

*The Union*

**McKownville Improvement Association (contact Don Reeb, president, 489-3909)**

**Albany Corridor Study**

**August 23, 2004**

The changes being considered in the New York State Thruway Authority Albany Corridor Study will possibly cause the most significant changes for commuters in the Capital District since I-90 through Rensselaer County was built. The Draft Albany Corridor Study presents two different solutions to traffic tie-ups at the toll plazas or exits on the Thruway in the Capital District.

The one is to construct high speed EZPass lanes, but please note that about more than a few drivers do not use the EZPass.

The other--the Two Barrier Concept--eliminates all tollbooths at the most congested toll plaza, Exit 24. Instead, round trip tolls would be collected at Exit 23 and Exit 25. At Exit 23 the toll would be for a round trip from Exit 24 to 23, even if you traveled from Exit 25, for example. And the toll at Exit 25 would also be priced as if you came from exit 24. By charging a round trip toll no thruway ticket would be involved and three of the four stops commuters normally make to collect tickets and pay tolls each day would no longer be necessary. EZPass users would continue to pay tolls electronically at Exit 23 and 25. In time savings, the Two Barrier Concept has obvious advantages--and it benefits everyone.

The McKownville Improvement Association, the neighborhood that is near Exit 24, concluded that the Two Barrier Concept, with some modifications, presents the most advantages to the most people..

This new Concept provides significant savings--to commuters (in time of travel), to the

Thruway Authority (in budget outlays), and to those of us living near Exit 24 (in noise). And the new merged Concept, by lessening the “weaving” through Exit 24 provides for other benefits as well. It might eliminate the necessity for taking land from the PineBush for example. Too little attention has been given to the benefits from eliminating the toll booths at Exit 24 and collecting a round trip toll at Exit 23 and 25.

Make no mistake about it, we in McKownville continue to be unalterable opposed to the Western Avenue Flyover, a bridge flying over Western Avenue that would cause significant added noise in Woodscape and our other neighborhoods. The Association circulated a petition and has collected several hundred signatures in opposition to the Western Avenue Flyover. We continue to collect signatures in opposition to it. And we received the endorsement of the McKownville petition from all of our locally elected officials—Senator Breslin, Assemblyman McEneny, Supervisor Runion, County Legislator Commisso and others.

We, like everyone else, want to see not only our neighborhood improved but the lives of those living in other neighborhoods. We believe that the new modified Concept does just that. The Thruway has come up with a winning idea with the Two Barrier Concept and with some modifications it can be made better. The Albany Corridor Study is available at libraries and through the internet at