

Erie-Cattaraugus Rail Trail
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For Immediate Release

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One Hundred Eighty Pro Trails Residents Attend
Town Meeting; Encourage Continued Board Support

Orchard Park, NY: On Wednesday, May 20, over 180 Orchard Park residents filled the municipal building to express their support for the town board's existing resolution in favor of developing a dedicated multi-use trail along the former Buffalo-Pittsburg rail corridor in the south towns. Supporters filled the seats, the aisles, and gathered outside the board room; several carried colorful balloons of support. In addition to residents, local and regional affiliates from the Adirondack Mountain Club, the Western New York Mountain Bike Association, the Niagara Bicycle Club, the Western New York Chapter of the New York State Horse Council were in attendance.

The 27-plus mile potential "linear park" extends from Orchard Park to beyond Springville and has the backing of Erie-Cattaraugus Rail Trail, (ECRT), a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization formed to support the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation in their efforts to purchase and preserve the property.

Extended, safe trails for bicycling and hiking are largely unavailable in southern Erie County, and several supporters spoke of the need for and value of this type of recreational resource. In addition to the obvious recreational benefits, others spoke of positive experiences on trails in many other parts of the country, how trails build a greater sense of community, and the economic benefits of trails to both towns and property owners. Several local physicians and medical experts noted a variety of health benefits associated with trail and greenway activities.

"So often town board meetings consist of listening to problems citizens have with this or that service or activity in their community," noted Anne Bergantz, ECRT President. "Clearly, this meeting was all about the hundreds of people who see the many, many positive reasons for preserving and converting this magnificent property to an asset we can all benefit from and enjoy for generations."

For more information about Erie-Cattaraugus Rail Trail, visit www.ecattrail.org.

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