

May 13, 2016

FROM THE MAYOR'S OFFICE
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By: Nicholas P. Episcopia

WATER METER REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

Please be advised that the Village has contracted National Metering Services Inc. to upgrade our water meter system. National Metering Services will be installing meters and soliciting door-to-door during the next three weeks. The new meters will be read by radio transmitter.

This installation service is free of charge. Access to your home or place of business to install the new meter, however, is required. National Metering Services' installers are required to be in uniform and have identification badges displayed at all times. Their vehicles will also be appropriately marked with the company name. For project information, visit National Metering Services Inc.'s website, www.nmsnj.com.

LIRR THIRD TRACK PROJECT

As I hope most of you know, Governor Cuomo recently resurrected the idea of building a third track on the LIRR Main Line from Floral Park to Hicksville. The track would be on the south side, directly affecting our residents in the Western and Estates sections.

The third track plan was scrapped in 2005 because there was massive opposition from all the affected Villages. At that time, the MTA/LIRR was totally unsuccessful because there were no facts to prove the need for this additional track to facilitate a west to east morning commute. The plan also called for the taking of approximately 500 homes along the Main Line and disruption to the quality of life and the businesses was totally unacceptable.

This time around, the Governor and his team are taking a different tact. The Governor himself has met with the Mayors of the affected villages and said that there would be no homes taken and minimal disruption to the quality of life or businesses. He emphasized that work would be done quickly using a technique called "design/build." What this really means is that there will be no specific set of plans and specifications for this project, but rather a project that will be designed and worked on a "as you go" basis with a projected cost presently estimated at over \$1 billion. And with no specific plans in place, there can be no guarantee that homes will not be taken or that disruption to the quality of life and business communities will be minimal.

To coin a phrase, the Governor's team has been using the "carrot and stick" approach in dealing with the affected Villages. Everyone would like the grade crossings eliminated so the Governor's team has spent a lot of time with Village officials. (Trustees Bolebruch and Makrinos and I went to three such meetings.) Although the Governor's staff was very cordial and willingly accepted our suggestions for new designs of the grade crossings, they made it very clear that the grade crossing eliminations and the third track were one project. In short - grade crossings will not be eliminated unless the third track is constructed.

At our last meeting the "Draft SEQRA Scoping Document" was distributed and discussed. This was allegedly an outline of the entire third track project. However, all the detail related only to grade crossings. The verbiage on the third track itself was essentially "hype" with no detail or backup statistics, leaving serious unanswered questions. A few examples are:

- Where will the third track project actually start?
- How many areas will be affected at the same time?
- Where will the construction equipment staging areas be located?
- What provable tangible economic value will this bring to Central Nassau County?
- Will the work on the Ronkonkoma tracks, the Jamaica switches and Third Track start simultaneously?

When questioned, the Governor's staff, including LIRR representatives, said this document is simply an outline and that details would be covered in the "Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS)." One of the most disturbing facts is that the President of the LIRR has firmly stated the real problem with train delays is the archaic switching system in Jamaica where the great majority of the delays occur. Why not upgrade the switches first and then see if a third track is necessary?

Public "Scoping Sessions" have been scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday, May 24, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Inn at New Hyde Park, 214 Jericho Turnpike, New Hyde Park;
- Tuesday, May 24, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Hofstra University Mack Student Center, 1000 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead;
- Wednesday, May 25, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the "Yes We Can" Community Center, 141 Garden Street, Westbury;
- Wednesday, May 25, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Antun's, 244 West Old Country Road, Hicksville

Public comments on the Scoping Document can be submitted until June 13, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. which is the close of the Scoping Period. All comments received will become part of the public record and will be considered part of the project studies. Written comments can be submitted during the public Scoping Sessions, via the project website (www.AModernLI.com) or by mail to: Edward M. Dumas, Vice President, Market Development & Public Affairs, LIRR Expansion Project, MTA Long Island Rail Road, MC 1131, Jamaica Station Building, Jamaica NY 11435.

We Mayors from the Villages along the Main Line have complained about the unfair scheduling of the public Scoping Sessions and the shortened comment period. Unfortunately, the Governor's staff has not been reasonable and to date, will not change anything. We believe that the start time for the evening sessions should not be 6:00 p.m. as planned, but 7:30 p.m. so that commuters and other working people can attend. The public comment period should be 90 days, not less than 30 as it stands now.

The LIRR has opened a Project Information Center on the south side of the Mineola Station. It will be open from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays; and 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturdays. If you can, please visit the Center and express your opposition to this unfair scoping session schedule and short time frame for responses as well as the proposed plan.

PROPOSED LOCAL LAW - WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROJECTS

The Board will hold a public hearing on a proposed local law regarding Wireless Telecommunications projects on Thursday, May 19, beginning at 8:00 p.m.

The Board has determined that having a specific regulatory framework for processing applications for Wireless Telecommunications Facilities is appropriate and advisable in order to further the safety and general welfare of the Village in that it will ensure that wireless equipment installed in the Village complies with federal law and regulations governing telecommunications facilities. Accordingly the Board seeks to implement a set of regulations that shall apply to and govern any and all applications for commercial wireless facilities in the Village.

S.T.O.P. COLLECTION

The Town of Hempstead Sanitation Department will conduct its monthly S.T.O.P. (Stop Throwing Out Pollutants) program on Saturday, May 14, 2016. The program, which is held at various locations throughout the Town of Hempstead, will make hazardous waste facilities accessible to as many residents as possible.

Saturday's program will be held at Newbridge Road Park, 2600 Newbridge Road in Bellmore. The hours of operation will be 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Under the S.T.O.P. program, residents are able to take polluting materials to the facility and have them disposed of by a registered, professional disposal company, free of charge. The facility will not accept the following materials: ammunition, explosives, fireworks, infectious or medical waste, propane or oxygen tanks, radioactive materials, unlabeled materials and fire extinguishers. Non-conforming or damaged propane tanks can be returned to the establishment that refills your barbecue grill tanks.

LAWN MAINTENANCE

As a reminder to our residents, lawn maintenance is permitted seven days a week throughout the Village. The Village Code requirement, however, states that no owner of any land within the Village shall permit noxious weeds, long grass or other ranks growths on real property. In addition, law cutting or any power gardening equipment is only permitted to be done during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MEETING SCHEDULE

The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees' meeting will be held on Thursday, May 19, 2016 at 8:00 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Board Room at Village Hall.