



## Columbia County Board of Supervisors

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February 14, 2020

By email: [janzevino@scenichudson.org](mailto:janzevino@scenichudson.org)

Jeffrey Anzevino  
Scenic Hudson, Inc.  
1 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 200  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Dear Mr. Anzevino:

We are writing to support Scenic Hudson's initiative to engage Columbia County stakeholders and others to better understand challenges and opportunities associated with protecting—and ultimately expanding—public river access.

The Hudson River is the reason why places like Stuyvesant Landing, Stockport Landing, Hudson, Germantown, and Cheviot developed in the first place. River access was key to Columbia County's early economic success. As time went, however, changes in transportation technology diminished the need for river access. At the same time river became tainted by sewage and industrial waste. Communities, literally, turned their backs on the Hudson River.

But, over the past decades and through the collaborative efforts of many public and private partners the Hudson River is cleaner now and serves once again as a source of community pride. Communities in Columbia County and beyond rely on the Hudson River as an integral part of their 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

However, as you know, the railroad line along the Hudson's shoreline has been and remains a major impediment to river access. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, one-by-one many historic, generational grade crossings have been closed. Historic steel truss bridges such as the one at Ferry Street in Hudson have gone unmaintained and fallen into disrepair. Some have been dismantled and we're in danger of losing others. A few years ago in Stuyvesant, we almost lost a grade crossing at Nutten Hook were it not for public outcry from local residents. And in 2018 Amtrak unveiled a plan to

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install gates and impasse fencing in eight locations in five communities, including several locations in Stuyvesant, Stockport and Germantown. While the plan was withdrawn due to public pressure, we know that Amtrak will be back with a new application—and the new plan will probably not differ much from the old plan.

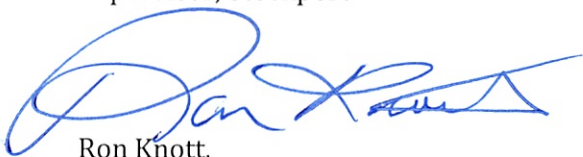
Our constituents at the January 4<sup>th</sup> Hudson River Shoreline Access Plan stakeholder meeting in Germantown spoke with a clear and unified voice. There is broad consensus that while the railroad is an important part of New York State's transportation infrastructures, a collaborative approach is required to reducing risk along the rail corridor that does not reduce already limited river access along the shore. This has been a burning issue in Columbia County for two years now and interest is steadily growing.

Again, thank you for engaging us in your effort to convene municipalities in three counties overcome river access challenges posed by the rail line along our shoreline. We believe that a reasonable solution can be identified that reduces risk while at the same time increases much-needed river access. We look forward to reviewing the plan when it becomes final in March.

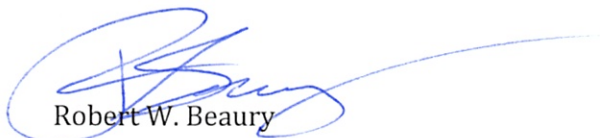
Sincerely,



Matt B. Murell  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors  
Supervisor, Stockport



Ron Knott,  
Deputy Chairman, Board of Supervisors  
Supervisor, Stuyvesant



Robert W. Beaury  
Supervisor, Germantown