

News

Scout gets New Paltz's OK to put mile markers on rail trail

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NEW PALTZ — The Town Board has agreed to support an Eagle Scout project to install markers every half-mile along the 12.6-mile Wallkill Valley Rail Trail from Gardiner to Rosendale.

Alekzandar Obyr, of Boy Scout Troop 172, said the markers will give visitors a sense of location.

“This project has been approved by the town of Gardiner, the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail Association, the village of New Paltz, and it’s in the process of being approved by the (Wallkill Valley) land trust,” Obyr told the Town Board on Thursday. “The rail trail association has appointed a representative to work with me on the design of my markers.”

Obyr said approval is expected from the Boy Scouts of America by the end of the year.

“Before I’m allowed to receive the honor of being an Eagle Scout, there are some criteria that need to be filled out,” he said. “One of them, and by far the most important, is having a project that’s beneficial to the community.”

Councilwoman Jane Ann Williams said the project could help emergency services providers locate people on the trail who need medical help.

“I think it’s a great idea,” she said. “My husband collapsed a year ago on ... the Highland trail, and he was right at Black Creek, so everybody knew where it was. But I think (markers) would be a big help in directing an ambulance.”

Obyr said 24 to 26 markers will cost a total of about \$1,000.

“It’s going to be a 4-by-4 post, roughly 4 to 5 feet tall, that is going to have a metal or wooden end cap on the top,” he said.

Obyr said the idea came to him when he realized there was a better way to determine distances than guessing.

“I judged on how tired I was at the end ... and realized that if I put markers along the trail, it would not only help me but a variety of people,” he said.

“I bike along the rail trail a lot to get to town and for fun,” Obyr said. “It’s a great way to get around and to enjoy nature. I was just biking around and I realized I don’t know how far I’ve gone and I always wanted to know.”

