

Motion & Voting

RESOLUTION OF THE LIBERTY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT IN SUPPORT OF UPGRADING ROUTE 17 IN ORANGE AND SULLIVAN COUNTIES

WHEREAS, The Mid-Hudson/Catskills Region is achieving economic and population growth due to its proximity to New York City and other states as well as being home to attractive communities with a high quality of life.

WHEREAS, The Region has an immediate requirement for infrastructure investments to allow economic development to continue and maintain the Region's ability to attract jobs and preserve its quality of life for its citizens.

WHEREAS, In May of 2013, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) issued a study (The Route 17 Transportation Corridor Study) that recommended a new General Use Third Lane be developed along the Route 17 Corridor and found that "additional transportation capacity is needed to address existing and projected levels of congestion in the corridor, provide for enhanced mobility, and allow for future economic growth in both Sullivan and Orange Counties."

WHEREAS, while the improvements underway at Interchange 131 near Woodbury Common, and the proposed improvements to accommodate LEGOLAND are too underway and necessary, they will not address the existing and worsening traffic issues along the Corridor.

WHEREAS, investments along the Route 17 Corridor are consistent with smart growth principles and the 2011 report issued by the Open Space Institute (Private Lands, Public Benefits) which found that Sullivan County has the greatest percentage of preferred growth area in the Catskills, "which is largely concentrated in the center of the county and coincides with significant, established infrastructure."

WHEREAS, the full conversion of Route 17 to interstate standards (I-86) was previously scheduled to be completed by 2009, but that has not occurred in many of the eastern sections of Route 17. Major upgrades to Route 17 need to be implemented to meet interstate standards

WHEREAS, as part of the 2018-19 New York State Budget, the New York State Department of Transportation has committed to "provide up to \$5 million to advance environmental and design activities related to the construction of a third travel lane along the Route 17 Corridor in Orange and Sullivan Counties."

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Transportation anticipates hiring a consultant to conduct a Planning and Environmental Linkage Study (PEL) in the Summer of 2019 as the next step in the process leading to the implementation of the recommendations from the Corridor Study, providing locations of priority and conducting environmental assessments and preliminary engineering.

WHEREAS, the current estimate of the cost of implementing the Corridor Study is approximately \$500 million.

WHEREAS, the Mid-Hudson Valley/Catskills Region needs to continue to grow and attract businesses and jobs, and the 2013 NYSDOT Study has documented the requirements of the Route 17 Corridor.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby RESOLVED, that the LIBERTY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT:

Strongly supports efforts to improve the Route 17 Corridor and encourages the New York State Department of Transportation to begin as soon as possible the environmental processes necessary to advance the construction of a third lane along the Route 17 Corridor consistent with interstate standards.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that \$500 million in Capital Funding to make these important investments along the Route 17 Corridor be included in the State's and Nation's Infrastructure Programs so that the necessary projects to modernize Route 17 can commence as soon as possible.

Motion by Robert Keith Torrens, second by John Nichols.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Matthew DeWitt, Karen Hook, John Nichols, Philip Olsen, Robert Keith Torrens, Anthony Sinacore, Barbara A Kelly, Peter Racette

Liberty Central School District Board of Education