



## City of Beacon

Office of the Mayor

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## Town of Fishkill

Office of the Supervisor

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### **FISHKILL AND BEACON LEADERSHIP EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR HUDSON HIGHLANDS FJORD TRAIL, CALL FOR INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN FULL OBJECTIVE DATA REVIEW PROCESS**

**Beacon & Fishkill, NY:** Town of Fishkill Supervisor Ozzy Albra and City of Beacon Mayor Lee Kyriacou today issued a joint statement, strongly supporting development of the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, and calling for completion of objective data review by the committee tasked with that effort.

The Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail (HHFT) is a proposed transformative environmental project, centered around improving the trailhead area of the Breakneck Ridge Trail – considered to be the most popular day hike trail in America – and extending a new trail along the Hudson River through the Town of Fishkill and connecting the City of Beacon with the Village of Cold Spring. As part of this effort, HHFT Inc. announced the formation of a Visitation Data Committee, tasking them to publicly and collectively review the work of visitation management and environmental review consultants on the proposal.

Earlier this month, five members of the HHFT Visitation Data Committee from the involved Putnam County communities, acting on their own, issued a letter expressing concerns regarding the ongoing data effort. Thereafter, the three elected executives of the Philipstown, Cold Spring and Nelsonville issued a statement opposing the portion of the trail in Cold Spring.

Following consultation with their visitation committee representatives, as well as other elected officials, Mayor Kyriacou and Supervisor Albra both expressed their strong support for the Fjord Trail concept. Further, both the Supervisor and Mayor have asked for additional representation on the Visitation Data Committee, and for completion of an objective analysis of potential impacts to be reviewed by the full Committee.

Mayor Kyriacou said, “With all due respect to other elected officials, reaching conclusions without a full fact base on the table seems like a disservice to all our communities. We should participate in the data development process in good faith, debate the information as it becomes available, present it to our communities, and seek their input on the best available fact base.”

Supervisor Albra stated, “This committee has five representatives from three municipalities with 10,000 residents, while Fishkill and Beacon – with 40,000 residents and roughly 80% of the length of the proposed trail – each have only a single representative. Respectfully, we request additional representation on this important committee, and call for a full and complete process by an open and collaborative membership.”

Supervisor Albra added, “Having knocked on the doors of the entire town in the past year, I can say with certainty that the clear majority of Fishkill residents support the Fjord Trail concept, including those living in Dutchess Junction where most of the trail would run.”

Mayor Kyriacou agreed, noting that “I received a briefing from Sarah Mencher, Beacon’s member on the HHFT Visitation Data Committee, and reviewed this topic with the full City Council last night. All agreed that Beacon residents are strongly supportive of the trail concept, and would be excited to have HHFT begin trail work in Beacon first, if that would be helpful in expanding our regional trail system.”

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