

Area officials hail Fuller Road project

Groundbreaking begins work to improve roadway

By RYAN MUNKS

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County Executive Michael Breslin and Guilderland Supervisor Ken Runion joined other local officials at the groundbreaking ceremony of the Fuller Road Construction project on Thursday, April 1, at the corner of Executive Drive and Western Avenue.

Breslin said the \$13.5 million project "is a huge step forward for us, a huge step forward for the Town of Guilderland, and for residents and people who travel through here."

The goal of the pavement reconstruction project is to alleviate traffic and congestion that takes place on the stretch of Fuller Road that goes from Western Avenue to Central Avenue, and to make the road friendlier for pedestrians and bicyclists.

"Fuller Road sees a high level of traffic on a daily basis, particularly since the growth of the SUNY Albany NanoTech facility," said Breslin, in a statement. "The improvements will enhance Fuller Road to make it safer and more accessible for drivers, pedestrians and

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Frank Comisso, D-Albany, majority leader of the Albany County Legislature, said that the project has been years in the making, and will be especially beneficial for students at SUNY Albany.

"Finally we are here, and it's going to be quite an undertaking," said Comisso. "It's going to be a much, much safer area."

Although the groundbreaking ceremony was on Thursday, April 1, the project actually began the week before and will be conducted in two phases over the course of two years, according to Breslin.

The phase that is under way is on the southern part of Fuller Road, from Western Avenue to Tricentennial Drive, and is scheduled to be

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completed in November. The second phase, between Interstate 90 and Central Avenue, is scheduled to begin in April 2011 and end that November.

"It's almost a mile on this side [Western Avenue to Tricentennial Drive], and almost a mile on the other side [I-90 to Central Avenue]," said Breslin.

While the complete cost of the project is being covered by the county, the Town of Guilderland decided to take advantage of the opportunity and replace a water line on the west side of the road.

The \$183,500 project was approved by the Town Board at its Tuesday, March 13, meeting. At the meeting, William West, superintendent of the town's Water and Wastewater Department said the current line, installed in 1948, is "very brittle" and in need of replacement.

"It's cheaper to have it as a betterment project under the county," said West, at the meeting.

According to information from Breslin's office, the Town of Guilderland is saving approximately \$60,000 on the replacement of the sewer line by rolling it into the county project, as opposed to having it done independently.

At the March 13 board meeting, West said that the town decided to replace the west side water line, as opposed to the east side line because the west side line is made out of cement, while the east side line is made out of cast iron.

"If the cast iron pipe were to break I wouldn't have to get into brand new road surface. It would be a mess, but I wouldn't have to get into brand new road surface," said West.

He said he doesn't believe the line is in danger of breaking in the near future.

"We've got some time on that," he said.



Town and county officials dig in for groundbreaking ceremony of the Fuller Road construction project. From left are Town Supervisor Ken Runion, Majority Leader of the County Legislature Frank Commissio D-Albany, County Executive Michael Breslin, County Legislator Alexander Gordon D-Berne, County Legislator Brian Scavo D-Albany and Patrick Kenneally, senior vice president of Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.