

***McKownville Improvement Association  
Organized 1924***

Mr. Michael Wyatt  
Region I District Office,  
Planning Bureau, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York State Department of Transportation  
328 State Street  
Schenectady, New York 12305

Dear Mike:

February 6, 2007

Thank you for meeting with John Esler and myself on January 29, 2007. You and Alma were wonderfully forthcoming in your explanations.

The NYSDOT study focused on the McKownville Reservoir Park is very important to us. Guilderland is in the first stages of using its recently received grant funds to create a more usable Park and your work has the potential to make the Park even better.

Several points that we emphasized at the meeting I want to list for you here—and add several that did not occur to us then.

We very much want to have a Park that has a continuous and sizable body of water. A simple walking path around our lovely reservoir is what we mostly seek but we assume that some Park patrons will choose to drive to the Park and therefore some of the land at the west end of the reservoir that belongs to the reservoir should be reserved for parking. Moreover, as John explained, at one time the reservoir was intensively used for ice-skating and it is important to us that even in the winter the pond be sizable enough to be used by skaters.

Replacement of the 36" culvert should be added to the study agenda. It is a bottleneck and causes some portion of the flooding problems on Western Avenue. Its replacement will not cure all of the flooding problem on Western Avenue though many of us believe that it will cure much of the flooding problem. (See C.T. Male report, *Route 20 @ Stuyvesant Plaza*, Alternative 1, page 5 where replacement of the culvert is listed as the first recommendation). Since the culvert is located under unused bare ground its replacement should not be financially burdensome.

Several collateral improvements will be occurring soon in the vicinity of the reservoir that might well impact on the study recommendations. These include: (1) a repaving of Fuller Road including new curbs and sidewalks and some rearrangement of storm water catch basins; (2) a repaving of Schoolhouse Road, again including curbs and sidewalks and catch basins and the section of Russell Road that includes the portion which crosses over the Krumkill; (3) a new sidewalk along the west side of McKown Road south to the entrance of Woodscape (the sidewalk will pass over the west branch of the Krumkill carrying the outflow from the reservoir); (4) new sidewalks along both sides of Western

Avenue from the City line to Fuller Road with some modification of storm water catch basins; and, (5) construction of another NanoTech building on the CESTM-University of Albany campus and expansion of related facilities such as natural gas lines, parking, and the addition of a holding pond on the CESTM campus. The natural gas lines, which may just have been completed, are in the area of the wetland stream that runs near Stuyvesant Plaza and the Northway. The changeover in the use of the Harriman campus will also be occurring. Depending on how the roads are realigned this may impact the drainage into the University pond and its flow into the Krumkill. The lawsuit that I am a party to involving Crossgates, the reservoir and Save the Pinebush need also be included if only because it documents the continuing problems with Crossgates and its impact on the reservoir. Crossgates appears to be ready to settle this case. And since the completion of the 1998 C.T. Male study of **Route 20 @ Stuyvesant Plaza** a new storm sewer line was constructed near the north side of Stuyvesant Plaza, to solve the drainage problems for the homes on Providence Street.

The view from here is that a major portion of the Western Avenue flooding occurs because of run-off from Crossgates, with augmentation from Stuyvesant Plaza, Fuller Road and other sources. As for the nitrogen and other unwanted wastes being washed into the Krumkill from various sources, at one time there was a large weed filled holding area (a classic wetland) for reservoir run-off near the McKown Road culvert. It was part of McKown Grove, a privately owned park and swimming area that ceased operation about 1974. The large area borders the stream near McKown Road and is still vacant. Silt now covers the entrances into the former wetland area. Making the old wetland again useable might prevent the flooding of McKown Road and aid in filtering some of the unwanted wastes.

It is wonderful that you and NYSDOT are prepared to try and solve the flooding problems near Western Avenue and also help improve the McKownville Reservoir Park. The flooding remediation work is long overdue (who needs another set of photos in the *Times-Union* showing Western Avenue flooded?) and undoubtedly NYSDOT would have liked to have done the work sooner, but then budgets are what they are.

John and I would love to have the opportunity to give you and others from your office a walking tour of the reservoir, the stream and the neighborhood—to see our area through our eyes. I will be calling your office in the next few days to see if this can be arranged.

My post office address is included below along with my email address and telephone number.

Sincerely,

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cc: Supervisor Runion, Assemblyman McEneny, John Esler