

TRI-TOWN TRANSCRIPT
4/25/08

Rail Trail protects natural resources

To the editor:

I was surprised and very pleased to hear from my son that my name was referenced in a letter to the editor by Joe Geller in the April 11 edition of the *Tri-Town Transcript Rail* ("Rail trails in other communities," Letters to the Editor). It is gratifying to know that folks remember the community effort that went into the construction of the bike paths/sidewalks on Route 97 and Ipswich Road and recognize what an asset they are to Topsfield residents.

If I lived in Topsfield, I would be 100 percent in favor of the Rails to Trails proposal for the old railroad bed. Our family used to

cross-country ski across what in the late '70s was the Topsfield landfill to access the snow-covered railroad bed and ski to Boxford. A bike path/recreational trail makes perfect sense because it protects a natural resource, promotes physical fitness, reduces use of petroleum products and resulting emissions and fosters a spirit of community. I believe that the fears and criticism expressed by a group of abutters are overblown. What a shame for them not to recognize that the proximity of their property to the proposed path and its value for conservation/recreation is an asset, not a liability.

I hope that the citizens of Topsfield will have the good sense to see the advantages of this warrant article and support it with their vote. Perhaps my two sons and three grandsons who live in Topsfield will invite me along on one of their excursions when the Topsfield Linear Common is ready.

Thank you.

**Mary Johnson
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