



1745 Main Street
Keeseville, NY 12944

518-834-9328

www.aarch.org

AARCH Position on the New York Central Railroad,
Adirondack Division, Corridor

Board of Directors

Pat Benton

Blue Mountain Lake

Sally Berk

Indian Lake

Robert Faulkner

Raquette Lake

Edward Finnerty

Lake Placid

Richard Frost

Plattsburgh

Susan Harral

Keene Valley

David Hislop

Essex

Ed Hodges

Architect

William Johnston

Wadhams

Howard Kirschenbaum

Raquette Lake

Richard Levensgood

Spitfire Lake

Joyce McLean

Lake Placid

Wester Miga

Newcomb

Willem Monster

Northampton

Stefanie Noble

Syracuse

Carol Nordmann

Saint Regis Lakes

Julia Tansor

Plattsburgh

Martha Spear

Lake Placid

Marcy Weisburgh

Port Kent

Staff

Steven Engelhart

Executive Director

Michele Drozd

*Communications and
Development Director*

Kate Ritter

Program Director

Virginia Siskavich-Bosley

Office Manager

Adirondack Architectural Heritage supports the preservation of the contributing historic features, including the railroad tracks themselves, of the entire New York Central Railroad, Adirondack Division, corridor, which is listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places. AARCH also supports the multiple public and nonprofit use concept for the corridor as envisioned and outlined in its management plan, including the development of a compatible recreational trail system along the corridor.

Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH) is the private nonprofit, historic preservation organization for the Adirondack Park. AARCH has a membership of more than 1500 people and is dedicated to protecting and preserving the irreplaceable architectural heritage, historic places, and communities of the region. In addition to our far-ranging educational programs, technical assistance work, and partnership projects, we have helped to successfully solve several contentious conflicts over the preservation of historic and cultural resources, including at Camp Santanoni, several fire observation towers, the Bow Bridge, Debar Pond Lodge, and the Old Stone Barracks.

The New York Central Railroad, Adirondack Division corridor is an historic resource of great importance. This railroad made it possible for the interior of the western and central Adirondacks to be more widely settled and to prosper economically. Its significance is evident by its listing on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

We concur with the opinion of the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation that the "removal of the railroad tracks from

the historic right-of-way would be considered an Adverse Impact . . . and would diminish those qualities which made the railroad State and National Register of Historic Places eligible.”

Although our primary interest is in ensuring the preservation and public use of the entire National Register-listed historic rail corridor, including its railroad tracks, we support keeping the tracks in place for other reasons, including:

- We believe that a healthy transportation infrastructure for the Adirondack region should include **good rail access**. This provides an alternative means, besides the automobile, of getting to the region. This is especially important for (urban or lower income) visitors who may not own a car. Getting here by rail is also a greener transportation alternative, as per passenger mile, rail transportation uses less energy and generates less carbon emissions. If the tracks were removed, the opportunity to fully develop and use this rail line will be lost forever.
- We believe that the potential for **further developing excursion rail experiences** for visitors within the region not yet been fully realized and that further development of excursion rail experiences, promises additional excellent economic benefits for the region.
- We believe that a **robust recreational trail system** is completely compatible with the existence of the railroad. The work of the Trails and Rails Action Committee (TRAC), of which we are a member, has demonstrated that the railroad is the organizing element in completing a “trails with rails” system, maintaining it, and providing access to Adirondack natural resources and communities. One of the most important reasons for the rails and trails to co-exist is the opportunity for further development of train excursions that would drop off hikers, bicyclists, campers, boaters, birders, photographers and other outdoor enthusiasts at various points along the corridor. In the middle segment of the corridor, the train is a crucial organizing element in accessing more natural areas in a managed way to avoid overuse.

It is our position that the railroad tracks should remain in place and that the corridor should continue to be used for multiple purposes as was envisioned by the management plan adopted for the corridor in 1996.



Steven Engelhart
Executive Director