



County of Rockland

Office of County Executive C. Scott Vanderhoef

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Diagnostic Team Review site visits underway for Railroad Crossing Safety/Quiet Zone project *Project's Detailed Design Phase Begins*

Orangeburg, NY – County Executive C. Scott Vanderhoef announced this morning at the Highview Avenue railroad crossing in Orangeburg that a Diagnostic Team Review (DTR) for the Railroad Crossing Safety and Quiet Zone Project is currently underway along the West Shore Line. The DTR is taking place today and tomorrow, June 21 and 22. Traffic at and near the crossings will not be affected. This DTR marks the beginning of the project's Detailed Design Phase.

During the DTR, which is a Federally-required procedure, the project team will conduct site visits to each crossing to evaluate the Supplemental Safety Measure (SSM) recommendations, examining the more technical aspects of the proposed measures. This will include discussion of gate delay timings, signal preemption, loop detection, approach circuitry distances, as well as other factors and concerns. (SSMs are required by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Rule to compensate for the absence of a whistle or horn warning in a Quiet Zone). Representatives from the municipalities responsible for the roadway at each crossing are taking part in the DTR, along with staff from the County Highway and Planning Departments, the NY State Department of Transportation (DOT), FRA, CSX Railroad and the railroad's engineering consultants.

This past January, the County received authorization to proceed with Detailed Design from the NYS DOT. That authorization, however, was granted more than a year and a half after the County submitted the request. That delay, coupled with delays this year in gaining concurrence on the project's preliminary design from CSX and the NYS DOT Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Safety Section, has set the estimated construction start date for the project back to 2012.

“Despite the delays, we are pleased to be able to get this project moving again,” said Vanderhoef. “We realize that our project will likely create the first Quiet Zone in the State under the new FRA rule, and all parties want to ensure the project sets the highest possible standard as a model. We cannot, however, allow this project to be subjected to any further delays. Over the past several months, we have expressed our concern to the State DOT's Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Safety Section and have been assured that we now have their concurrence with our Preliminary Design for this project.”

“Like the DOT, Rockland's first concern in this project is safety. Rockland County has followed the exact requirements of the FRA rule and our Planning and Highway Department staff have worked diligently with our town and village highway and DPW professionals, FRA and CSX Railroad to ensure that the most appropriate supplemental safety measures are put in place at these crossings before the Quiet Zone is established. We are now one step closer to making that happen.”

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SSMs will vary in complexity by crossing. The following are the Phase I crossings and SSM recommendations that are being evaluated during the DTR:

1. Andre Avenue (Orangetown): Four Quadrant Gates
2. Old Tappan Road (Orangetown): Four Quadrant Gates
3. Greenbush Road (Orangetown): One-way Street with Single Gate on East Side
4. Highview Ave. (Orangetown): Convert to One-way Eastbound Street with Gates on the West Side
5. Glenshaw Street (Orangetown): Four Quadrant Gates
6. Erie Street East (Orangetown): Four Quadrant Gates, with Vehicle Presence Detection
7. Bradley Parkway (Orangetown): Four Quadrant Gates
8. Pine View Road (Clarkstown): Four Quadrant Gates
9. Kings Highway (Clarkstown): Four Quadrant Gates
10. Gilchrest Road (Clarkstown): Four Quadrant Gates
11. Lake Road East (Clarkstown): Four Quadrant Gates
12. New Main Street (Village of Haverstraw): Four Quadrant Gates, with Vehicle Presence Detection
13. Westside Avenue (Village of Haverstraw): Four Quadrant Gates, with Vehicle Presence Detection
14. Railroad Avenue (West Haverstraw): Four Quadrant Gates, with Vehicle Presence Detection

These 14 crossings are included in the DTR site visits taking place June 21 and June 22. An additional Phase I crossing – Short Clove Road (Village of Haverstraw) – will not be part of the DTR because NYS DOT is currently constructing a highway-rail grade separation project that will address the SSM needs at that crossing.

The County's consultant for the project is Bergmann Associates of Rochester, NY, along with XoRail of Jacksonville, Fla. (formerly Southwest Signal Engineering Co.); Shumaker Consulting, Engineering and Land Surveying PC of Binghamton, NY; and R.K. Hite & Co. Inc. of Avon, NY. The County secured \$3.6 million for the project in the 2005 federal transportation bill. The project's construction phase may also be eligible for NYS Marchiselli Highway funds. Total cost for Phase I will be determined once Detailed Design is complete; however, the cost is currently estimated at approximately \$6 million. Phase II of the project will involve six private railroad crossings.

For further information on the Rockland County Railroad Crossing Safety and Quiet Zone Project, go to www.rocklandquietzone.com.