

Town of Waterloo Press Release

For Immediate Release
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Town Hosts Ribbon Cutting for Trail

Town of Waterloo Supervisor Don Trout and his fellow Town Council members welcomed area residents in a ribbon cutting ceremony marking the opening of the Cayuga-Seneca Trail on Saturday, June 30. The event was held at the western entrance to the trail pathway, located inside Seneca Lake State Park. The trail path follows the southern bank of the Cayuga-Seneca Canal, linking the Village and Town of Waterloo with the Seneca Lake State Park.



“This is a great day for Waterloo residents,” said Town Supervisor Don Trout. “We now have an enhanced trail, linking communities in the area,” he stated. “Not only does this support local walkers and bicyclists, but is a tourism attraction. The trail will draw people who want to enjoy our beautiful canal waterway and its scenic natural surroundings,” he said.

While the trail has been partially complete and utilized by pedestrians and bicyclists for some time, they previously could only travel from the Village of Waterloo as far west as NYS Route 96A. There was no safe means of passage across the busy, multi-lane highway. With the completion of a ramp that passes below Route 96A, the trail now extends into Seneca Lake State Park.

Funding for the project included substantial support from the Town of Waterloo, the project coordinator and lead agency. Additional funding for construction was provided by Seneca County. Designed by Waterloo’s Town Engineers, MRB Group, the ramp and approaches are ADA-compliant and encourage pedestrian and bicycle use. The highway underpass structure required 375 feet of continuous decking. Frequent turns required to navigate through the ramp and underpass will also likely discourage unauthorized use of motorized vehicles, making the path safer for pedestrians.

Supervisor Trout thanked those whom he called “visionaries and volunteers,” whose hard work made the trail possible. “This project took years of hard work - by many people,” he said.

Planning for the trail project was originally initiated by a group of dedicated area residents who started the Cayuga Seneca Canal Trail Association, led by President Vincent Scalise. Part of the State-wide Canal Trail Association, the local affiliate group worked to create a Master Plan for trail routes that would connect a 19-mile path through a number of communities, linking Seneca Lake State Park to the Montezuma Wildlife Refuge. The hope was to create a tourist attraction and amenity for local residents who want to celebrate healthy lifestyles and enjoy the natural beauty of the Finger Lakes. Scalise and

his group secured funding through NYS Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb in order to complete the Master Plan.

Scalise described the generous contributions of area volunteers, including the late Verne Sessler and his company. "I mentioned to Verne that the old railroad bed was full of brush and debris, and when I came back a few days later, it was completely clean," said Scalise.

New York State Senator Pamela Helming presented Supervisor Trout and Vince Scalise with a Certificate of Congratulations to the Town of Waterloo. She spoke about the significance of having a trail which connects Seneca County communities with the newly opened Finger Lakes Welcome Center located nearby on the shore of Seneca Lake in Geneva, within walking distance of the trail.

Senator Helming recognized the support for the trail by several area community leaders and officials who were present, including Waterloo Mayor Ted Young, Fayette Town Supervisor Cindy Lorenzetti-Garlick, County Supervisor Bob Shipley, Seneca County Chamber of Commerce Director Jeff Shipley, and New York State Parks Regional Director Fred Bonn.

"It's impressive to think about the many local governments – and many levels of State government – that came together and collaborated to complete this important project," Senator Helming stated.

Fayette resident Don Cobb, who owns property adjacent to the trail, explained that while he was previously opposed to the project, fearing trespassers and "trouble", he is now in full support of the trail and considers it an asset to the area.

Mayor Ted Young also congratulated the Town, and offered a friendly challenge to Seneca Falls Supervisor Greg Lazzaro, who was present for the ceremony. "Now it's your turn," he said.

New York State Canal Corporation Director Brian Stratton extended his congratulations to the Town of Waterloo, and expressed enthusiasm for the continuing trail project.

"This project is a major step toward allowing more people than ever to experience the beauty along New York's canal system," said Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton. "It will also enable cyclists and hikers to eventually access Governor Cuomo's 750-mile Empire State Trail when it's completed in 2020 and be on the nation's largest multi-use state trail network. It's another reason why our canals and the many welcoming towns they go through will become increasingly popular destinations."

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