

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



KATE BROWNING
County Legislator, 3rd District
Health and Human Services, Chair

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COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS APPROVED FOR DANGEROUS ROADWAY

Browning Appropriates \$500,000 to Realign Main St. in Yaphank

Yaphank, NY – For decades residents living along Main Street in historic Yaphank have feared that the next accident could be disastrous. A dangerous curve that is notorious for excessive speeding has led to multiple accidents over the years in which vehicles have hit trees, hedges, and even homes on various private properties. Homeowners, many of them families living in the quiet hamlet for many generations, have been calling on the county for years to remediate the dangerous conditions. At its March 22, 2011 legislative meeting the Suffolk County Legislature solidified a project championed by Legislator Kate Browning (WF-Shirley) that will answer these calls for the much needed road project.

The county had attempted less costly alternatives over the last five years by installing both dangerous curve warning signs and rumble strips, as well as increased enforcement of the speed limit. These remedies were not sufficient, especially in the winter months when weather conditions make it impossible for speeding cars to stay on the roadway when rounding the curve. The County Department of Public Works had approached the community about a decade ago with a plan to straighten the roadway by eliminating the curve and installing a median, but local residents felt it would limit their property lines and cause more problems with entering and exiting their driveways.

After cheaper remedies were exhausted Legislator Browning brought the community and the Department of Public Works together to discuss a compromise that would realign the roadway but limit the impact on homeowners. After several meetings in 2010 the community agreed to a less intense realignment that will slightly straighten the curve as well as super-elevate it to reduce the ability of vehicles to lose control and endanger homes. The final design will result in only a few property owners losing some footage at the front of their parcels. It was a sacrifice neighbors were willing to make to guarantee the safety of the community.

“When I first took office this was a concern that my predecessor and even his predecessor had been contacted about,” stated Browning. “This is a long standing problem that took a lot of work and cooperation between the county and the community. Where there is a will there is a way, and together I believe we have found a solution that will improve the safety in the community dramatically.”

“Kate has been diligent in getting this County Road 21 curve problem solved,” stated resident Josephine Curiale. “We’ve been asking for something to be done about the dangerous curve for years before she came into office. We have been plagued with accident after accident resulting in cutting utility poles in half, landing upside down on our lawns, and destroying our property. Now what remains is that we must get the cooperation of the

Seventh Precinct to consistently enforce the speed limit, because the problem will not be fully resolved until drivers are prevented from speeding down the road.”

Now that the money has been approved and the Department of Public Works has advertised the project to prospective bidders, which is due back on April 7, construction should begin this summer. The project will cost \$500,000 and will take several months to complete. In addition to the realignment of the roadway, the project will include concrete curbs, new sidewalks, drainage improvements, new pavement markings and signage.

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