

TOWN OF CLARKSTOWN
INFORMATIONAL MEETING
ROUTE 59 CORRIDOR
2/9/87

1

Town Hall

8:02 P.M.

Present: Supervisor Holbrook
Councilmen Carey, Lettre, and Councilwoman
Smith - Councilman Maloney absent
John Costa, Town Attorney
Patricia Sheridan, Town Clerk

Supervisor declared the Informational Meeting open.
Assemblage saluted the Flag.

Supervisor stated that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss the Route 59 Corridor Land Use and Traffic Study which was written last year at the behest of the Town Board by our consultants, Raymond, Parish, Pine and Weiner. Since the publication of this report it has been the subject of much discussion both here and at the DOT level in Poughkeepsie. There have been meetings this year with the DOT concerning Route 59 in the Nanuet vicinity which is a painfully difficult place to get through with a car and has been for many years. However, Supervisor said they have been assured by people from the State that if Town and residents could come together on some plans the State would be prepared to go forward with these plans.

Supervisor said the State has taken the approach that they are not going to come and solve our problems for us only to find later that they are shot down section by section at various meetings which come after. He said they want us to use our report as a basis for brainstorming some of the problems, come up with some solutions, get some public input and discussion and then come back to them with some public support as well as Town Board support for the proposals which we put forward. Then the State can be relatively confident that they can come forward with the improvements so desperately needed.

Supervisor said that after this evening we will have some idea of what the public wants and then we can proceed on to the next step and hopefully it will not be too long before some improvements take place. The Town does intend to make improvements as well as the County. We are the only municipality in the County to take some initiative toward dealing on their own with some of these problems. It is a direction the State wants other municipalities to take rather than just going to the State and saying come and fix our problems.

Supervisor then introduced the Town Planning Consultant, Mr. Robert Geneslaw, to briefly explain some of the proposals outlined in the Corridor Study and Land Use and Traffic Study. After he is finished the Town Board will be able to ask questions and certainly anyone from the public who is prepared to make a statement will be heard.

Mr. Robert Geneslaw introduced Mr. John Sarna, Director of Traffic Engineering for Raymond, Parish, Pine and Weiner and Wes Bruckno, who is the Project Planner and either of them may be able to answer questions.

Mr. Geneslaw said the impetus for the Route 59 Land Use and Traffic Study came about as the Planning Board was reviewing a proposal for property on Middletown Road. The Planning Board asked for a traffic study from the developer and the results of that traffic study from the developer were that the intersection of Route 59 and Middletown Road was at about capacity in mid 1985 without the proposed shopping center. Because of that and the Planning Board's concern the Town Board was asked to take a look at the entire Route 59 Corridor in the Nanuet area and to propose a moratorium on development to give the Planning Board and the consultants an opportunity to look at the entire corridor area.

Continued on Next Page

ABE740

Mr. Geneslaw went on to say that the study is somewhat unique in that it is not simply a traffic study. It is a traffic study combined with a land use study. He said they tried to look at the traffic impacts which were there at that time (the first half of 1986) and look at the potential for additional traffic based on development that could occur in accordance with the present zoning at that time in the same corridor and to try to determine what level of road improvement would be necessary to meet the traffic which could result from the zoning already in place. In order to do that traffic was counted at major intersections on various Saturdays and weekdays in March and April of 1986. We compared our traffic counts with traffic counts we had from developers proposals over the last couple of years. Where the counts were consistent we used them. Where the developers counts were much lower we rejected them. From that we were able to ascertain how much traffic was actually using the system. We also calculated the theoretical capacity of the roads based on traffic engineering standards. From that we made an evaluation of how much reserve capacity might be available.

Mr. Geneslaw said in order to summarize the material that was collected, analyzed and digested he would refer to vehicle capacity ratios which is the standard traffic engineers use to measure the relationship of the amount of traffic that is on the system with the amount of traffic the system can handle. The figure of 1.0 would be capacity. The figure of .86 or less is generally considered to be under capacity. From .86 to 1 is about at capacity and over 1 is over capacity. We found that a number of the intersections along the Route 59 Corridor from Smith to Grandview were at capacity. Some were above .86 and close enough to capacity so that even without new development they would reach capacity because of increased traffic in the area generally with no new generating traffic being responsible for it.

Mr. Geneslaw said they then looked at the amount of development that could take place under present zoning within the corridor. The Nanuet Mall is about 765,000 square feet of retail space. The Service Merchandise/Crazy Eddie Mall is about 230,000 square feet of retail space and the old Grandway Mall is about 250,000 square feet of retail space. We found that based on the zoning in place at the time we did the study within the study area there could be about 400 additional dwelling units mostly in the Pipetown Hill Road area; 1,000 additional units at Kingsgate which feeds into the Route 59 corridor; about 200,000 square feet still available at the airport (even if the airport were operating based on a plan approved about five years ago); about 400,000 square feet of additional retail space; about 200,000 square feet of office space and about 235,000 square feet of industrial space, most of it fronting directly on Route 59.

Mr. Geneslaw said in general terms you can visualize 1400 dwelling units in the same square feet that are at the Nanuet Mall coming into the corridor under the present zoning if nothing was done. He said they looked at would that would generate in the way of traffic and what it would do to the intersection. Obviously it would load up the intersections even more. To give you a generalized picture of what it would be, based on the traffic analysis and the increasing development, (including the Spring Valley Market Place) the intersection of Grand View and Route 59 would become similar to the intersection of Middletown Road and Route 59 in about two years. Middletown and 59 would not get any better either.

Obviously, we did not like those figures. We spoke to DOT fairly early in the study. They told us that based on the needs in their seven county region that are handled out of Poughkeepsie improvements to Route 59 in Nanuet weren't even on a program yet. They did not think it would get on a program for five to ten years. That does not mean construction; that means getting it on to the list. Our attitude at that time was, since that is a state highway,

the State has a primary responsibility for taking care of it. There is nothing that the Town can do, on its own, that would meet the real need.

The real need would be to add one or two lanes to Route 59 through its length roughly from the Palisades Parkway to Grandview or beyond. That is clearly beyond the ability of the Town to finance without any question. We looked at what might be done short of that. We came up with several things: Intersection improvements to most of the intersections from Smith Road to Grandview and these are all identified in a summary report (copies of this report were readily available.) We also suggested a number of zoning changes which were intended to reduce the peak hour traffic adjacent to Route 59. Mr. Geneslaw said in recommending zoning changes there has to be a recognition that the property has value and that the value cannot be eliminated from the property. A reasonable change made by the Town consistent with meeting Town objectives would be supportable. It was a matter of finding what kinds of changes would be appropriate. Those are also listed in the summary available.

Mr. Geneslaw said they had suggested that the Town look into the possibility of eliminating the tax abatement given to new development particularly in that area. Nanuet, right now, is considered to be one of the hottest retail areas in the State if not in the country. To us there does not seem to be a strong reason to grant a tax abatement to a developer to build in a situation like that. Tax abatements should be used to encourage development in areas that need an incentive or to produce jobs that are desirable for the community. We have not been able to establish whether the Town can limit the areas in which it grants a tax abatement. That needs to be researched. We feel that one thing that might be done to slow down some of the development in Nanuet would be to look into that question. Zone changes can be done very quickly. Requests to DOT to carry out improvements beyond the intersection improvements can be done very quickly. However, this is not the DOT program for some time.

In discussing the report with DOT they said several things. First of all they complimented the Town on undertaking something on its own with its own funds which is relatively rare. Because of it, Clarkstown is getting increasing attention from DOT. What they have told us, informally, is that if the Town can move forward to further develop a proposal and discuss it with DOT there would be the possibility of getting that five to ten year time frame reduced perhaps cut in half in order to get significant improvements on Route 59 itself. In order to do that the Town would have to indicate its support of most if not all of the features of the plan and to get public support from the business community and the residents in the Nanuet area and to find a way to finance some of it with money other than that provided by DOT.

At this point DOT probably has requests that are five to ten times the amount of money available. In order to make that money go as far as it can they are looking for communities to provide some support. This is not unique to Clarkstown or Rockland County or this region. It is something the DOT is doing across the state. Where some alternate forms of funding can be found to advance things they will be much more receptive. In this report we have suggested several ways that the Town might seek what we will call for the moment creative financing. He thought it important that the public understand that tonight is not the end of the process - in effect it is the beginning of the process. It is a matter of the Town Board deciding from here on what steps it wants to take and to encourage DOT to create a priority for Route 59 in Clarkstown.

One of the items suggested is equivalent to a road improvement district which would have the property owners fronting

ABE740

on Route 59 or just off Route 59 and contributing traffic subject to a special tax that would be used specifically for the cost of the improvements on Route 59. The reason for this is that the Town has traditionally gotten some road improvements from large developers as they have come it. It is very difficult to get a small developer, typically a fast food place or a free standing retail store, to do very much except for fixing the driveway in front of their place or maybe putting in a signal or doing some curbing.

We are not likely to get large scale development along Route 59 in the corridor except for a couple of places possibly in expansion at the Mall, for example. To provide some kind of reasonable improvement in the Route 59 corridor there has to be an alternate way of financing it and it seems to us that since the existing businesses are the ones who benefit mostly from it that some of the cost should come from the existing businesses. One of the things we are suggesting is the Town explore using something equivalent to a road improvement district to finance a part of this.

The second way of financing part of it would be the usual contributions by developers as they build. Developers often resist doing improvements particularly when they are not immediately adjacent to the property. In many states it is becoming increasingly common to require developers to carry out road improvements or drainage improvements off site in order to accommodate the development they are proposing.

The third way of financing is to work on an impact fee of one kind or another that any new development would pay in lieu of or in addition to specific improvements at their front door where their driveway meets Route 59. All of these should be explored as all are possibilities. A fourth way of financing would be a use of a portion of the County sales tax since Route 59 is the major commercial center for the County. We know the County Executive has opposed that and we are not suggesting that is the only solution but there needs to be some way found to finance improvements along Route 59 without waiting for DOT. If the Town waits for DOT then we may well be talking five to ten years before anything specific is done. The improvements that we recommend in the report we have prepared will be the equivalent of buying some time - three to five years - and then having the situation back to approximately what it is now. These ideas are all feasible and can be done relatively inexpensively but they only buy three to five years. It does not really solve the problem.

Mr. Geneslaw went on to say that in order to do this right - to do the widening along all of Route 59 which could mean one or two additional lanes with turning lanes at the intersections - it will absolutely mean that some private property will have to be acquired. It means that some buildings will have to be demolished. It means some businesses will have to be relocated. It may even mean some residences will have to be demolished. The DOT have told us each time we have met with them or spoken with them over the telephone that if they get public support and Town Board support they will be willing to undertake a major reconstruction. They will be willing to undertake the displacement that goes along with it. Without the displacement the traffic engineering standards which they want to maintain cannot be met. We anticipate they will make that a requirement somewhere along the way.

Mr. Geneslaw said he has avoided going into most of the details of the study because he felt that two-thirds of the audience are people who have heard the presentation before and are people who have given us information all the way through and even before we were doing the study. He therefore stated that he wanted to leave time for questions either on the study or on the suggestions we are making for financing.

He then asked Mr. Bruckno and Mr. Sarna if there was anything of importance which they would like to add.

Continued on Next Page

Supervisor asked if they would highlight some of the improvements in terms of traffic. Mr. Geneslaw said at the intersection of Pascack Road and Old Nyack Turnpike an additional lane for southbound Pascack to turn left into Old Nyack Turnpike; an additional lane on Old Nyack Turnpike to turn right onto Pascack; and an additional lane coming off the Parkway ramp to turn right to go south on Pascack. At Grandview - to eliminate the left turn lane from eastbound Route 59 onto the Thruway at the Holiday Inn. One of the problems we found is that there is not enough green time on the signals on Route 59 and by eliminating that left turn we can get more green time for vehicles that want to go west toward Spring Valley. The basic problem is that the intersections cannot handle the volume of traffic that wants to go through. One way to try to deal with that is either put in two left turn lanes in some places or eliminate the left turn lanes. In the case of Grandview and Route 59 we are suggesting that the left turn lane from Route 59 east onto the Thruway be eliminated; that the Thruway off ramp be widened and have an additional lane where it meets Route 59; and that Granview north at Route 59 have an additional lane.

At Middletown Road, Mr. Geneslaw said, they are suggesting additional lanes from Middletown, north and south at Route 59. At Smith, they are recommending an additional lane southbound on Smith with signage for traffic that is westbound on Route 59 to get to Route 304 (the present signage is there but not very prominent) we would like them to turn right after Route 304 instead of turning left to get some of the traffic away from the area around the mobile car wash and the back entrance to the Service Merchandise shopping center. That left turn lane blocks up. You can do the same thing if you want to go towards Pearl River by turning right from Route 59 going up towards Caldor. Better signage will encourage more people to do that. We are suggesting that the Town look into a left turn lane from Route 59 into the Service Merchandise shopping center again to try to help free up that intersection. In virtually every case it is the intersection problems that are the worst. We are trying to relieve those with additional turning lanes.

Mr. Geneslaw said he was sure everyone could think about parking that is close to the intersection or buildings which are close to the intersection. In order to get the improvements there will have to be displacement which DOT is talking about.

Supervisor said when you are talking about the intersections and the additional lanes are you talking about lanes for the extent of the corridor or lanes at the intersection itself? Mr. Geneslaw said they would be at the intersection itself and they would vary in length depending upon the amount of traffic that we have counted that want to make various movements. The lanes might be longer in some cases than in others.

Mr. Geneslaw then referred to College Avenue and Route 59. He said northbound College Avenue at Route 59 there should be an additional lane for right turns and for southbound College, there is a right turn lane now but it is very narrow and it needs to be widened. Supervisor said then you are not talking about extending a lane all the way up Route 59, at this point, only at the intersections.

Mr. Geneslaw said they recommended in the report that it be at the intersections. One of the comments made by DOT when they reviewed this was that what we have recommended makes sense and it will reduce the vehicle capacity ratio. What it won't do is provide the significant kind of relief which everyone agrees is needed. In some cases even though there may be improvement the perception of the driver using the intersection may not recognize it to be a significant increase. We, therefore, come back again to needing the real additional lane improvement on Route 59 itself. If the Town is agreeable some arrangement can be worked out with DOT

Continued on Next Page

ABE740

for the funding recognizing that in addition to the displacement and the actual cost of construction there is a railroad trestle that at this point is probably the narrowest feature of the entire corridor. That trestle needs to be replaced. The entire rail structure needs replacement. It is a very expensive proposition and certainly nothing the Town could do. This is one of the reasons that the DOT is not anxious to do work in that area. If there is a contribution from non-DOT sources we are reasonably confident that Clarkstown will be higher up on the priority list of DOT.

Supervisor said then there are certain things which can be done with DOT's blessing very quickly. Mr. Geneslaw said yes. Supervisor said there are other things that will take a little more time but if the Town Board endorses them with public support the DOT would be willing to move up and look toward the long range on Route 59. Mr. Geneslaw said we can cut that long range in half so that we can begin to see some improvements in maybe four to five years which may seem long to us but in terms of DOT's calendar is pretty soon.

Supervisor said in terms of some of the things about which we are talking here at the intersections, what would be the timetable for those, if they were endorsed by the Town Board with public input? Mr. Geneslaw said he thought what DOT would probably say is extend the analysis that has already been made a little further to figure out how much widening Route 59 would need and the intersection would need to get the kind of improvement everybody wants. Then take that and break it down into segments so that the worst parts of it can be done. It may be possible to do one or two of the worst intersections without waiting for the Route 59 corridor to be done. If an intersection is done within the design set for the whole thing then they know it will work when they get to designing the whole business. It is just the idea of getting the approval for rebuilding the trestle and doing the engineering which is a very lengthy procedure and it is entirely possible that once design is set for the balance that some of the intersections which are now a problem could be done.

Mr. Geneslaw said it is also possible that there will be some developer proposals in the corridor and once we know what is needed when the developer makes a proposal we can try to tie those proposals in to what would be done and that could become part of a non-DOT share of the project.

Councilwoman Smith asked that in addition to the main intersections that you speak about in this report has there been any consideration given to, and what would it take to bring to the Service Merchandise shopping center, what exists in the Nanuet Mall and Marshall's, namely that you can go out and go east or west because that is one is giving us the problem on Grace and Orchard. Those people cannot get out of that shopping center to go to the Nanuet Mall. Is there any way that the Caldor intersection can be lined up with an intersection at the Service Merchandise and permit traffic to flow. Mr. Geneslaw said it is certainly possible to do it physically but the question is whether any of the restaurants are in the way. There are several restaurants out in the front.

Councilwoman Smith said how about a little further west down at Sneaker Town where they say there is a lot of land but it is just not graded appropriately and the access is not correct. Can we look at that to get an intersection to have the traffic flow west. Mr. Geneslaw said it is possible and it would probably be possible to get a signal there.

Councilwoman Smith said when you enter the Nanuet Mall you must go down one lane and then make your decision to go either right or left or whatever. You come into Service Merchandise and you don't know where to go. They are coming at you from all aisles and fifty feet down some more are coming at you. Maybe that should be one road in and as you got in to go either right or left. Mr. Geneslaw said there is no question that it should be.

(At this point Councilman Carey and Town Attorney Costa left the meeting.)

Supervisor said with regard to Grace and Orchard Street where First Street comes down to Route 59 perhaps an access from the shopping center on to that street should be considered where cars would be able to turn left and take the extension of First all the way into the Nanuet Mall.

Councilwoman Smith said neither one of those streets was meant to be a main access in or out to that shopping center. Can you really close them off without getting the traffic out some other way without overburdening Smith and 59 and Church and Middletown Road itself in Nanuet? Councilman Lettre said that traffic is ending up in that particular location anyway.

Supervisor said most residents would agree that if you could make an access from the vacant parcel onto First Avenue that you could in effect cut the two streets off because that traffic which would be going to the Mall would take First Street right into the Mall as opposed to going out onto Church Street, making a right and then making a left. That is something that we will be looking at in the future. Mr. Geneslaw said before you close either one of them traffic counts be done to establish how many vehicles are really using it and where they are going to go.

Councilwoman Smith asked in how short a time can we get an intersection out of that shopping center that would go west? Mr. Geneslaw said that is a good example of something that could be done independently of all the rest once the design is finished. It doesn't affect the trestle, it doesn't affect College, it doesn't affect Middletown and that could be undertaken as a project by itself once we know it will fit in the overall puzzle. If the Town Board is agreeable to taking the approach we have outlined we need to talk to DOT next and establish a timetable for getting a firmer design for the whole thing so we know as pieces are done they are going to fit it. That is one where either DOT money could be used or if one of the shopping centers wished to expand that could be included as a requirement that that work be done.

Supervisor asked if any other Board Members had any questions. No one did.

Supervisor asked if there was anyone from the audience wishing to speak.

Appearance: Mr. Armand Miele
Nanuet, New York

Mr. Miele said we could open up First Street and do the exact same thing as was done in New City on Main Street and have three lanes - two lanes and a center lane for turning either right or left. Coming from Pearl River going into First Street to the Mall if we could put a sign "No Left Turn" from the hours of say 12:00 until 6:00 so they would have to make their turn at the next traffic light because the street is wider.

Appearance: Mr. Al Rossi
Hutton Avenue
Nanuet, New York

Mr. Rossi said with regard to the old Korvette Shopping Center he felt we have to decide for whom we are responsible and for what. The problems are not from the people in Clarkstown and in particular Nanuet. Route 59 is a county-wide problem. We should look at the possibility of closing off those streets (Grace and Orchard) and let the problems fall on the owners of the shopping center. If they have problems maybe then they will come up with a solution. We can see what the impact would be on our people if we do close those roads.

Continued on Next Page

ABE740

Councilman Lettre said two of the main suggestions made by the Town Board in funding any of these major projects would be either through a road improvement district which would be paid for by either abutting or properties utilizing the Route 59 Corridor and/or the proposal that had been made and which fell on deaf ears but the realistic proposal being that the County cough up sales tax dollars towards the improvements on Route 59. That is a realistic proposal. The money should be appropriated towards projects such as this especially where the revenue is generated from. The Town Board is not proposing in any of these projects to use taxpayer tax dollars toward improvements. We recognize the fact that the improvements although they would be beneficial to the citizens of the Town they will be most beneficial to the shop owners or the shopping center owners who have properties along this corridor. They should cough up a great deal of the money to improve it.

Councilman Lettre went on to say that we should also look toward an alternative which would be a road improvement tax which would generate tax dollars not from the taxpayers of the Town but from the property owners along the corridor.

Apperance: Mr. Jack Cuff

He felt you were talking an awful lot of money to buy a couple of lanes considering the properties doing business there. He discussed the band-aid approach and said he could not imagine the legal process being completed in three to five years and that it was not realistic to imagine that retailers would sell their property to the Town for road widening.

Mr. Cuff wanted "expansion at the Mall" explained. He got the feeling that we were saturated with shopping here in Clarkstown and wanted no more retail operations. He believed that the development of the Pyramid property at Route 303 and Route 59 would alleviate some of the traffic situation in Nanuet.

He said considering Nanuet is one of the hottest retail areas in the country who would give up this prime real estate to widen roads, etc. except through condemnation proceedings? Maybe we should reconsider the \$10,000,000.00 which Pyramid wanted to give us down in West Nyack which would be a good start toward the road improvements we need in that section.

Supervisor said if Pyramid wanted to give the Town a gift of \$10,000,000.00 to improve the area we are talking about we would certainly consider their offer. Mr. Cuff said a developer could not be expected to come in and solve other developer's problems.

Mr. Cuff questioned tax abatements and Supervisor said we were talking about the elimination of abatements.

Supervisor said if the intersections were improved they would have to be improved to the level that they would fit into what the entire project would be like when they widened Route 59. They would be useful in the sense that they would be built to the capacity to handle traffic when the other lanes were expanded for the full length. Supervisor said there was an alternative in that we could possibly take some land at intersections, moving over a little bit and taking land more available rather than knocking down buildings.

Mr. Cuff asked if we did have to go into condemnation would that take a long period of time?

Mr. Geneslaw said it would be expensive. The intersection will have to be improved whether short term or long term. Property owners of course will not offer to sell their land to the Town at prices less than market price. The Town should not

pay for the land out its money. Primarily it is a DOT obligation. There are County roads involved and so there is a County obligation. Some of the funding, one way or the other, whether in the form of construction, contribution or taxes, will have to come from the private developers who have properties along Route 59. If that doesn't happen we simply wait for Route 59 to get to the top of the DOT list. The kind of decision the Town Board faces is do we wait for DOT and tolerate the situation the way it is watching it get worse every year or does the Town try to do something to shorten that time period and get a contribution from other people.

Mr. Geneslaw said with regard to tax abatement right now the Town participates on a Section 485 B of the Real Estate Tax Law of the State which basically says any new commercial or industrial development can get a tax abatement. It is almost automatic anywhere in Town - new commercial or industrial and substantial additions can get a tax abatement. Routinely most of them do. We are suggesting that if Nanuet is so popular and Route 59 is such a terrific place to do retail business, what do we need a tax abatement for to encourage people to go there? Why not get full taxes out of that. We are suggesting the Town look into elimination of the tax abatement in the Route 59 Corridor. In Westchester, Nassau and part of Suffolk Counties, school districts and towns that have been giving the abatement are taking it away because they feel they are getting so much development they don't need to encourage people. Can we take a piece of the town and not subject it to abatement?

Mr. Geneslaw said is three to five years enough of an improvement for the kind of dollars involved? Supervisor said finding out that the DOT does want to help is a good move.

Mr. Geneslaw said as to doing Middletown and 59 in three to five years with all the properties there if condemnation is involved it might take longer but some of the intersections where there is no building it would probably go faster. If we can get a system where we have designed the whole thing from one end to another then as opportunities come up we can take advantage of them.

Appearance: Mrs. Ferretti

She said with the new mall that is being built up by the airport off the Thruway at Exit 14 there would be less traffic in Nanuet. Mr. Geneslaw said what is going to happen, he thinks, is that you are going to shift some shopping towards the west. As people either go from the center of Nanuet to the Market Place to either comparison shop or buy then we are going to see some redistribution. If there are retailers there who are not presently in Nanuet it may attract more people into the Nanuet area. In addition to the redistribution there may be some new traffic.

Mrs. Ferretti said the traffic could go by way of the Thruway if they are going west. Isn't there going to be some kind of service ramp that will go right into that mall? Mr. Geneslaw said as the construction is approved the access is from what would be an extension of Hopf Road. Hopf Road is the one that you would take from Route 59 down to Pascack. That will be an extension to the north and is under construction now. That would eventually go to the railroad and beyond but that will be the entrance to the Spring Valley Market Place - and the only entrance.

Mr. Geneslaw said the Market Place will be roughly half the size of the Nanuet Mall and it will not have the same attraction. He said most of the retailers who are going to be at the Market Place are already in Bergen and Westchester so they will probably not attract a lot of traffic. Rockland traffic will just have one more place to shop.

Mrs. Ferretti questioned the timing of traffic lights so that traffic could flow through.

Continued on Next Page

ABE740

Mr. Sarna said the reason you can go on many streets uninterrupted by traffic lights is that the traffic is going in one direction. On Route 59 you have heavy traffic in both directions. It is almost impossible to get a decent progression in two directions. If you favor one, you hurt the other. That would be the problem on Route 59. Traffic today on Route 59 is reasonably balanced and there is no heavy flow in one direction. Mrs. Ferretti said she was talking of Middletown Road and the backup on weekends. She also mentioned Lederle traffic during the week. Mr. Sarna said signal progression on Middletown Road is not the problem. It is simply a matter of more cars than can be handled on the existing narrow road. Additional lanes is the only thing that will handle the traffic adequately. Mrs. Ferretti said there is not enough green time going north and south. Mr. Sarna said the only way you get more green time going north and south is to take it away from east and west. You are using all of the available green time on all approaches. The heavier traffic is from east-west at that point and the State is giving preference to it.

Mrs. Ferretti asked that a sign indicating "Left Turn on Green Arrow Only" be installed at Middletown and Route 59. Supervisor said he would write a letter requesting that tomorrow. Mrs. Ferretti referred to figure 20 in the study and Mr. Geneslaw again reiterated his comments as to displacement. Discussion regarding the intersection of Middletown Road and Route 59 and as to how the intersection could be improved ensued.

Appearance: Mr. Duffy
Nanuet, New York

Mr. Duffy discussed taking away the tax abatement from developers. He wanted to know for whose convenience are we widening Route 59? He said there is drugs and crime in Nanuet. He felt all the costs of improvements should be borne by the developers. He said the Town Board is a developer's board. He said the Planning Board threw out part of the Town study before anyone got a chance to look at it because it would hurt the developers. He said twenty years ago he argued against the development of the Mall and was told that twenty years from now you won't be paying any taxes. The taxes have gone up 500%. He felt that a portion of the sales tax of the County should certainly be returned to the Town of Clarkstown.

We can make improvements but we must take into consideration the people who live there and who have built this little hamlet. He discussed the traffic problems in Nanuet. He said to take away all tax abatements from any future development and impose a super tax for any future developments. Offer an abatement to bring in what we need in this Town and that is housing. He said he would not like to see Nanuet separate from the Town of Clarkstown but better representation is needed for this hamlet.

He suggested that there be no left hand turns anywhere except at existing lights. Why not have a referendum on this and see what the people of the Town want? He said let them build another mall in West Nyack and another one in Pomona and take them away from Nanuet.

Supervisor said in regard to the sales tax some of the proceeds should certainly be used to improve Route 59. With regard to the intersections he said Mr. Duffy's suggestion is a viable one. Developers paying for the improvements is a good suggestion and he did not think there should be any abatements. Developers should make a contribution substantial enough to make an impact to the State to show that we are serious in trying to alleviate the problems. Intersection improvements are not enough. Contributions from the developers would facilitate the timetable on these. We are attempting to take a step forward and have the some of the wealth accumulated by the builders go back to the improvements of the roads which the people in the area have to traverse to get across Town.

Continued on Next Page

Mr. Geneslaw said with regard to no left turns being allowed the people are going to have to go somewhere and turn around and come back again. The intersections they would have to use to turn around are at or above capacity now. By not allowing left turns in between the intersections will be made worse.

Appearance: Mr. Rick Lowe, President
Nanuet Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Lowe owns a business in Nanuet. He chose it because of the community and it is a good place to do business. If the community has a problem with the traffic that business is generating it is also business's problem. It is not just a problem of one group or the other. He discussed problems with changing zones. The Town should improve the secondary roads in Nanuet to alleviate the access to and from Route 59. The Town must first present a viable plan and then DOT will come through. He also discussed the problems of businesses and residences in the area and possible solutions for the assistance of both. He urged Town, businesses and residents to get together to implement a plan to present to DOT.

Appearance: Mrs. Patricia Rossi
Nanuet, New York

Mrs. Rossi said she was representing the residents of both Grace and Orchard Streets. She said they want their streets closed. She reiterated the problems the residents on those streets face. They want people to use First Street which is a commercial street built within the last ten years but has not been used fully. It is light controlled and is longer than either of the above mentioned streets.

Supervisor asked Mr. Sarna to consider the suggestion that Mrs. Rossi just made and urged him to take a look at the street in question.

Councilman Lettre mentioned the safety factor of the senior citizens who must get to the shopping by walking.

Supervisor said he was trying to set up a meeting with Mr. Minchella as to the feasibility of acquiring that strip so that access could be looked into. He told Mrs. Rossi he would apprise her of that meeting date.

Mr. Geneslaw said one of his suggestions was to take traffic counts to ascertain how many cars are using the streets to which she referred. This would also let them know how many people are using the intersection. They want to be sure they are solving the problem not just rearranging it.

Mr. Geneslaw also discussed the planned traffic study similar to the one done in Yonkers.

Supervisor and Councilman Lettre had dialogue regarding the creation of a road improvement district in the area.

Appearance: Mr. Tom Fagan
Valley Cottage, New York

Mr. Fagan asked about the sales tax and if it was discussed formally with the County Executive? Supervisor said our feelings have been conveyed to the County Executive by letter and by resolution. However, the County Executive is not in favor of doing this. There are Rockland County Legislators who are in favor of the sharing of the sales tax revenues with the municipalities. We are hopeful that we can prevail upon the County Executive to reconsider his position. Mr. Fagan felt the resolution was not clear as to this point.

Continued on Next Page

ABE740

Councilman Lettre said he had made his suggestions to Mr. Ed Gorman, a Rockland County Legislator, and he brought it back directly to Mr. Grant (County Executive) and that is a sharing of the funds from the sales tax based upon a revenue sharing package which would be set up directly attributed to the sales tax generated by the retail uses on Route 59. This is the proposal which Mr. Grant has flatly rejected at this point. We are not going to stop at that rejection. We will proceed on a course to garner some, if not all, of those funds and put it toward projects such as this. Mr. Fagan felt that Supervisor Holbrook should make the proposal directly from himself to Mr. Grant and not go through another party.

Mr. Fagan questioned why we were going back into Nanuet after the Master Plan has been adopted by his Town Board. Mr. Geneslaw said the Master Plan was not adopted by the Town Board. Some of the zoning changes suggested in the plan were made by the Town Board. The level of traffic study involved here could not have been done as part of the Master Plan for the entire Town. It would be prohibitively expensive and frankly would not produce enough information to warrant the cost of doing it on a town-wide basis. Mr. Geneslaw said these traffic studies are not done as a part of a Master Plan but separate and apart from same.

Mr. Fagan inquired about the new shopping center going up off Route 17. He was unaware that the traffic would have to exit onto Route 59. He asked if that would be a future problem and if representatives of this Town were present when that shopping mall was approved and a ramp approved exiting onto Route 59? Mr. Geneslaw said it will be a problem. The Town was represented but there was no request for an exit ramp because the Thruway does not approve exit ramps onto private property. The Town did review the traffic study for the Spring Valley Market Place and the Town Board did pass one or two resolutions expressing its concern about certain aspects of it. The Spring Valley Planning Board had that information. Mr. Geneslaw said they had attended the meetings of the Spring Valley Planning Board and made these points. They have offered to put in a traffic signal at Hopf Drive and Route 59. They have offered to make other improvements including construction of most of Hopf Drive from Route 59 almost to the railroad which will be four lanes. They are trying to get approval from DOT for entry points at Route 59. Discussion among Mr. Geneslaw, Mr. Sarna, Councilwoman Smith, Councilman Lettre and Mr. Fagan ensued regarding proposals at the rejected Palisades Shopping Center and also at the Spring Valley shopping center.

There was some discussion regarding a proposed MP-4 zoning designation and properties located on Middletown Road which might fit into that designation.

Appearance: Mr. Alan Freedman
Nanuet, New York

He proposed that Clarkstown have its own sales tax with the money put toward transportation needs and then we could address our problems properly. He suggested an overpass and let the businesses pay for it. If Nanuet is such a great place to do business, let business pay for the improvements.

Appearance: Mr. Al Rossi
Nanuet, New York

Mr. Rossi discussed the intersections of Hutton Avenue and Kemmer Lane with Route 59. He questioned why the study did not include those two roads? Mr. Geneslaw said the intersections with the highest traffic volumes were addressed as that was where the problems were the worst. The two roads Mr. Rossi mentioned require waiting time to get onto Route 59 but the volume is very low. There is not sufficient volume to warrant a signal and zoning there now will not allow enough development to warrant one in the future.

Short of creating additional lanes not much can be done. Mr. Rossi asked that he be included in some way. Mr. Rossi and Mr. Geneslaw discussed the right-of-way of the DOT on Route 59. Mr. Rossi discussed left turn designations and recommended that there be none between the railroad bridge and the Holiday Inn. It will not impede traffic but will smooth traffic flow. Mr. Geneslaw reiterated the impact those vehicles would have at the next intersection.

Mr. Sarna said he would hope in a widening plan we could also combine driveways or establish where they can go where they will fit in with two way left turn lanes so there will be sufficient stacking distances between driveways. Two way left turn has been shown to work in many places very well when there is sufficient spacing between driveways. Our biggest problem right now is that there are too many driveways too close to each other.

Mr. Sarna said of course it would be better to put the left turns at intersections where you have better control if the signalized intersections have the capacity to take the additional traffic. If you can increase the capacity at those intersections with the ability to make a U turn then we can consider reduction or elimination of left turns.

Mr. Rossi also wanted the road closed when the signal light near the swimming pool place goes off (which happens frequently) and/or the light repaired immediately, which doesn't happen.

Mr. Rossi wanted to know if the traffic study had been adopted by the Town Board and Supervisor said it has been accepted but there has been no formal resolution. It is the intention of the Town Board to consider approving in concept the recommendations for the intersections and the additional lanes. He said the Planning Board right now is in the process of looking at the creation of an MF-4 as it impacts across the entire Town. Mr. Geneslaw said the Planning Board has not looked at this yet but they will be doing so shortly.

Mr. Rossi wanted to know other than the area located near the Nanuet Hebrew Center if there are any other areas in this Corridor study for which you are proposing MF-4 or MF-5. Mr. Geneslaw said we propose very tight limitations on where these zones should be placed and one of the prerequisites is that it could only be within the area of the corridor study and not applied randomly around the Town. It should have access to and frontage on Route 59 and at the time it was adopted any location to which it might be applied had to have a zone that would generate more traffic than the other MF zones. The purpose was to reduce the peak hour traffic. There were some other limitations also but we felt those were the primary ones needed to carry out the purpose of the corridor study and assure that it not be adopted ramdonly around the Town.

Mr. Geneslaw said he meant to say access to or frontage on County or State roads and zoned RS is potentially eligible for the change as we proposed it. Mr. Geneslaw said they also suggested that there are two areas zoned RS that should be changed to R-15 before the MF-4 is adopted so they cannot be eligible. One is the Christian Love Redeeming Church because the way we drafted it it could be potentially eligible and the other is the area along Dykes Park Road most of which is single family homes mostly zoned RS. He said they are suggesting to the Town Board that if they want to adopt the MF-4 with the kinds of limitations we are recommending those areas be changed from RS first so that they not be able to qualify under the zone. From there on there are possibly a few parcels that would qualify but again there must be frontage on and access to a state or county road. It has to be basically RS in order to qualify as generating more traffic. He told Mr. Rossi that if he wanted to get a copy of the recommendation it was available from the Planning Board Office.

Continued on Next Page

ABE740

Supervisor said when they went to the DOT this year he was pleasantly surprised with their response. It was not a turn off. There will be subsequent meetings and there will be progress.

Discussion as to land use, etc. followed reiterating much of what was already said. Mr. Rossi emphasized that if a road improvement district is considered that residential properties not be included but only the commercial properties.

Mr. Miele suggested instead of making a left hand turn coming from Middletown Road we should create a clover leaf behind where the Nanuet Mall comes in. Also on the opposite side there is a vacant lot near Huffman Koos and they could make a left hand turn at that clover leaf.

At this point discussion ended.

RESOLUTION NO. (131-1987)

APPROVING IN CONCEPT ROAD IMPROVEMENTS AS DEPICTED IN THE ROUTE 59 LAND USE AND CORRIDOR STUDY OF RAYMOND, PARISH, PINE & WEINER OF AUGUST 1986

Co. Lettre offered the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the road improvements along Route 59 at Route 59 and Middletown Road, Route 59 and Smith Street, Pascack Road and Old Nyack Turnpike, and Route 59 and Grandview Avenue, as depicted in the Route 59 Corridor Land Use and Traffic Study completed by Raymond, Parish, Pine & Weiner in August of 1986, be approved in concept, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to the State Department of Transportation in Poughkeepsie, New York.

Seconded by Co. Smith

On roll call the vote was as follows:

Councilman Lettre.....Yes
Councilwoman Smith.....Yes
Supervisor Holbrook.....Yes

Councilman Lettre wanted it noted for the record that there was a gentleman from Senator Levy's office present in the audience, Mr. Hartwick. This office has been most cooperative. Supervisor thanked Mr. Hartwick and stated that his presence was appreciated.

On motion of Councilman Lettre, seconded by Councilwoman Smith and unanimously adopted, the Informational Meeting was declared closed, time: 10:18 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Sheridan
PATRICIA SHERIDAN,
Town Clerk