



TOWN OF PHILIPSTOWN

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TOWN CLERK AND TAX COLLECTOR

ROBERT FLAHERTY, COUNCILMAN
JUDITH FARRELL, COUNCILWOMAN
JASON ANGELL, COUNCILMAN
MEGAN COTTER, COUNCILWOMAN

Dear Ms. Stoner:

It is the majority opinion of the Town Board of Philipstown that the proposed Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail stops at the southern end at Little Stony Point. We propose that you consider a purposed pause of an extended period of time, preferably two years, with all other improvements and mitigation measures in place. This would include, but not be limited to, all the parking improvements, Breakneck Station improvements, completion of the visitor center at Dutchess Manor, and proposed infrastructure in and around the Town of Philipstown and the villages of Cold Spring and Nelsonville. We also propose that HHFT, along with NYS Parks, agree to provide all emergency services needed to service the trail and subsequent additional tourists adequately.

We feel that the potential adverse impacts to the Town require this pause, and it will provide us with an up to date view of the volume of visitors and efficacy of the mitigation measures before proceeding to the final phases. It is our request that measured benchmarks of vehicle and pedestrian traffic to the area be established, and prior to potentially proceeding south from Little Stony Point to Dockside Park, these benchmarks be tested and evaluated. In this way officials will have real time data when making the decision whether or not to complete the final phase and connect the Trail to Dockside Park.

We also request that you review the comment letters of Tim Miller Associates (as the Town's environmental consultants, attached) and the Town of Philipstown Conservation Board (under separate cover), and address the questions and alternative ideas they have proposed as part of the FGEIS. The Conservation Board as well as Riverkeeper have encouraged avoiding over-water construction in the Hudson River and suggest that alternative routes that minimize potential adverse impacts be more seriously considered.

The Town Board is appreciative of the already made and proposed investment being made by NYS Parks and HHFT to assist with over tourism in the area. The Town Board is tasked with ensuring the safety and quality of life of our residents, and we have become a community divided over this topic. We are fully aware it was not the intention of HHFT or State Parks to divide the community, but the scale of the project and both the benefits and the potential impacts to the River and our quality of life have done just that. It has divided civic groups, municipal boards and even friendships. We feel that the best route to unify the community is to agree on a compromise such as proposed. We ask that you take this proposal into serious consideration as the review and final design of the Trail go forward.

Supervisor and Town board
Town of Philipstown