

Final meeting with Sloatsburg sends DOT back to drawing board

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BY KATHY KAHN

In a mission to make Route 17 in Sloatsburg more manageable for village residents and businesses, the NYS Department of Transportation and its planner from Creighton Manning came to Village Hall on Tuesday, March 13 to finalize plans for restructuring the corridor.

With the improvements Michael Bruno has made to downtown Sloatsburg to make it a tourism destination for those travelling the Route 17 corridor, and prep work for the 1,100 Tuxedo Farms development completed, the village would like to see the cars speeding through the sleepy village slow down and take in the sights—that includes watching out for pedestrians trying to cross the street.

The DOT had its fourth and final project meeting with residents Tuesday evening, getting input on where turn lanes should be placed, as well as discussing the placement a small raised median between the four-lane state highway in the heart of

the village, enabling pedestrians to have a place to stand if they can't get all the way across the road at one time. The original four lanes will remain in the heart of the village, said the DOT, because trying to create one lane in each direction with a turning lane in the middle would bring the heavily travelled commuter road to a standstill at peak times.

Rather than create more of a traffic nightmare, the DOT opted to make the highway converge into three lanes when it reaches 7 Lakes Drive going north. (The turn light at that intersection leads into Harriman State Park.)

The \$4 million DOT project will be combined with a \$600,000 grant Sloatsburg received to bring its sidewalks up to American Disability Act (ADA) code. The project includes repaving the entire length of Route 17 within the village boundaries, receiving a welcome sigh of relief from those who dodge potholes.

What will happen when the repair/renovation reaches the Town of Tuxedo in Orange County, right on Sloatsburg's border, is not in the equation. "The goal of the hybrid 'road diet' is to make downtown Sloatsburg a desirable, walkable community," said Mark Sargent, Sr. Project Manager at Creighton Manning, based in Albany.

The DOT will return for its final meeting with the village board and the residents in September, laying out final plan for work to begin. Work is expected to begin in 2019 and end by 2020.