

Friends of Dryden Trails

May 18, 2016

Next meeting: 7 pm Wednesday June 15, Dryden DPW building

Introductions

Attendees talked about their interest in the trail project.

Bob Beck, Chair of the Town Conservation Board, convened the rails to trails group

Chris Tessaglia-Hymes From East Ithaca, enjoys the recreation way there

Abe Strook From Cornell, interested in planning and transportation

Cathy Servos Chair of the Dryden Recreation and Youth Services Board

David Bravo Cullen Member of the Rec/Youth Services Board

Bruno Schickel Grew up on Ferguson Rd., interested in development of town resources

Brian Postle From Freeville, supports trail development

David Fogle Mayor of Freeville. Noted that the trail from Johnson Rd to Union St is up and running; there is lots of support for the trail in Freeville.

Ray Berger Town of Dryden planner

Jim Miner Interested in trail as member of the biking community

Steve Shaum on the Board of the Finger Lakes Runners' Club (FLRC)

Nancy Kleinrach Also on FLRC Board

Richard Maxwell "Max" Lives on Turkey Hill Rd, uses segments of the trail now

Judy Pierpont Lives on Pleasant Hollow Rd., interested in preservation management, Land trust

Alice Green Regular walker on rail section between Malloryville and McLean

John Keiffer Worked at CU, regular trail rider

Todd Bittner Director of Natural Areas, Cornell Plantations

David Bradley Lives in the Village of Dryden

Greg Sloan Last meeting with the group; retired as Town Board member and is moving. But will come back to use the trail in the future.

Reports:

Pinckney Road Purchase Bob reported that since the Pinckney Rd. purchase was voted down May 3, there is interest in raising private funds, which looks promising. This land is not necessary for the trail project to proceed, but it would need an easement for the north half of the trail bed, as well as another for the south half. It could serve as an anchor point for the project.

Abe: noted importance of emergency access along the trail; said this was a factor in expensive bridges being required along the Black Diamond Trail.

GS: This probably won't be in issue in this project.

Appointment of the Rails to Trails Task Force

The Town Board will vote tomorrow night on a proposed Task Force Steering Committee for the Rails to Trails project with the following members:

Four members appointed from Town "committees":

John Kiefer <jak14@cornell.edu> Planning Board

David Bravo-Cullen <dsbravoiii@aol.com> DRYC

Evan Carpenter <evanjcarpenter@yahoo.com> Ag Advisory Committee

Bob Beck <rmb24@cornell.edu> Conservation Board

Seven from the community recommended by the above:

Todd Bittner <todd.bittner@cornell.edu> Cornell Plantations; lives on Ringwood Rd.

David Fogel <dfogel@worldwide-artbooks.com> Freeville mayor; trail exhibit of rail history

Alice Walsh Green <aliceithaca@gmail.com> Retired Youth Bureau & CU; lives near Fall Creek Rd. McLean

Nancy Kleinrock <nk33@cornell.edu> Runner; technical writer, lives on Sunny Slope Rd.
Rick Kugler <riki.dian@gmail.com> Hiker; grant writer; lives in Varna
Bruno Schickel <info@schickelconstruction.com> Business owner; lives on Schutt Rd.
Chris Tessaglia-Hymes <cth4@cornell.edu> Lab of Ornithology; lives in Etna

Friends of Dryden Trails

In order to include the larger number of people interested in the trail project, the Friends Group will meet with the Task Force regularly to assist in its work.

Information on Rails to Trails Projects

Bob outlined and distributed information about the following resources on trails projects:

- 1) Building Greenways for Tompkins County: An Action Plan; Tompkins County Greenway Coalition; July 1995, 91 pages; rail trails and much more.
- 2) Building Healthier Communities: East Hill Recreation Way (extension); Ithaca College; Spring 2005, 37 pages; specifically Game Farm Rd. to Route 13.
- 3) Tompkins Priority Trails Strategy: A Vision for Networked Trails in Tompkins County; Tompkins County Parks & Trails Network, January 2014, 14 pages; current efforts in the county.

Experiences with other trails

Bob and Greg mentioned the well-appointed trail running through Bedford, Concord, and Cambridge Mass.

David Bradley described an abandoned RR trail, which was a quiet zone for 5-6 miles through Buffalo

The Dryden Dairy Run uses a combination of the railroad trails and area roads

Bruno described a visit to Loveland, Ohio where he saw part of a 70-mile linear rail trail and park along a river, which attracted trail users, kayak users and generated local business.

Chris TH talked about the High Line, the elevated former RR line in New York City, which is packed with users.

Todd was involved in two Illinois to Michigan trails projects along old canal towpaths

Greg noted the Dryden project can connect into winery trails and promote tourism, establishment of B&B's along the trail etc.

Brian said Seattle has a well-used rail trail through a large urban area.

David Bradley noted that thousands ride a trail to Niagara on the Lake, with many wineries along it

Evan Carpenter has a signed agreement with users of a snowmobile trail that crosses his property, and it's been working well.

Next Steps for the Dryden Trail

Plan is to start at the Ithaca end, Game Farm Road, and work towards Freeville, per recommendation from Fernando Aragon, of the Ithaca-TC Transportation Council.

It appears that 32 Easements will be needed (about 19 owners to Rte. 13). In places the railroad beds divide between landowners.

The Transportation Council has prepared a map of the property owners, and the Design Connect team provided lists of property owners who attended information meetings

The process of approaching landowners can begin as soon as the Town Board approves the Task Force.

The task force will seek trail supporters who know individual landowners to assist in approaching them about easements.

The town attorney is working on a template that can be used for the easements

The town will provide training for volunteers who approach landowners, with attention to issues of landowner privacy and confidentiality.

Subcommittees will be formed. Bob Beck and Judy Pierpont will start with work on a fact sheet that can be handed out to landowners. Chris volunteered his wife to help with the graphic layout.

The Task Force will work on a long-term communication strategy for the project.

Volunteers will be sought for several areas of trail development

Task Force representatives will meet again with officials of the DEC, to follow up on an earlier meeting regarding the portion of the trail that would go through the Game Farm. Could involve sportsman's clubs, and devise a way of benefiting the mission of the Game Farm. Barbara Litton could be helpful.

Attendance:

Ray Burger <rburger@dryden.ny.us>
Greg Sloan <sloan@isc.astro.cornell.edu>
Bob Beck <rmb24@cornell.edu>
Todd Bittner <todd.bittner@cornell.edu>
Dave Bradley <tantalum7324@gmail.com>
David Bravo Cullen <dsbravoiii@aol.com>
Evan Carpenter <evanjcarpenter@yahoo.com>
David Fogle <dfogel@worldwide-artbooks.com>
Alice Walsh Green <aliceithaca@gmail.com>
John Kiefer <jak14@cornell.edu>
Nancy Kleinrock <nk33@cornell.edu>
Richard Maxwell <rwmaxw@gmail.com>
James Miner <shiggyrunner@gmail.com>
Judy Pierpont <jp28@cornell.edu>
Brian Postle <brian.postel@me.com>
Milo Richmond <mrichmond2@twcny.rr.com>
Bruno Schickel <info@schickelconstruction.com>
Kathy Servoss <kdservoss@gmail.com>
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Chris Tessaglia-Hymes <cth4@cornell.edu>