

## Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway Presentation Updates Plans, Seeks Input

An update on plans for the proposed *Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway* will be presented for public comment at the board meetings of the towns and villages along the route during April; five meetings were already held in March.

Efforts are underway to establish a state-designated scenic byway that would follow 65 miles of state and county roads linking towns, villages and hamlets around the Shawangunk Mountains.

A steering committee comprising town supervisors and representatives from nine Ulster County municipalities (including the village of New Paltz and the towns of Rochester, Marbletown, and Rosendale, and the Orange County towns of Crawford and Montgomery) is in the process of preparing the *Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway* management plan for the state's review.

The presentation will explain the meaning and benefits of a state-designated scenic byway, show the revised route of the proposed *Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway*, and will give an overview of the region's scenic, natural, recreational and historic resources which have been inventoried as part of the planning process.

Preliminary goals for the Byway will also be presented. These have been developed by the Byway Steering Committee, which is made up of the elected official or appointed representative of each of the 11 municipalities.

"This is very much a grass roots program," says John Valk Jr., chairman of the Steering Committee and also Supervisor of the Town of Shawangunk. "And we're at a point now in our planning where we need to present our thoughts to the people in each of these communities and hear their ideas, concerns and suggestions."

Al Wegener, project manager, will make the presentations for the *Byway*, and the Steering Committee member in each community will facilitate public discussion.

According to Wegener, this plan will address what is needed to make the byway safe and enjoyable for

travelers and what will be done to manage the increased tourism while preserving the resources that distinguish the route's character and beauty.

"A byway encourages the preservation of the natural, scenic, and historic resources of the region," said Wegener, who led a presentation of the proposal at the New Paltz Village Board. Also, he said, it gives the involved communities an opportunity to receive state and federal funding for improvements to road shoulders, guide rails, and scenic pull-offs, among other things, and such amenities as kiosks, rest stops, and picnic areas.

Wegener showed slides of sites along the proposed route, including the Wallkill Valley railroad trestle in Rosendale, the old **D&H Canal ticket office** in Ellenville, **Sam's Point**, the **Minnewaska Preserve**, dairy farms along state **Route 52**, and stunning views of both the Catskill and Shawangunk mountains.

"We are moving people who have not yet taken advantage of all of the historic places around the area," he said. "We hope to build more of a sense of a regional community."

The New York State Scenic Byways program was created in 1992 and is administered by the Landscape Architecture Bureau of the state Department of Transportation in conjunction with representatives from various other state departments, such as Agriculture & Markets and Parks & Recreation.

There currently are more than 2,200 miles of road in the state byways system.

For more information, contact Al Wegener at **255-3572**. Or contact Ellenville representative Iris Friedman, **647-7902**, or Wawarsing representative Tom Gale.

Meetings already held: March 6, Town of Rochester; March 12, Village of New Paltz; March 13, Town of Marbletown; March 20, Town of Shawangunk; March 27, Town of New Paltz.

The schedule for the upcoming meetings is -

April 1	Town of Gardiner	7:30 PM
April 3	Town of Montgomery	7:30 PM
April 9	Town of Rosendale	7:30 PM
April 10	Town of Crawford	7:30 PM

**April 14 Village of Ellenville 7:00 PM**  
**Ellenville High School Lecture Room**

**April 17 Town of Wawarsing 7:00 PM**  
**Wawarsing Town Hall, 108 Canal St.**



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