

## Layout Fact Sheet

Name: **Seneca Valley Lines**  
Age: **Construction started 1989**  
Scale: **HO (1:87)**  
Size: **40'x60'**  
Prototype: **Lehigh Valley**  
Locale: **Eastern US**  
Period: **1960s**  
Layout Style: **Walk-in**  
Layout Height: **50" Mainline, 60" on the branchline**  
Mainline Length: **350 Feet of double track**  
Length of Branchline & sidings: **500 Feet**  
Length of Trolley Line: **125 Feet**  
Benchwork: **L Girder**  
Roadbed: **Homabed on 3/4" plywood**  
Track: **Code 83 flextrack on mainline, Code 70 on sidings**  
Turnouts: **More than 100 both Code 83 & Code 70**  
Switch Machines: **Twin coil & stall motor**  
Minimum Radius: **36" Mainline, 22" Yard**  
Minimum Turnout Size: **#6**  
Ruling Grade: **Level on mainline, 2% on branch line to Hazelton**  
Scenery: **Plaster cloth on cardboard strips or insulation board**  
Backdrop: **Painted Masonite**  
Buildings: **200**  
Bridges: **10**  
Control: **NCE Digital Command Control (made in nearby Webster)**



## **ROCHESTER MODEL RAILROAD CLUB** *The Seneca Valley Lines*



Meetings every Monday (except holidays)  
7:00-9:00PM

(Located in the basement of the First Universalist Church)  
150 South Clinton Avenue (at Court Street)  
Rochester NY 14604

Phone: 585-454-2567

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[www.facebook.com/RochesterModelRailroadClub](http://www.facebook.com/RochesterModelRailroadClub)

## A Brief History of the Rochester Model Railroad Club

Five model railroaders began construction of the first "Seneca Valley Lines" in 1939, located in the basement of a small radio and electronics store on Genesee Street near Brooks Avenue. The organization was called the Kodak City Model Railroad Club in honor of Rochester's popular nickname of the time. The club gradually attracted others with a similar interest in models railroading and the Seneca Valley Lines continued to grow.

The club would not have a long term home until 1989, so over the years a familiar theme was "Dismantle, Move and Start Over". In 1943, the club relocated to the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Railroad office building at 155 West Main Street. After six short years, it was to move again to, this time to a former horse stable on Ravine Avenue, located behind a toy store that fronted Lake Avenue. Construction moved along rapidly in this location and by 1952 half the layout was in operation. The club held its first open house in 1954, with additional open houses in each of the following two years. In 1957 the club secured quarters on the second floor of the Pennsylvania Railroad building located at 357 West Main Street which was across the street from the station that currently houses Nick Tahou's. The previous layout was salvaged and sized at fifteen by forty five feet, and with a thousand feet of track it had the capability of operating 12-15 trains simultaneously. Open houses were held at this location from 1958 to 1961.

The Pennsy sold their building and the club moved to the third floor of 49 South Avenue (where the Riverside Convention Center now stands). After much rebuilding and rewiring, the club held its first open house at this location in 1966. The club stayed at this location until 1979 and completed much of the layout. The Fortieth Anniversary of the club was a major event during 1979, with the club being featured in Model Railroader magazine. In early 1980, the club tore down the layout and moved down South Avenue to the basement of the Elks Club at South & Gregory Avenues.

In 1983 the club changed its name to the Rochester Model Railroad Club, Inc. and became an educational, not-for-profit organization. During our stay at the Elks Club much of the original layout was replaced with all new scenery and track work. The open house in January 1989 was a huge success. Newspaper, television, and word of mouth were responsible for more than 3,000 people viewing the final operation of the Elks Club layout.

In mid-1989, the club moved to our current location in the basement of the First Universalist Church in downtown Rochester. An entirely new layout was started, designed to take advantage of the available 40 by 60 foot space. Progress has been steady with the layout now fully operational and scenery work nearly complete. Annual open houses have been held at this location since 1995. The club layout was once again featured in Model Railroader magazine in September, 2008. In 2014, we celebrated our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

## The Seneca Valley Lines

The Seneca Valley Lines is the name of the current HO scale model railroad. The SVL is modeled after a fictitious prototype railroad that could have operated in New York and Pennsylvania. The equipment, scenery, buildings and towns of the Seneca Valley Lines are primarily based on the Lehigh Valley Railroad. This is blended together with traces of the Erie, the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western, the New York Central and a fair amount of artistic license. We are attempting to build a believable railroad that captures the flavor and operation of railroading from Jersey City, through the anthracite region of northeast Pennsylvania, the rolling hills of western New York, to the busy city of Buffalo for continuous through train operation. In addition to the many industries along the right-of-way to generate traffic for the railroad, there is a branch line that climbs into the coal mining hills of Pennsylvania and an interurban trolley line that runs westward from Jersey City.

The mainline is double tracked, approximately 350 feet long; two major storage yards have storage capacity for 400 freight and 50 passenger cars. The layout was initially operated with blocks and cab control, but was converted to Digital Command Control.

Working from photos, plans, maps, and on-site investigations of many of the scenes, buildings and bridges will be recreations of actual prototypes. Geneva Station, Victor, Rochester Junction, and Caledonia are some of the places that are accurately represented in miniature, and a reproduction of Buffalo's Lackawanna Terminal is in progress.

The trains are built and owned by the individual members of the club. The equipment ranges from early steam-powered trains to today's modern diesels. When the layout is being operated as a prototypical railroad, equipment will be limited to a specific era in history. However, during an open house, you will be able to enjoy a parade of trains from many different eras.

The railroad is designed to operate as a continuous scene from Jersey City, NJ, to Buffalo, NY, allowing the engineer to run his/her train without losing sight of it when operated point-to-point. The two ends are tied together with a staging yard in an adjoining room.

The club today has about 50 members who share a common interest in both prototype railroads and model railroading. We meet every Monday evening (excluding holidays), mostly to work on the layout but we also have regular operating sessions, and periodic clinics to learn and share modeling tips, techniques and information.