

Press



Release

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For Immediate Release

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Schoenberger & Soskin: Forshay Road Improvements Will Improve Vehicle Travel, Pedestrian Safety

Project Includes Reconstructed Roadway, New Sidewalks, Better Drainage



Above: Crews at work at the Forshay and Viola Road intersection/Laura Incalcaterra

New City, NY (Aug. 12, 2015) – One of Rockland's busiest stretches of roads has begun to undergo a massive reconstruction, with the Rockland County Legislature approving necessary funding for the project.

Forshay Road in Ramapo is no longer adequate to handle the cars that drive it and the people who walk alongside it, and the new project seeks to address the issues.

"It's been in the works for at least a decade and I'm glad to see it's finally coming to fruition," Legislator Ilan Schoenberger said. "It will truly bring needed improvements, both from a transportation perspective and also a human safety perspective."



Ilan S. Schoenberger

Schoenberger and Legislator Phil Soskin are familiar with the traffic backups, the difficulties faced by pedestrians and the crumbling edges of Forshay, portions of which lay in their respective Legislative Districts.

"This has really been needed for a long time," Soskin said. "When it's done, the road should be much improved and people will have sidewalks so they can safely walk without constantly worrying about being hit by a car."

The project includes the reconstruction of Forshay Road between the Viola and Willow Tree Road intersections, with improved drainage and new sidewalks, traffic signals and signage, Schoenberger said.



Philip Soskin

According to county Highway Superintendent Charles "Skip" Vezzetti, drivers on Forshay will also get a left-turn lane onto Viola. The lane will also help relieve traffic because it will allow other drivers to continue through the intersection versus getting stuck behind cars waiting to make the left.

Improvements are also in the works for Viola Road near the Forshay intersection, with improved drainage and turning lanes. Crews are already working on a culvert project near the intersection.

The first roundabout to be installed in the county will be built as part of the project at the Forshay and Willow Tree Road intersection to help improve the safety and efficiency of traffic flow, Vezzetti said.

County legislators voted 17-0 Aug. 4 to provide additional funding for the project, which is estimated to cost about \$12.5 million. The county covers 5 percent of the cost while the state covers 15 percent and the federal government covers 80 percent.

Vezzetti said the county bid out the work and is overseeing its progress, with George Wolpert, a senior engineer in the Highway Department, serving as project manager.

"Our county has been the most successful at acquiring federal and state funding in the Hudson Valley and we're proud that that's going to help us with this important project," Vezzetti said.

Schoenberger thanked Vezzetti and his team for their hard work and said the Forshay Road project was just one example of the many infrastructure improvements taken on by the county every year.

"These projects can be massive, both in terms of scope and cost, but we are committed to taking care of the county's infrastructure for the good of all our residents," Schoenberger said.

According to Green's "The History of Rockland County," Forshay Road is so-named due to the long residence of members of the Forshay family in the area.

County Historian Craig Long said that in 1851, W.S. Forshay built a cigar manufacturing shop near the intersection of Forshay and Grandview Avenue. By 1886, the shop had grown to employ 12 workers and was turning out 600,000 cigars annually.

Today, the area is mostly comprised of single-family homes with yards and trees, with Forshay connecting to College Road, which takes drivers to Rockland Community College, the site of Rockland's former almshouse, or residence for the poor.