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**CONTACT:**

Nancy Smith, Executive Director

(716) 687-1225 office

(716) 432-1777 mobile

[nancys@wnylc.org](mailto:nancys@wnylc.org)

## Goldfarb Financial's "Money Talks" Series to highlight the DL&W Trail

Goldfarb Financial and the Western New York Land Conservancy welcome the public to join national experts and local community leaders for an inspiring discussion about reimagining the abandoned DL&W rail corridor in downtown Buffalo. Attendees will help shape the future of this iconic and innovative urban nature trail and park. This event is part of Goldfarb Financial's "Money Talks" series and will take place from 6-8pm on Tuesday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at the historic Saturn Club in Buffalo. Attendees will enjoy complimentary wine provided by Arrowhead Spring Vineyards and hors d'oeuvres.

In downtown Buffalo, the unused DL&W rail corridor connects Canalside to the Buffalo River near Solar City. It forms a ribbon of green that runs through The Valley, The First Ward, and the Perry neighborhoods. For the past eight months, the Land Conservancy has been leading a community engagement process to spark conversation about the future of this corridor. Hundreds have participated, including neighborhood residents, business owners, and community leaders. A vision is emerging, and the goal is to create a mile-and-a-half long trail system for walking and biking that celebrates our industrial and railroad heritage and creates a place that connects people with nature and people with people.

The presentations on April 17<sup>th</sup> will bring together ideas and lessons learned from similar high-profile projects around the country with the hopes and aspirations of people living in the communities surrounding the corridor. Speakers will include: Tom Woiwode, Director of the GreenWays Initiative for the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan; Steve Apfelbaum, author and the founder of environmental design firm, Applied Ecological Services; Sara Heidinger, owner of Undergrounds Café on South Park Avenue and President of the Old First Ward Community Center; and Leslie Zemsky, the "Director of Fun" for Larkin Development Group.

"There are many examples of places around the country where urban trail projects are making communities better places to live and visit," said Nancy Smith, Land Conservancy Executive Director. "We are excited to hear from some leaders who played a pivotal role in projects like ours, as we explore ways to convert this remnant of our own industrial heritage into a beautiful, engaging, and ecologically resilient linear park."

Tom Woiwode will talk about the deeper impact of rails to trails projects. "Creating a greenway is about more than biking and walking paths, it's about providing an opportunity for people to come together and think differently about their neighborhoods, their relationship to their community, and neighborhood revitalization." He will share stories about the Dequindre Cut Greenway in Detroit, a two-mile rail to trail greenway that was developed through a public, nonprofit, and private partnership. Prior to his work with the Community Foundation, Tom was the founding director of The Nature Conservancy of Michigan and an officer of the international Nature Conservancy organization.

Steve Apfelbaum, through his work at Applied Ecological Services, has contributed his scientific expertise and creative approach to over 7,000 projects throughout the country and around the world, including restored wetlands, reconstructed urban ecosystems, remediated landfills, and the Land Conservancy's own Niagara Gorge restoration project. His work provides insight and design solutions at the intersection of ecological systems and developed land uses. Steve will share his experiences with similar projects, particularly involving the community in the design process. According to Steve, "The key to making the DL&W Trail successful for Western New Yorkers is to listen to what the community has to say and make sure that what is built really works for them."

Sara Heidinger is a community leader who grew up alongside the rail corridor, called the "Dell" by local residents. She will share her memories of living along the corridor as well as benefits this project could bring to the First Ward. Sara envisions the Dell as "not only a place to relax and enjoy the beautiful green paths, but a project that will strengthen community connections and provide a place for public art."

Leslie Zemsky oversees the events at Larkinville that draw more than 130,000 visitors each year. She also serves on the board for Visit Buffalo Niagara. Leslie will bring a regional perspective to the discussion and will talk about what the project could mean for the Western New York community. She is "very excited about the DL&W trail. The interconnectedness this project will create between neighbors, parks, public art, and restaurants will further support the growth and vibrancy emerging in this part of Buffalo."

The event is free and open to everyone, but space is limited so attendees must RSVP by Friday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, at Goldfarb Financial's website: <http://goldfarbfinancial.com/money-talks-2018-series/>.

If you would like to support this project, donations can be made on the Land Conservancy's website ([www.wnylc.org](http://www.wnylc.org)), or by sending a check made payable to the "Western New York Land Conservancy" to P.O. Box 471, East Aurora, NY 14052. All donations are tax-deductible. Contact the Land Conservancy with any questions or comments at [info@wnylc.org](mailto:info@wnylc.org) or (716) 687-1225.

Goldfarb Financial is a certified B-Corp and has been doing socially responsible investing in Western New York for 30 years. They strive to create a better world and help their local communities by creating sustainable relationships between businesses and our communities.

The Western New York Land Conservancy is a regional, not-for-profit land trust that permanently protects land with significant conservation value in Western New York for future generations. The Land Conservancy envisions a future in which open spaces, working lands, wildlife habitat, and scenic beauty are cherished and protected as part of the landscape and character of Western New York. The Land Conservancy is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and is one of 1000+ land trusts nationwide, including 90 in New York State. Land trusts have protected 56 million acres of land. For more information on upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, or the mission of the Western New York Land Conservancy, please call (716) 687-1225 or visit [www.wnylc.org](http://www.wnylc.org).

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