

**P R E S S R E L E A S E F R O M
L E G I S L A T O R J O H N M . K E N N E D Y , J R .**

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**LEGISLATORS KENNEDY AND NOWICK HOST MEETING WITH NYSDOT
REGARDING SMITHTOWN MAIN STREET SAFETY**



Photo Caption: State, county and town government representatives, along with business and community leaders, meet with NYSDOT officials Thursday, May 26 at county offices in Hauppauge.

May 27, 2011: A coalition of town, county and state government officials, along with local business and community representatives, met with New York State Department of Transportation officials Thursday, resulting in a commitment by the NYSDOT to study traffic on state Route 25 through downtown Smithtown and consider a number of substantial traffic-calming improvements suggested at the meeting.

Last year, following multiple pedestrian deaths on that portion of Route 25, Smithtown's Main Street, the NYSDOT implemented a number of improvements to promote use of crosswalks and increase the safety of pedestrians crossing the road. However, cars have continued to strike pedestrians crossing Main Street – including, according to Newsday, collisions causing the death of Afghanistan war veteran Seamus Byrne of Smithtown in February and the injury of two sisters from Central Islip in May – leading to calls from residents and government officials alike for further safety improvements.

Responding to these calls, Suffolk County Legislators John M. Kennedy Jr. (12th District) and Lynne Nowick (13th District), who represent the portions of the Town of Smithtown south and north of Main Street, respectively, hosted a meeting Thursday between local government and community representatives and state DOT officials at Kennedy's district office in Hauppauge.

The meeting featured discussion with: Suffolk County Public Works officials regarding the potential use of red-light cameras, Suffolk County police regarding traffic law enforcement efforts on Main Street and Smithtown Chamber of Commerce representatives regarding the impact of traffic collisions on local business and downtown revitalization efforts. The mother of a victim of a Main Street collision also spoke passionately about the need for further improvements to prevent similar tragedies. New York State Assemblyman Michael Fitzpatrick and a representative from New York

State Senator John Flanagan's office also participated.

The dialogue included a number of proposals, including those that would calm traffic by reducing Main Street to one travelling lane in each direction with dedicated left turn shoulders and medians to shelter passengers mid-street. Smithtown Town Councilman Bob Creighton conveyed the town Planning Department's recommendation to use heavy duty paint striping to create a median to achieve this effect, while Smithtown architect Mark Mancini presented a detailed pitch for constructed, decorated medians. There was also discussion of enhanced sign use and review of the operation of the current crosswalk features by NYSDOT engineers.

NYSDOT officials listened to the proposals, and pledged to perform their own study of traffic conditions on Main Street and respond to the Smithtown representatives' proposals at a similar, soon-to-be- scheduled meeting.

"The community made their hopes for improved traffic safety on Main Street heard, and the state DOT showed a willingness to review all the proposals and concerns presented," Legislator Kennedy said.

"I believe that this was a highly productive meeting," added Legislator Nowick. "I am encouraged by the fact that all levels of government are coming together to make traffic and pedestrian safety on Main Street a priority."

"The meeting was very productive," said Assemblyman Fitzpatrick. "The proposals by Councilman Creighton and Mark Mancini were both very good and I am eager, as we all are, to hear back from DOT once they plug in some figures and do the necessary counts to see what solutions can be proposed to make Main Street as safe as possible."