

**Dryden Rail-Trail Friends and Task Force  
Minutes of the June 21, 2017 Meeting  
Houtz Hall, Etna**

**Attendance:** Bob Beck, Chair, Bruno Schickel, Vice Chair, David Bravo-Cullen, David Keifer, Judy Auble-Zazzara, David Fogel, Milo Richmond, Judy Pierpont, Jim Miner, Alice Green, Diane Tessaglia-Hymes, Chris Tessaglia-Hymes

**Call to order** (7:08 p.m.) – Bob Beck

**Report on booth at Dryden Dairy Day (6/12) and at Dryden Lake Festival (7/22)** – Alice, Diane, Bob, Bruno

The Rail Trail Booth at Dairy Day was very popular. It featured a prominent banner on the pop-up tent, a rail history storyboard, invitations to the Community Design Workshop, and the large maps created by Reed Heugerich to show trail features. Bob, Bruno and Alice talked with a steady stream of visitors all day. Many signed up for the Friends of the Dryden Rail Trail list serve. Alice thanked Diane for her design work on the Rail Trail Banner and PR pieces for the workshop, and David Bravo Cullen for pictures of the event. The same booth layout will be used for a Rail Trail display at the Dryden Lake Festival.

**Report on Community-Design Workshop at Dryden Fire Hall (June 17)** – Alice, Todd, Bruno, Diane, David F., Bob

More than 40 people participated the workshop, which gathered significant public input about trail design ideas. After a brief overview and slide show on the town's railroad history, attendees divided into six groups to brainstorm ideas for uses, names, destinations, look and feel, and amenities along the trail. Presentations from the breakout groups were lively and included lots of ideas.

Milo's group talked about safety issues and urged clear mapping with markers at consistent intervals along the trail. Groups agreed that informational kiosks should be placed at all trail entrances and road crossings. David BC said the design of the proposed Freeville pocket park provides a great example. Milo said he has a friend who might be interested in donating a caboose.

There was considerable discussion about horseback riding on the trail, and how to keep the multi-use trail friendly for all users. The William George Agency is interested in using the trail for its equestrian program. Wendy Wakula of the CNY Horse Club submitted a letter with suggestions for including horseback riding on the trail. Rules of trail etiquette for equestrians and other users are available from the Rails to Trails Conservancy, Bob said.

Bruno said the workshop confirmed the direction of the task force, and generated some new possibilities. He said our next step is to ask our consultants for suggestions on how to get to the next stage, where trail elements are designed and ready for community builds. Judy suggested Roger Hopkins, who has helped with Land Trust design, might be a resource with the next stages of trail features.

Diane suggested next steps: 1) Identify the overall theme and name (It could be an overall trail name, with different named sections); 2) Decide on a consistent look for the logo, sign colors and fonts, content of kiosks and informational material (Some components might be the same trail-wide; others reflecting neighborhoods/ sections of the trail) and then, 3) design trail components

A volunteer is needed to transcribe the large post-it sheets generated by the groups, so the suggestions can be summarized for a follow-up discussion next month. Thanks to several meetings of the workshop-planning group, (Bob, Todd, Bruno, Diane, Amy German, David Fogel) with facilitators David Cutting, and Reed Heugerich, the session ran exactly according to schedule. Only one attendee said he opposed the trail.

**Report on USA Today and Doppelt Family grant applications: – Bob**

The Rail Trail video did not win the national USA Today contest, or the national competition for a Doppelt Family grant through the Rails to Trails Conservancy.

**Report on letter from Barbara Lifton to NYSDOT – Todd**

At Todd's request, our state assemblywoman wrote to the NYS Department of Transportation to clarify questions about the ownership of the FH Fox Bridge over Route 366 and to request a feasibility study of options for the Route 13 trail crossing.

**Preparation of grant application to NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP) – Bob, John, Bruno, Todd**

John Kiefer is heading up this effort with Bob. After sorting through some conflicting information, they determined that easements should be in place before the grant application can be considered. One option would be to focus the application on the sections where most easements are in place: between the villages of Dryden and Freeville, and from Game Farm Rd. to Route 13. The William George Agency easement is expected very soon. It's hoped that the grant deadline at the end of July may spur the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to move forward on granting an easement.

**Update on plans for July volunteer trail work and youth employment with Lexi Hartley of Cornell Cooperative Extension – Alice, Milo**

Up to 10 Dryden area youth, ages 12-16, are expected to help clear a section of the trail on property owned by Ross and Rachel Adkins near Etna in mid July. Milo will head up the work crew with Lexi Hartley from the Town's Project Lead program, assisted by David Keifer, Bob and Gwen Beck and Alice. Judy Auble-Zazzara, a next door neighbor of that trail section, arranged to host the crew at nearby Houtz Hall, offered parking in her driveway, and will allow the youth to cross her back yard to get to the trail.

**Update on Trail Easement progress – Bruno, Bob**

The deadline for the NYS Parks, Rec and Historic Preservation grant may spur other property owners to follow through on pledges to grant easements. Bob and Bruno have been in discussions with Steve Lucente and Brian Stratton about key properties in Varna. Dan Lamb continues to stay in touch with DEC Deputy Commissioner Ken Lynch about the Game Farm easement. Rick Young of the Town Highway Department recently authorized two DPW employees (Howard and Mel) to inspect trestles (with David Kiefer and Bob) on the game farm section, and will provide a cost estimate for repairs that can be used in the grant application. They will also look at a washout east of the FH Fox Bridge. Milo expressed appreciation to Rick for all his help on the bridges and for Schug trail maintenance.

**Next Meeting Scheduled for 7 pm July 19 in the Dryden Village Hall**

NOTE: This was later **changed to July 26** to allow the facilitator to attend the follow-up of the Community Design Workshop

**Adjournment at 9:15 pm**

Submitted by Alice Walsh Green