

Corkscrew Rail Trail Public Meeting
Feb 27, 2014 - Stephentown Fire Hall
Summary & Results

Introduction

A public meeting was hosted by the Friends of the Corkscrew Trail (a committee of local residents) to introduce the idea of creating a multiuse trail and to solicit ideas and concerns from the local landowners and community.

An initial concept to roughly follow the old Rutland Railway rail bed where and only where landowners desired to have the trail on their property was presented. It was stressed that landowners have the ultimate say of whether the trail crosses their land and if a landowner doesn't want to participate an alternate route will be found.

The Friends of the Corkscrew Trail invited representatives of the Hudson River Valley Greenway to present about trails in general.

60 people attended.

After the brief presentations participants broke into breakout groups to answer three questions. Their responses are recorded below. Each group was also asked to pick their top 3 benefits, concerns, visions and ideas. Those are shown in bold.

Results

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS BENEFITS OF A TRAIL?

No Benefits / Community Involvement / Connection - Between Houses / Family Togetherness / Connect Communities Economically And Socially / Builds Unity Among Users / Sense Of Ownership Reinforced By Communities Maintaining The Trail (Snowmobiles) / More People Interacting / **A Way To Connect Communities** / Help Economy / Increased Property Value / Increased Business / **Increase Stature Of Community/Business** / Increased Land Values And Property Values / Enabling Establishments Of Small Businesses / And Existing Food / Lodging / Community / Economic / Businesses Like Trading Post Benefit / New Businesses / Creates Destination / We Have Great Things In Rens Cty / Don't Have To Travel Far / Keeping Money Local -- Multiplies Local Economy / Economic Benefits / **Attractive Ammenities** / Real Estate Enhancement / **Getting Out In Nature** / Preserving Wilderness Corridor / Getting People Outside / Could Provide Better Public Access And Preservation Of Rare Local Ecology / Can See Amazing Places On Trails In Rens. Co. (Snowmobile) / Kids Out Of The House / **Experience Nature And A Place To Escape** / **Historical Perspective** / Safer As A Legitimate Trail Than It Is Now As An Abandoned Trail / Rail Beds Are Better For Biking (Not Hilly) / **Outdoor Recreation** / **Safer Place For Exercise** / Many People Like Trails In General / **Place For Me To Go Horse/Biking/Hiking/X-Country Safely On Bikes/Walking** / **Great For Kids** / **Safe Good Experience** /

Containing Trespassers / Opportunities For Recreation / A Place To Walk / A Place To Ride Horses / **Safe Trails As Opposed To Highway Shoulders** / Freedom For Older People

2. WHAT CONCERNS YOU ABOUT A TRAIL?

Cost \$100 / 000 - \$300 / 00 Per Mile / **Cost** / Cost / Will Take A Long Time To Create/ Commitment / **Cost** / Could Create Controversy And Tear Apart Town / Nimby / Zoning Issues? / What About Dogs? / Opportunity To Change Mind / Injuries On The Trail / First Aid / Increased Property Value Increases Taxes / Paying Tax On Property / Property Values / Open During Hunting Season? / Landowner Liability / If Lawsuit Brought / Lawyer Fees Upfront / Liability / Legal Liabilities Clarification: Property Damage / Indemnify Land Owners / Insurance / **Private Property Issues** / Dumping Garbage / Nyscg Contacted Yet? / **Expenses- Who Pays?** / Maintenance / **Becoming Overbuilt And Incur A Cost That's Not Sustainable** / **Who's Going To Be Responsible To Maintain It Financially And Labor?** / Maintenance - Litter Cleanup / Maintenance Cost / **Allowable Hunting / Fishing / Trapping / 500' Limit From Trail** / Multiuse / 4 Wheelers - Wear And Tear / Accessibility / Hunting Season / Use Conflict / Noise (Snowmobiles) / Noise / Local Snowmobile Noise / Property Trespassing / **Privacy/Trespassing And Property Rights** / Privacy Fence - Who Would Pay? / Loss Of Privacy / Landowners That Don't Want It - How To Do Trail? / Ecological Impacts / Interrupting Habitat / Noise / Trespass / Litter / Erosion / Restrooms / Ada Reqmt's / Sanitary Facilities / Robberies - Strangers / Vandalism / **Trust**

3. WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR A GREAT TRAIL? WHAT ARE YOUR IDEAS

Rt 22 Interim Route/ Alternate Route / Sense Of Ownership By Community / Bring Community Together / Signs To Businesses / Stopping Areas For Side Trips / Want To See Parts Of County That You Otherwise Wouldn't See / Low Impact Trail Close To Existing Conditions / More Info And Conditional Trail Period / First Aid Station Would Help / Provision For History Of The Trail / **To Have Landowner Protection** / Tax Credit For Homeowners / Making It Wide Enough And Maintained (Cleaned Up) / **Multi-Use** / Gates To Limit Use - Motorized Vehicles / **Multi-Use** / Getting Sponsorship Or Grants / Privacy Plantings / Proper Signage / **Don't Re-Invent The Wheel** / **Keep The Trail Narrow To Fit The Landscape** / **Green/Natural/Double Track** / Good Signage Especially Access Points / Good Parking / Like Carriage Trails On Mt. Desert Island / **Using Other People's Successes And Problems** / **Something That Is Attractive And Maintained** / Lighted Parking Area / Wide Trail / Signage / X-Country Trail / Opening And Closing Times / Emergency Access / Start Small And Grow

Additional Feedback

In addition to those who participated in the breakout groups there were several people who elected not to participate. '[One of them] felt that there should have been a straightforward discussion of the proposal in open forum in front of the entire group at the meeting'¹. This resident spoke with Jim Bonesteel before leaving. Jim suggested that he at least write down his concerns so they could be included with the results. He replied that he wouldn't write them down and said 'I think you know what my concerns are'. Jim tried to state his concerns as follows, 'you are worried that even though you have

been assured to the contrary that someday you will be forced to have the trail on your land.' He indicated that that was essentially correct and added that he is concerned about trespassing even if the trail diverts around his land, and is concerned about liability and trash. He said that he believes that the committee believes that landowners will never be forced to have a trail, implying that while the committee has good intentions that something may still happen in the future to infringe on their property rights.

Errata

If you attended this meeting and feel that any of your statements have not been captured please contact us at info@corkscrewtrail.org and we will make sure to update this document with your statements.

¹ David Flint, Eastwick Press, March 7, 2014.