

**PRESS RELEASE FROM
LEGISLATOR SARAH ANKER**

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Legislator Anker Evaluates Partial Rails to Trails Project



Representatives of The RBA Group join Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker, Chief Engineer of Public Works William Hillman, and Commissioner of Public Works Gilbert Anderson at the Rails to Trails Community Forum.

Mount Sinai, January 2013 - After hosting two separate community forums for the proposed Port Jefferson Station to Wading River Rails to Trails project, Legislator Anker is evaluating the feasibility of a partial three-mile segment of the trail from Randall Road in Shoreham to Wading River Manor Road in Wading River. A similar trail has been successfully constructed in Stony Brook.

“Rails to Trails is a wonderful project that will provide residents with outdoor enjoyment while increasing the economic value to our area,” said Legislator Anker. “I am meeting with the Shoreham and Wading River Civics, LIPA and the County Executive’s office to discuss cost and liability agreements that are required to move forward with this project.”

(more)

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Rails to Trails was first proposed in 2008 to provide a ten-mile bike, running and walking trail from Port Jefferson Station to Wading River, on the former railroad now owned and used by the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA). More than a decade ago, federal grant funding for East End Scenic Bikeways was secured for construction and design. While a portion of the federal funding remains available, it is not nearly enough to complete the original plan. Additionally, the County must agree to assume the liability and additional funding costs for construction and maintenance. Local bike clubs have generously offered assistance with maintaining the path.

Legislator Anker stated, “I’m going to vet this option through the civics. The segmented three-mile trail being considered will begin by the newly acquired Tesla Museum site, and will continue toward Wading River Elementary School. The trail will end at Wading River Manor Road. The proximity of the trail to the 5,200 acre RCA state preserve will maximize the value to ecotourism. The result will not only be a local community bike path providing a safe alternative for pedestrian traffic; it will be an investment in the future of our local economy.”