

# Proponents hope trail from Delhi to Simcoe becomes a reality

Posted By Kate Schwass / DELHI NEWS-RECORD

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A trail linking Delhi to Simcoe could be just a few years away.

Steve Weinstein was expected to appear before council on Tuesday night on behalf of the Delhi Rail Trail Initiative committee to pitch the idea of using an abandoned rail line between the two towns as a trail for walkers, cyclists and cross country skiing.

"I think it will be a great asset for the county," Weinstein told the News-Record before his council deputation (which occurred after this paper's deadline).

A core group of about five residents have got behind the project, including Simcoe's Gord Pennington, who was instrumental in the creation of the Lynn Valley Trail. Pennington is also currently helping the Rotary Club of Norfolk Sunrise with the Norfolk Sunrise Trail. That trail will link the Lynn Valley Trail with the Waterford Heritage Trail.

The idea for the trail came from a 2006 consultant's report that looked at tourism opportunities specifically for Delhi. The members of the committee took the suggestion to heart.

"We've walked the trail. It's very beautiful," Weinstein said, but added there would be a lot of work ahead of them if the project moves forward. He said there are spots where the rails are still in place.

On Tuesday night, Weinstein was asking for council's approval of the project in principle. With that in hand, the next step would be to talk to adjacent landowners about the trail. Once that is completed, the committee would appear before council again to ask for a partnership agreement that would allow them to apply for grant money and fundraise for the project.

Norfolk's manager of parks and facilities Kevin Lichach told residents at a meeting about the Norfolk Sunrise Trail on July 3 that Haldimand County is currently working on a trail plan. As well, he said there are also plans to eventually move the Waterford Heritage Trail northbound into Brant County, where it could meet up with the Trans Canada Trail. The Delhi trail could also potentially head westward to meet up with another branch of the Trans Canada Trail.

Weinstein said he didn't think council would reject the idea, so over the next few weeks, they'll be looking for feedback from residents and landowners.

He wouldn't guess just how long it would take to break ground on the new trail.

"We really don't know. There is a lot of physical work to be done on the trail," he said, but added members of the committee "are quite eager" to get to work.