

March 3, 1983

Mr. Paul Cooney, County Engineer
Albany County Highway Department
Vorheesville, NY 12186

Dear Mr. Cooney:

I am a resident of McKownville and am writing you about a traffic condition on Fuller Road that is unsafe and can be corrected at a relatively modest expense. It is hoped that you will take whatever action is within your authority to correct the condition.

About 5,000 students live at the uptown campus of the State University. A great many of these students go to Styvesant Plaza to do their shopping periodically. Those that walk exit the university at the access road just south of the power plant and walk down Fuller Road on one or both sides of the street in order to reach the plaza. Unfortunately, making this trip on foot can be a real safety hazard.

The first problem is that of walking along Fuller Road. The east side of the road has no walkway because of power company poles and a drainage ditch in the place where a walkway would normally be. The west side of Fuller Road is better but the sidewalks are limited to the stretch between the plaza and Mercer Street. A drainage ditch extends north from Mercer and this leaves about 75 feet as a gap between the end of the sidewalk and the intersection of the access road with Fuller.

The next problem is in crossing from one side of Fuller to the other side. There is no traffic light at the access road intersection and traffic on Fuller is heavy at times. According to a DOT traffic study made in 1979 the average weekday level on Fuller between 7 am and 8 pm is more than one vehicle every 6 seconds and this rises to about one every 3 seconds during the period between 4 and 5 pm.

This intersection at the access road near the power plant and Fuller Road is the one most frequently used by students walking to and from the plaza for shopping and it is the only logical place to cross Fuller Road. As you may recall, a student was struck by a vehicle at this intersection a few years ago and died as a result. I'm betting it will happen again before long.

One added complicating feature is that following heavy snow falls the students share the roadway itself with the cars. The sidewalks, such as they are, are not kept free of snow. The plows on Fuller Road do try to remove the drifts on the west side of the roadway but still leave several inches of snow and ice so that students seem to prefer to walk in the roadway. The whole thing is a situation crying out for remedial action.

Let me suggest one plan that may help the condition. First, the sidewalk on the west side of Fuller should be extended 75 or 100 feet north of Mercer so that a person crossing at the university access intersection has a sidewalk instead of a drainage ditch to walk in. Second, a traffic light with push button controls should be installed at the intersection. Perhaps the light farther north on Fuller installed for the benefit of the university maintenance department could be moved to the intersection in question. And finally, arrangements should be made to plow the walkway between the access road and the plaza. Perhaps the County could do this or a contract let for the work but it should be done to keep the students out of the heavily traveled roadway during the long hours of darkness in the winter.

Please give this your attention and respond at an early date. The situation is dangerous and begs for action. I will appreciate being kept informed.

Sincerely yours,

Jim Lane
44 Providence St.
Albany, NY 12203