

**MEDIA ADVISORY FROM  
LEGISLATOR SARAH ANKER**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
August 14, 2013



Contact: Pamela Donovan  
Office: 631-854-1600  
Email: [pamela.donovan@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:pamela.donovan@suffolkcountyny.gov)

**Legislator Anker, County Executive Bellone, Congressman Bishop,  
and LIPA Announce Major Step Forward for Rails to Trails Path**



*Elected officials and community leaders celebrate Rails to Trails Project at Tesla Museum in Shoreham.*

**August 15, 2013 - Shoreham, NY** – Today, Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker was joined by County Executive Steve Bellone, Congressman Tim Bishop, LIPA’s Vice President of Environmental Affairs Michael Deering, Friends of Tesla President Jane Alcorn, elected officials and civic leaders to announce Suffolk County’s plans to advance the Rails to Trails pedestrian and bike path.

At the July 30 General Legislative Meeting, County Legislators unanimously approved legislation to authorize the lease of portions of LIPA owned right-of-way from Mount Sinai to Wading River allowing the county to begin the planning steps for the path.

“For over ten years, the Rails to Trails Project has faced obstacles and challenges,” said Anker. “This project will be a tremendous asset to our community as it will provide a safe outlet for people to run, walk and bike recreationally. The project will also create a green transportation alternative that will help economic development, reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and encourage healthier lifestyles.”

*Continued...*

“I am pleased that Legislator Anker and I have been able to work together to bring this unique opportunity to fruition,” said County Executive Bellone. “The development of this historic right-of-way is the right thing to do for Suffolk County. I thank Congressman Bishop for being a great partner and steadfast in his support of this project and I thank LIPA for providing the opportunity to create the Rails to Trails project on the existing LIPA right-of-way.”

The agreement between LIPA and the county will allow Suffolk to move forward in utilizing the underused land as a route for recreational and pedestrian use, running parallel with the Route 25A corridor. With a right-of-way agreement in place, final engineering plans can move forward.

“The Long Island Power Authority is excited for the Rails to Trails venture and the positive impacts it will bring to the community,” said Michael J. Deering, Vice President of Environmental Affairs for LIPA. “As Long Islanders continue to migrate towards a healthier lifestyle, whether it be walking, running, or cycling, the timing for this project couldn’t be better. We were pleased to work side by side with Congressman Bishop, Executive Bellone, Legislator Anker and other government officials and community leaders in order to move the ball forward on this first of a kind project for Long Island.”

The project is funded under the Federal Highway Administration’s Scenic Byways grant, and cannot be used for anything but a bike and pedestrian trail. Thanks to Congressman Bishop’s oversight, approximately \$6.5 million has been secured to design and construct the path that will serve to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access.

“With this exciting Rails to Trails project moving forward, the federal funds I secured will continue to enhance our North Shore communities for decades to come,” said Congressman Tim Bishop. “Not only will this project serve as a gateway to the new Tesla Museum, it will be an outstanding resource for bikers and pedestrians to exercise and enjoy safely.”

As part of a community based partnership, Anker is working to create a shared parking lot at the newly acquired Tesla museum with the Rails to Trails bike path. The proximity of the trail to the 5,200-acre RCA state preserve, Brookhaven State Park and the new Tesla Museum, will maximize the area’s ecotourism value as well as complement a gateway to the North Fork farming community.