



News Release

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Dutchess County Honors William R. Steinhaus at Dutchess Rail Trail Celebration

Many celebrated for contributions at Official Grand Opening

Rail trail enthusiasts gathered this afternoon at the Hopewell Depot Trailhead in East Fishkill to celebrate the “official” Grand Opening of the completed Dutchess Rail Trail, the 13 mile multi-use linear Dutchess County park stretching from the Hopewell Depot in East Fishkill, through the towns of Wappinger, LaGrange and Poughkeepsie, reaching the Walkway Over the Hudson in the City of Poughkeepsie. The Dutchess Rail Trail has been a significant undertaking, made possible by the work and dedication of many people. Today’s ceremony recognized those who contributed to Dutchess Rail Trail, from idea conception to construction, with a special dedication honoring former Dutchess County Executive William R. Steinhaus.



Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro (center) recognized the work of many who contributed to the development of the Dutchess Rail Trail today at the Hopewell Depot Trailhead in East Fishkill in celebration of the “official” Grand Opening of the completed trail.

“We are grateful to all those who have had a role in the development and construction of the Dutchess Rail Trail. Today we celebrate a wonderful community asset connecting Hopewell to the Hudson!” said County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro.

“Yet, the Dutchess Rail Trail would not have become a reality if it had not been for the leadership and dedication of one individual... Bill Steinhaus. Bill had a focused vision for the Dutchess Rail Trail. He hosted numerous public information sessions for community input, he worked through concerns and overcame funding challenges and construction obstacles. His commitment and passion for the project never wavered and today we have the linear park he envisioned – connecting communities and counties, people and places, together. Without Bill Steinhaus, there would be no Dutchess Rail Trail. So it is only fitting the Dutchess Rail Trail bear his name,” said County Executive Molinaro.

County Executive Molinaro unveiled a special dedication plaque noting the trail’s new, formal name as the “William R. Steinhaus Dutchess Rail Trail,” honoring Steinhaus for his legacy of public service and his work shepherding the Dutchess Rail Trail from an original idea through much of its construction.



The Steinhaus family and County officials gather at the new dedicated William R. Steinhaus Dutchess Rail Trail. From left to right: Deputy County Executive Bill O’Neil, Bill and Julie Steinhaus Dunn, Cassie and Matt Steinhaus, Susie and Bill Steinhaus, Reese Steinhaus, Blaine Steinhaus, County Executive Marc Molinaro with Dutchess County Legislators Dale Borchert, Marae Horton, Anaela Flesland, Sue Serino and Donna Bolner.

William R. Steinhaus dedicated more than 30 years of public service in Dutchess County Government, beginning as college student working in the Department of Public Works and then working fulltime as a staff assistant in the Executive Office. In 1978, he was elected Dutchess County Clerk, serving four terms. In 1991, Bill Steinhaus was elected as the Dutchess County’s 6th County Executive and served for 20 years as the chief elected official, the longest serving County Executive to date in Dutchess County history.

As County Executive, Steinhaus was responsible for countless projects and initiatives that have made Dutchess County a better place to live, work and visit. No project was closer to his heart however than the development of the Dutchess Rail Trail. He envisioned a linear county park that connected communities and provided an opportunity to enjoy the beauty of Dutchess County. He worked to bring federal, state and local partners together to make the Dutchess Rail Trail a reality.

Former County Executive Steinhaus remarked, "It was an extraordinary honor to serve as County Executive for twenty years and to have the privilege to lead our skilled team of county staff to design and build the Harlem Valley Rail Trail and the Dutchess Rail Trail for the enjoyment of the many thousands of local county families who use the two rail trails every day."



Several of the individuals recognized for their work on the DRT including (left of pillar) Pete Idema, Jim Hammond, Fred Schaeffer. Front row left to right, right of pillar: Roger Akeley, Dyson Foundation's Diana Guiervo, Nancy Giordan, Carol Bogle and Bill O'Neil. Back row: Steve Olsen, Brad Barclay, Robert Balkind, Patricia Lichtenberg, Matt Dutcavich, Charles Traver and Jim Sproat.

Over twenty other individuals were also recognized for their efforts in the creation of the Dutchess Rail Trail, including those who championed the original concept of building a bike trail along the former Maybrook Rail Line as well as those who worked through the logistical and construction aspects of the Dutchess Rail Trail's

creation. A plaque honoring the contributions of these individuals greets trail visitors at pillars on either end of the Dutchess Rail Trail.

The Dutchess Rail Trail (DRT) travels along the former Maybrook Rail Line. Regular use of the rail line ended in 1974 following the fire that closed the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge. Dutchess County purchased the Maybrook Line right-of-way from Hopewell Junction in East Fishkill to Morgan Lake in Poughkeepsie in 1984. Early on, a highway project was considered but did not become a reality due to the environmental impacts of the development. The idea of creating a pedestrian/bike trail began to emerge. In 2000, the Dutchess Rail Trail, as a 12 mile trail from Hopewell Junction to Morgan Lake in Poughkeepsie, was added to New York State's Transportation Improvement Plan, making the project eligible for 80% federal funding.

Before the DRT project could begin, much needed water infrastructure was installed through the rail line right of way. In 2006, the Dutchess County Water and Wastewater Authority (DCWWA) completed construction on the 13 mile Central Dutchess Water Transmission Line (CDWTL)

project, which has the capacity to carry up to 10 million gallons of water per day, providing water from the Joint Poughkeepsie Water Treatment Plant to communities in south central Dutchess County as well as the IBM East Fishkill site. Work on the CDWTL cleared the entire right of way corridor, facilitating the development of the Dutchess Rail Trail.

Multiple public information workshop meetings were held in 2006 and 2007, one in each of the four towns in which the trail is located, to introduce people to the DRT and discuss key issues. The safety of road crossings, potential access to neighborhoods and other points of interest, and desired amenities for the trail were among the topics discussed with more than 500 residents who attended. The ideas and feedback were incorporated into the final DRT design.

However, the construction of the DRT still presented complex engineering challenges, including significant culvert and bridge repair work, new bridge installations, environmental issues and more. Due to these challenges, the trail was designed to be built in four phases.

The first phase was a 1.7 mile section that opened in East Fishkill in 2008. Phase II was 2.4 mile section from Overocker Road in the Town of Poughkeepsie to Morgan Lake in the City of Poughkeepsie which opened in the summer of 2009. Phase III, which opened in spring of 2011, was 6.5 mile section from Old Manchester Road in LaGrange, through the Town of Wappinger connecting to the original East Fishkill section.

As plans developed to create the Walkway Over the Hudson on the former Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge, efforts began to secure the land between the Walkway Over the Hudson and the DRT. After many years of efforts, it was announced in 2012 that CSX Railroad, which owned the property that became known as the “gap”, had agreed to sell the property to the Walkway Over the Hudson organization and the Dyson Foundation. Once the purchase was complete, the property was then turned over to Dutchess County Government so construction of this fifth and final phase could begin in conjunction with the construction of Phase IV.

This fall, the final two phases were completed. Phase IV featured the most complex construction aspect of the DRT—construction of a new 743 foot long bridge extending over NYS Route 55’s six lanes of traffic, the Wappinger Creek and Old Manchester Road. Phase V was also completed, with the .8 mile trail connection between Morgan Lake and the Walkway Over the Hudson. With the completion of Phase IV and V, trail users can enjoy 13 continuous miles from *Hopewell to Hudson*, and then link via the Walkway Over the Hudson to the Hudson Valley

Rail Trail in Ulster County, for more than 18 miles of trail in one direction!

Construction cost for complete Dutchess Rail Trail project is approximately \$21 million, with much of the cost federally reimbursed. The NYS Department of Transportation funded the entire cost of the bridge over NYS Route 55, estimated at approximately \$3.5M. The final connection to the Walkway Over the Hudson was fully funded by Dutchess County. The remainder of project cost, approximately \$15.5 million, received 80 percent reimbursement from the federal government, minimizing the net cost to the county taxpayers.

Today's DRT celebration was generously sponsored by the Hodgkins Agency, Blacktop Maintenance Corp (BTM) and Morris Associates, P.L.L.C.

The Dutchess Rail Trail has been a popular destination since its first phase opened in East Fishkill, quickly earning accolades at the "Best Bike Trail" by the readers of *Hudson Valley* magazine. With the full trail now complete and linked to the Walkway Over the Hudson, the acclaim for the "William R. Steinhaus Dutchess Rail Trail" is only expected to continue to grow.

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*Individuals recognized at November 16th, 2013
Dutchess Rail Trail Celebration*

Roger Akeley	Former Dutchess County Commissioner of Planning & Development
Robert Balkind	Dutchess County Department of Public Works
Brad Barclay	Dutchess County Department of Public Works
Gregory Bentley	Dutchess County Department of Public Works
Carol Bogle	Dutchess County Attorney Office
Betsy Brockway	Former Dutchess County Commissioner of Services for Aging, Veterans & Youth
Earl Bruno Jr.	Former Dutchess County Commissioner of Human Resources
Larry Donnelly	Dutchess County Department of Public Works
Matt Dutcavich	Dutchess County Department of Public Works
Rob Dyson	Dyson Foundation
Nancy Giordano	Former Dutchess County Chief of Staff
James Hammond	Former Dutchess County Legislator
Darren Hawkins	Dutchess County Department of Public Works
Suzanne Horn	Former Dutchess County Legislator
Peter Idema	Former Town of East Fishkill Supervisor
Joseph Kelley	Dutchess County Department of Public Works

Brad Kendall	Dutchess County Clerk/Formers Dutchess County Legislature Chairman
Michael Murphy	Former Dutchess County Commissioner of Public Works
Nelson Murray	Dutchess County Department of Public Works
Steve Olsen	Dutchess County Department of Public Works
Bill O'Neil	Deputy County Executive
Rob Rolison	Dutchess County Legislature Chairman
Fred Schaeffer	Rail Trail Enthusiaist
Vasily Shatalov	Dutchess County Department of Public Works
Jim Sproat	Former Dutchess County Legislator
William Steinhaus	Former Dutchess County Executive
Charles Traver	Former Dutchess County Commissioner of Public Works
Dave Whalen	Former Dutchess County Parks Director