

Times Union

4/24/81

Walters: Mall liable for roads

By Tom Friedman
Staff Writer

Guilderland Town Supervisor Carl Walters informed the state Thursday that he doesn't think his town has any role in designing access roads for the proposed \$85 million Crossgates shopping mall. Walters said in a letter to state Environmental Conservation Commissioner Robert F. Flacke that state officials and mall developer Pyramid Crossgates Co. are responsible for the decision.

"I do not believe it is incumbent upon the town of Guilderland to propose an alternate..." Walters said of the Crossgates road design.

"The responsibility for developing a satisfactory traffic plan on state Route 20 rests with the developer and the state of New York Department of Transportation." Flacke asked Walters in a letter dated April 17 if he had any suggestions for an alternate road de-



CARL WALTERS

sign for the proposed mall that might be more to the liking of the town.

The Guilderland Town Board advised Flacke last month in a letter that it

thought the mall developer's use of Western Avenue (Route 20) would create traffic congestion in Westmere and McKownville.

Flacke is scheduled to announce early next week if he will reopen hearings to allow the public to discuss potential traffic and environmental problems associated with the mall proposal.

Pyramid Crossgates Co. has proposed \$6 million in road improvements for its mall, which is proposed for a 169-acre site between Washington Avenue Extension and Western Avenue.

The improvements call for ramps from Washington Avenue Extension to a road encircling the mall, widening of Western Avenue from four to six lanes and an entrance-exit on Western Avenue and a ramp connecting the Northway with the road encircling the mall.

In his letter to Flacke, Walters said the town has no official position concerning the planning of Western Avenue. But he said the town has long considered a road paralleling Western Avenue to lessen congestion.

"My candid personal opinion, for what it is worth, is that a major artery parallel to Route 20 that could lessen the current traffic congestion is necessary. "In summary, our position with regard to future traffic projections and plans is that levels of service be generally maintained at least at present levels, and to the extent practicable, improved specifically at peak rush hours."

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