dryden to the Village of Freeville, thanks to William George Agency's agreement to contribute land by granting an easement. This brings the Town one big step closer to fulfilling the trail project. The multi-use Rail Trail is being pieced together along old rail beds and is designed to connect the Town of Dryden from one side to the other.

“At this point, we only need to connect sections of the Rail Trail between Varna and Freeville, and conclude negotiations underway regarding trail access on state owned property near Cornell. Completing the project will be a 20-year dream that some residents have had for a trail that links our Dryden communities. The plan is also to draw new people in to Dryden to enjoy recreation and to visit our businesses,” said Jason Leifer, Dryden Town Supervisor. “The Town appreciates the efforts of the Task Force and William George Agency Director of Facilities Services, Pat Foote, for all of their hard work for the community. We thank all the landowners who have or are planning to contribute land easements to the trail project.”

In 2016 the Dryden Town Board created a task force dedicated to getting community input on trail design and to securing land easements to connect sections of trail. Besides setting up the task force, the Town Board has also been working steadily to secure grant funding to complete the trail, which will connect the Village of Freeville to Game Farm Road at the border between Dryden and Ithaca.

The Rail Trail task force is led by its Chair, Bob Beck, a former Conservation Board Chair, working with Dryden Town Board liaison Deputy Supervisor Dan Lamb, who together spearheaded the project on behalf of the town, and Vice Chair, Bruno Schickel. The bipartisan task force is composed of eleven voting members appointed by the Town Board and is supported by a volunteer “Friends of the Trail” group which is open to anyone interested in advancing the trail’s development.

The Rail Trail project will create a route along extensive abandoned rail beds that run throughout Dryden. Residents have long awaited the day when they could follow the route from one end of town to the other. The new trail will be used for recreation and off-road commuting. It will promote community, health, and tourism-related business by drawing people both inside and outside of Dryden together for fun, exercise, and enjoyment of Dryden’s natural landscape.

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