



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Chris Jacobs

## Funding from Senator Jacobs to Support Orchard Park Train Depot

SENATOR JACOBS August 17, 2017

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(Orchard Park, NY) – New York State Senator Chris Jacobs today announced \$150,000 in funding to support restoration efforts underway at the Orchard Park Train Depot. The senator presented a ceremonial check to Orchard Park Town and Village leaders and members of the Western New York Railway Historical Society in making the announcement.

“I am very pleased to be able to provide state assistance to this great community asset,” said Senator Jacobs. “From its original purpose as a train station, through its recent history as a community gathering place, and now with its future as a destination location on the future Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail, the Orchard Park Train Depot occupies a special place in this community’s history.”

Built in 1911 by the Buffalo, Rochester, Pittsburgh Railway, the depot handled passenger service through the mid-1950’s and maintained freight service through 1979. For the last thirty-four years the depot has been under the care and guidance of the Western New York Railway Historical Society. The group took formal ownership in 1995 and is now in the process of a two-phased restoration totaling approximately \$2 million.

“After serving the community for over 100 years, the depot needs major structural repairs that are costly and beyond the ability of our dedicated volunteer staff, and we are very grateful to Senator Jacobs for his help in securing this funding,” said Orchard Park Depot Committee Co-Chairman James Slominski. “The Grant obtained by Senator Jacobs is a major boost in our efforts to raise funds and will ensure our ability to improve the safety of the depot.

The Railway Historical Society’s original intent was to preserve the historic railroad site and protect it from destruction. In 2007, the depot secured designation on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places. Over the years, it has become home to many major public and civic events from Quaker Days and Fourth of July’s to Orchard Park Chamber of Commerce and Orchard Park Library functions.

As progress continues on the development of the Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail, the urgency for the depot’s restoration work grows. The proposed trail covers a 26-mile stretch between the Towns of Orchard Park in Erie County and Ashford in Cattaraugus County. The Orchard

Park Train Depot will become a “trail head”, enhancing the economic benefit and return to the town and surrounding communities.

“It was highly unusual for a small village to have a station this size, but Buffalo & Pittsburgh Railroad President Harry Yates lived in Orchard Park and wanted something special for his hometown,” said Village Mayor Jo Ann Litwin Clinton. “Mr. Yates’ impact on Orchard Park reaches from Green Lake to the Orchard Park Country Club, and his Orchard Park Train Depot is an important part of Village history.”

“An enthusiastic thank you to Senator Chris Jacobs for securing much needed funding for such a worthy project,” said Orchard Park Town Supervisor Dr. Patrick Keem. “Our Orchard Park Train Depot is an asset the entire community treasures and dollars spent toward its restoration are a valuable investment. Many thanks to all those involved in the preservation of this historic structure.”

“Building on its proud past, I believe this investment of state resources will help transition the Orchard Park Train Depot into an even greater recreational and economic development attraction,” said Senator Jacobs. “I want to congratulate the Railway Society and the town and village leaders for their great work and look forward to the completion of the restorations and the new life that will follow for the depot,” the Senator concluded.