

Bonner Kicks Off Route 25A Corridor Study With Mt. Sinai Planning Forum January 30

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MOUNT SINAI, NY - Brookhaven Town Councilwoman Jane Bonner today announced that the first of five Community Planning Forums for the Route 25A Corridor Study will take place at the Rose Caracappa Senior Center in Mt. Sinai on Saturday, January 30 from 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

"This study is critically important to the future of Route 25A and the surrounding communities to ensure safe travel along the corridor through a well-balanced plan of smart growth and preservation of open space," said Councilwoman Bonner. "This is an opportunity for everyone in these communities to participate in preserving the character of the area along this major north shore traffic artery."

Future community forums for the Route 25A corridor study will take place in Miller Place in late February, Rocky Point in mid-March, Shoreham-Wading River in early April, and a final combined forum for all hamlets on Saturday, April 17. Dates and times for these events will be posted on the Town's website.

The Route 25A corridor study will look at five communities - Mt. Sinai, Miller Place, Rocky Point, Shoreham and Wading River - with the goal of providing community identity and pedestrian accommodations, and integrating community-based design and development recommendations to reverse the appearance of commercial sprawl. It will examine pending projects to determine pending development pressure, and perform a vacant land analysis to determine remaining development potential in the area. The study will also evaluate the seasonal agri-tourism traffic demands to the North Fork, evaluate and support local agriculture, and coordinate efforts with Shoreham/National Grid Steering Committee to evaluate the development potential of the 800-acre Key Span Property.

"Not long ago, 25A was a byway characterized by farms, fruit orchards, small businesses and the Rocky Point downtown area. That is rapidly changing now, and this is our last, best chance to preserve the rural character and nature of Northeast Brookhaven, before it looks like Hempstead Turnpike in Nassau County," said Bonner. "Every major project being proposed in this area is being done along the Route 25A corridor - all in an uncoordinated sprawl of development. That's why I'm calling for this study. By working together with civics, businesses, developers and state and county officials, we can move forward with a roadmap to planning decisions that will preserve these communities for generations to come."

The 10-mile long corridor of Route 25A in Northeastern Brookhaven is increasingly feeling developmental pressure from a variety of projects, ranging from big box stores to smaller shopping centers and large-scale residential developments. The study area will extend from Crystal Brook Hollow Road in Mount Sinai to the Riverhead Town border in Wading River, resulting in a regional land use plan for the Rt. 25A corridor that integrates transportation, housing, recreation and zoning recommendations to create and support quality communities. The study will also assist in providing community identity and pedestrian accommodations, integrating community-based design recommendations to reverse the appearance of commercial sprawl in the area, and assess the impacts of development in Riverhead Town on the affected communities.

"With this study we will develop a plan to increase vehicle and pedestrian safety, while coordinating Town planning and economic development efforts in the study area with NY State DOT and Suffolk County DPW transportation planning efforts," Bonner said. "We will also develop strategies and plans to encourage redevelopment of blighted, vacant and underutilized buildings along 25A, and strengthen the unique attributes of each hamlet while encouraging revitalization and strengthening of existing small businesses."

The study will also assess the effects of development pressure and big box store development in the corridor upon local businesses and the economy, making recommendations to neutralize or reduce any negative effects. The Town has established a Citizens Advisory Committee to ensure meaningful participation of local citizens, businesses and community organizations in the corridor study, Bonner said.

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