

# The McKownville Improvement Association

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June 8, 1985

Vincent O'Leary, President  
State University of New York, Albany  
1400 Washington Ave.  
Albany, NY 12222

Dear President O'Leary:

About two years ago the McKownville Improvement Association contacted the Albany County Engineer about a hazardous traffic condition of Fuller Road (County Route 156) that is of particular danger to SUNYA students. The County Engineer was asked to take action to correct this condition.

Briefly, the problem is as follows: Many students walk between the uptown campus and Styvesant Plaza for shopping purposes. As a rule, they exit the university at the access road between the university and Fuller Road just south of the power plant. They then walk south on Fuller to the plaza, crossing Fuller whenever the opportunity seems best. They return to the campus the same way.

As you no doubt know, the east side of Fuller has no walkway because of power poles and a drainage ditch in the place where a walkway would normally be placed. The west side of Fuller has a sidewalk extending from the plaza to Mercer Street. Above Mercer there is also a drainage ditch on the west side. This leaves a 75 foot gap between the end of the sidewalk and the intersection of the university access road with Fuller. There is no traffic light at any of the intersections on Fuller between the university access road north of the power plant and the one at the junction of Fuller and Western Avenue.

According to a NYS Dept. of Transportation study made in 1979, Fuller Road carries a maximum load of one vehicle every 3 to 4 seconds during the evening rush hour. It is reasonable to expect this frequency to be even higher in 1985. Within the past 10 years at least one student died as a result of being struck by a car when crossing Fuller Road on foot. Although we don't have the details on this incident the record is on file in the Office of Student Affairs at SUNYA.


A complicating factor is that following a heavy snow fall the students must share the roadway itself with cars. This is because the sidewalk is not kept free of snow and the plows on Fuller throw snow from the roadway onto the sidewalk area. This results in people walking along Fuller to prefer walking in the roadway instead of the sidewalk area. Too, darkness arrives early during the snow months making it more difficult to see people walking.

We asked the County to take three actions. We asked that the sidewalk on the west side of Fuller be extended 75 or 100 feet on north beyond Mercer so that a person crossing at the university access road has a sidewalk instead of a drainage ditch when he or she reaches the west side of the street. We also asked that a pedestrian operated traffic signal light be installed at the access road intersection. And finally, we asked the County to explore the possibility of plowing or contracting for plowing the sidewalk on the west side of Fuller during the snow months.

The original letter to the County Engineer was written March 3, 1983. This was followed up with letters several months later documenting the traffic count on Fuller and the incident of the student's death when struck by a car while crossing Fuller Road. No action has been taken by the County and apparently none is intended at this time.

It is with this in mind that we solicit the interest of the University in this on-going hazardous safety condition. One or more members of our Association would be happy to meet with you or whomever you designate to discuss the possibilities of appropriate efforts to remedy the present danger to pedestrians, whether student or non-student, who frequently use this walkway.

Sincerely,

  
James D. Lane  
304 Ridgewood Circle  
Albany, NY 12203

cc: Kevin Moss, Supervisor  
Town of Guilderland

Lewis Welch, Vice-President  
University Affairs, SUNYA