

# Route 20 widening rapped

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GUILDERLAND— Residents of the McKownville area apparently are strongly opposed to a state proposal to widen Route 20 from the Albany city line to the Northway.

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Dr. Donald Reeb, president of the McKownville Improvement Association, said early returns of a mail survey sent earlier this month to more than 700 community residents are running 10-1 against the state Department of Transportation proposal. A final tabulation is expected later this week, Reeb said.

The form asks residents, "Do you want Western Avenue in McKownville to become another commercial strip like Central Avenue?"

DOT has not outlined specific plans for widening Route 20, but Reeb said, "As far as we can tell, the increased width of the road will increase the commercialization of Western Avenue. That's "we're opposed to.

Reeb said the association's drive for community support in fighting the road project has gained the backing of businesses now located along Western Avenue. He said widening the road would force the closing of smaller businesses because "parking would be eliminated."

Reeb said residents will mobilize at the fire house at 8 p.m. Tuesday to voice their opposition to a proposed plan to construct a Mexican restaurant on Western Avenue next to the fire house.

He said the group will also be present at a meeting of the town zoning board of appeals at 8 p.m. Friday when Salvatore Fiato, owner of the New Yorker Hair Stylists beauty shop at 1244 Western Ave. and the proposed owner of the restaurant apply for a special use permit and a variance for the eatery.