

**Business of the Village Board  
Village of Saranac Lake**

SUBJECT: Rail Trail Safety

DATE: 12-11-2023

DEPT OF ORIGIN: Trustee Shapiro

BILL # 159-2023

DATE SUBMITTED: 12-7-2023

EXHIBITS: \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Village Attorney

\_\_\_\_\_  
Village Administration

EXPENDITURE  
REQUIRED

AMOUNT  
BUDGETED

APPROPRIATION  
REQUIRED:

**APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION**

MOVED BY: Shapiro SECONDED BY: Brunette

VOTE ON ROLL CALL:

MAYOR WILLIAMS

yes

TRUSTEE BRUNETTE

yes

TRUSTEE CATILLAZ

yes

TRUSTEE SCOLLIN

absent

TRUSTEE SHAPIRO

yes

## **Adirondack Rail Trail Safety**

Whereas, the health and safety of the people of Saranac Lake is our primary concern; and

Whereas, the newly constructed Adirondack Rail Trail has multiple road crossings of New York State Highways; and

Whereas, these road crossings are under the jurisdiction of NYDOT; and

Whereas, improvements in traffic control and signage would enhance the safety of the Adirondack Rail Trail users; and

Whereas, the Village of Saranac Lake Parks and Trails Advisory Board has studied these crossings developed recommendations for improving the safety of the Rail Trail users;

Therefore, Be it resolved, the Board of Trustees supports the requests outlined in the attached letter and that it be sent to the New York State Department of Transportation Region 1 and Region 7 with the signature of the Mayor.



# Village of Saranac Lake

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December 7, 2023

New York State Department of Transportation Region 1 and Region 7,

We would like to make the following recommendations to increase safety for users of the Adirondack Rail Trail at the following road crossings which are in your jurisdiction. It is imperative that safety measures be completed before the Spring 2024 season as trail usage will increase exponentially.

### **State Route 86 at Fowler's Crossing in the Town of North Elba - Essex County**

- This is a high traffic area and is extremely difficult for pedestrians and trail users to cross due to the volume and increased speed of vehicles. This is unsafe now and will become significantly more so once the trail opens to many more users in Spring 2024.
- We recommend that you reduce the speed limit from 45 mph to 30 mph in this area by extending the reduced speed limit for 1/2 mile from the Village of Saranac Lake line which will equate to 1/4 mile on either side of the crossing, so vehicles slow down before they reach it.
- We also recommend supplemental signage such as a radar speed sign and/or a flashing pedestrian sign and/or an in-road sign/bollard (removable in Winter) to increase visibility and for traffic calming.

### **State Route 3 (Bloomingdale Avenue) in the Village of Saranac Lake – Franklin County**

- This is a high traffic area with multi-directional traffic turning from intersections and businesses.
- The traffic light produces a queue of waiting vehicles to the trail crossing and could create dangerous blind spots for vehicles and trail users who are crossing.
- We recommend supplemental signage such as a flashing pedestrian sign and/or in-road sign/bollard (removable in Winter) to increase visibility and for traffic calming.

### **State Route 86 (Broadway) in the Village of Saranac Lake - Franklin County**

- This is a high traffic area with multi-directional traffic turning from intersections and businesses.
- We recommend supplemental signage such as a flashing pedestrian sign and/or in-road sign/bollard (removable in Winter) to increase visibility and for traffic calming.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts on these recommendations, receiving updates on what DOT safety measures are planned before May 2024, and partnering with you to make these road crossings safer for everyone.

Sincerely,

Mayor Williams

Village of Saranac Lake Board

Village of Saranac Lake Parks and Trails Advisory Board

# Trail User Safety: Our Primary Concern

## Simple, inexpensive method to improve safety for trail users crossing SR86 at Fowlers Crossing:

Extend the 30mph Saranac Lake Saranac Lake Village 30mph speed limit the ¼ mile to the crossing, and then an additional ¼ mile southeast. This would add a total of ½ mile of 30mph speed limit, an extra 20 seconds driving time at speed limit, or 15 seconds at the more typical 5mph over speed limit.

That is a small price to pay for the dramatic improvement in cyclist and pedestrian safety.



Studies have shown that pedestrian (and by extension cyclist) fatality rates increase dramatically with increased vehicular speed. A person struck by a car going 50mph is 4 ½ time more likely to die than if they were hit at 35mph.

The lower speed limit would also result in fewer collisions since there would be more reaction time for the driver to avoid a collision.

