

A well-known Gaspé activist joins the Coalition for the Return of VIA Rail

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ – Activist Laurent Juneau of Gaspé has joined the Coalition for the Return of Passenger Train Service to the Gaspé Peninsula.

In September, Mr. Juneau participated in a mobilization for the return of passenger train service and caught the coalition's attention, which invited him to join the movement.

Mr. Juneau, who was active in environmental issues for years, wants to work with everyone to continue the fight to bring about the gradual return of passenger train service with the completion of work on the rail line to Port-Daniel-Gascons.

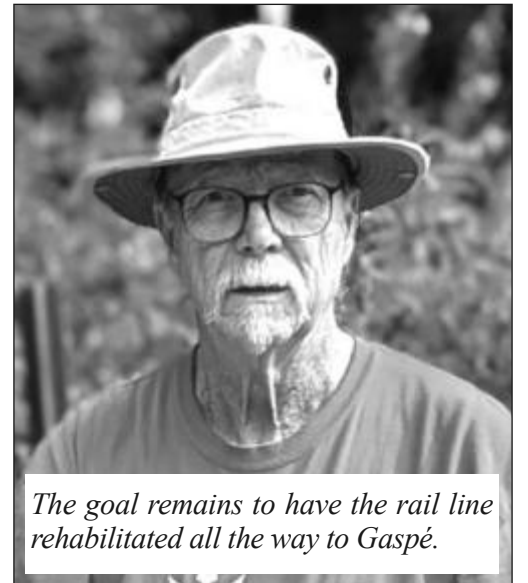
"I accepted because, in any case, I was wondering why we weren't there. For me, it's important that we be there, that we be together, and that our sector be represented," says Mr. Juneau. The Gaspé town citizens represent the "we" he is referring to.

On December 15, the citizen questioned the municipal council about the actions taken so far in support of the restoration and return of VIA Rail. The mayor reiterated that the town had adopted a resolution based on the principle of "no track, no train," as Daniel Côté puts it.

"The first thing is that if we don't restore the railway, there will be no VIA Rail, no freight, nothing. Right now, that's the heart of the problem," says the mayor.

"I need solidarity from one end of the Gaspé Peninsula to the other. Solidarity must not be one-sided. I want us to remain united on the ultimate goal of rebuilding the rail line to Gaspé, and that's where I'm hearing less. And that's where I'm getting tired," notes the elected official.

Mr. Juneau, who was a regular user until the service ended in Gaspé 14 years ago, assures that he will convey the message to the coalition.



The goal remains to have the rail line rehabilitated all the way to Gaspé.

Photo: N. Sergerie