

Update on the Little Italy Nature Preserve

Dear Planning Board,

I wanted the Board to be aware of the latest update regarding the efforts to protect and preserve the area known as Little Italy in the hamlets of Retsof and Greigsville. Last night the Genesee Valley Conservancy Board indicated that is supportive of moving forward with the Little Italy Nature Preserve project. This will protect an area of almost 70 acres of unique animal and plant habitat along the Bidwell's Creek corridor, our town's largest tributary of the Genesee River. It will also preserve the 35 foundations, walking paths and additional remnants of the historic mining settlement of Little Italy and serve as a reminder of that important part of the history of the Town of York.

A major factor in the GVC Board's decision was the proximity of the area to York Central School meaning the entire area could continue to act as an easily accessed outdoor classroom available to all students. Plans to include an ADA accessible trail as well as possible amenities similar to those featured along Letchworth Park's Autism Nature Trail have been discussed locally.

As we discover more about this special area (see below) we begin to understand its significance to the community of York, as well as surrounding communities, and the importance of doing all we can to protect this unique area in the "center" of our town. I would encourage you to visit the Spring Street entrance to the Preserve in Retsof and see for yourselves!

- It is contiguous to the Rochester Birding Association's "hot spot" #21 Retsof Area <<https://rochesterbirding.org/hotspots/retsof-area/>>

- It is included the eBird registry under Little Italy Nature Preserve, Retsof- <<https://ebird.org/hotspot/L14983291>>

- It is very near the Audubon's Important Bird Area of Nation's Road Grasslands <<https://www.audubon.org/important-bird-areas/nations-road-grasslands>>

- It has great potential as the trail connection between the Genesee Valley Greenway and the Groveland Secondary Trail.

Sincerely,

Dave Nagel