



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie, Canton Leaders Meet WITH Csx Over Rail Speed

PATTY RITCHIE September 26, 2013

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### Concerns Over Safety As Railroad Plans to Hike Speeds Through Village

State Senator Patty Ritchie and Canton village and town officials met Thursday with top executives of CSX to discuss concerns over the railroad's plan for increased train speeds on tracks that run through the small village.

Senator Ritchie organized the meeting at the request of Village Trustee Mary Ann Ashley, who attended the meeting along with village Mayor David Curry, Town Councilman Paul Backus, village attorney Gerald Ducharme, and CSX officials Maurice O'Connell, regional vice president, and Community Affairs Safety Officer Robert Rohauer.

“Village leaders were concerned by the railroad’s plan to raise the speed limit for freight trains that rumble through the center of town day and night, and I wanted to hear CSX’s plan to ensure that town residents, college students and visitors would be safe in view of faster trains,” Senator Ritchie said.

“That’s why I set up this face-to-face meeting, so that CSX officials could hear first-hand these concerns, and to gain the railroad’s commitment to work with the village to make public safety the top priority.”

CSX has been investing in track and grade crossing upgrades all along its route through St. Lawrence County to Montreal in order to allow increased train speeds up to 40 mph in most areas. The officials told Senator Ritchie that trains will still be limited to lower speeds at certain spots, including two areas of curved track near Canton.

Railroad speeds are largely overseen by the federal government, but railroad officials said they would work with police, local fire officials, schools, colleges and the village to improve public safety near their tracks through a public awareness safety campaign, assist local First Responders with training, and to identify other ways to help.

Senator Ritchie has already contacted the area’s federal representatives and the US Federal Railroad Administration to make them aware of the local villagers’ concerns, and said she would continue to research whether additional steps can be taken on the state level.

A copy of Senator Ritchie’s letter can be found by [CLICKING HERE](#).