



STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - REGION ONE
328 STATE STREET
SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK 12305
www.nysdot.gov

BRIAN O. ROWBACK
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

ASTRID C. GLYNN
COMMISSIONER

February 23, 2009

Mr. Donald Reeb
McKownville Improvement Association
5 Norwood Street
Albany, NY 12203

Dear Mr. Reeb:

This letter is a follow-up to our interim response sent to you this past November 20, 2008. In that correspondence we wrote that it was our intention to have a camera inspection conducted of the Route 20 storm drainage system in the vicinity of 1445 Western Ave. The primary reason for this undertaking was to help us determine the cause of a sinkhole that has appeared near the edge of the shoulder on Route 20.

This inspection has been completed. The video was able to verify the existence of an 8-inch diameter vitrified clay pipe entering a NYS Department of Transportation (DOT) owned and maintained drainage catch basin (at the western corner of Glenwood Street and Route 20). To obtain further information, the video camera was inserted into this pipe and sent in the direction of the aforementioned sinkhole.

The camera was actually unable to reach the area of this sinkhole as the pipe was blocked by heavy root growth and sediment. Damage to sections of this clay pipe was also evident. Based on the gathered information before us, it is our conclusion that the existence of this sinkhole is directly related to some type of failure of this clay pipe.

We have reviewed our records and plans and have found no indication that this clay pipe was installed by or for New York State. It does not appear to serve as any part of the highway drainage system for Route 20. Rather, it appears to be part of an old combined sewer system serving the McKownville neighborhood adjacent to this section of Route 20. This conclusion is supported in part by the copy of the "Water Supply & Distribution System" plans dated 1948 that you provided to Mr. Michael Johnson, our Albany County Resident Engineer, this past summer.

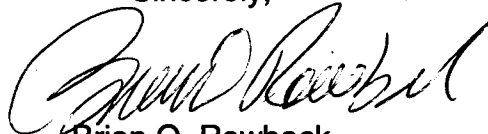
These plans do not indicate ownership. We are confident, however, that this system is not owned or maintained by the State. We will look to make remedial repairs to this sinkhole, but will not be undertaking any work on the drainage system itself.

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I have discussed this situation with Supervisor Runion and we both agree that this system, although largely abandoned and not serving a highway need, is a source of concern for the location where it's failure may lead to such holes. Although the Department is not compelled to address this old clay tile system as a whole, we are prepared to work with the town on any plans and financial resources identified to address the condition.

If you have any questions or comments, you may contact me at 388-0388.

Sincerely,



Brian O. Rowback

cc: Michael Johnson, Albany County Resident Engineer
Kenneth Runion, Supervisor, Town of Guilderland