



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sean M. Ryan

Senator Sean Ryan Calls For DOT Review Of North Forest Road In Amherst

SEAN M. RYAN | March 6, 2023

| ISSUE: NYS SENATOR SEAN RYAN, NYS SENATE DISTRICT 61, COMPLETE STREETS



SENATOR SEAN RYAN CALLS FOR DOT REVIEW OF NORTH FOREST ROAD IN AMHERST

Local Residents Have Complained for Years About Unsafe Conditions – Senator Ryan Urges Action to Review Roadway for Safety and Implement ‘Complete Streets’ Design

AMHERST, NY – Today, March 6, 2023, New York State Senator Sean Ryan wrote to New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Commissioner Marie Therese Dominguez, urging the department to launch an immediate review of a section of North Forest Road between North Union Road and Sheridan Drive that is maintained by the state, and implement a road improvement project utilizing Complete Streets principles. Senator Ryan also urged the NYSDOT to decertify Route 277 as a major commercial highway.

According to the NYSDOT, “Complete Street roadway design features include sidewalks, lane striping, bicycle lanes, paved shoulders suitable for use by bicyclists, signage, crosswalks, pedestrian control signals, bus pull-outs, curb cuts, raised crosswalks, ramps and traffic calming measures.”

Senator Ryan made the request at the urging of local residents, who have raised concerns about safety for years. The section of North Forest that is of concern is largely residential with the exception of a church and an elementary school. The area features significant gaps in the sidewalk, making travel difficult for bicyclists and pedestrians. Ryan noted that traffic calming measures, a complete sidewalk network, and improved access for bicyclists and pedestrians will go a long way toward improving safety for the people of Amherst and Williamsville.

Senator Sean Ryan said, “A NYSDOT review of this roadway is long overdue. Amherst and Williamsville residents have complained about this section of North Forest for quite some time, and their concerns need to be addressed. I am confident that a review will lead to significant safety upgrades and a Complete Streets plan that residents have been calling for. Safety is the paramount concern, and I know that the longer we wait, the longer people will remain at risk.”

A copy of the letter appears below:

March 6, 2023

Marie Therese Dominguez, Esq.
Commissioner
NYS Department of Transportation
Executive Office
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

Dear Commissioner Dominguez:

I write today regarding a significant traffic concern located in my district in the Town of Amherst. The Town of Amherst Traffic Safety Board (ATSB) has asked the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) to modify North Forest Road between North Union Road and Sheridan Drive to more appropriately fit the residential character of the neighborhood. This request has been made at the urging of local residents who have raised concerns about safety for years. I am requesting that the NYSDOT launch an immediate review of the section of roadway that is maintained by the state, and implement a road improvement project utilizing Complete Streets principles. Further, I urge the NYSDOT to decertify Route 277 as a major commercial highway.

The section of North Forest that is of concern is largely residential with the exception of a church and an elementary school. The area features significant gaps in the sidewalk, making travel difficult for bicyclists and pedestrians. Combine this with large commercial vehicles speeding through the area and you have a recipe for disaster. Traffic calming measures, a complete sidewalk network, and improved access for bicyclists and pedestrians will go a long way toward improving safety for the people of Amherst and Williamsville. It should also be noted that the Town of Amherst has embarked upon a major project to create Amherst Central Park. North Forest would provide an ideal direct link between the Village of Williamsville and the new Amherst Central Park. However, due to the unsafe conditions on North Forest, the Village is essentially cut off from access to the park. Improving safety on North Forest will greatly assist in linking Village residents to the amenities of the new park.

The highway designation for North Forest Road between North Union Road and Sheridan Drive is a relic of the past and clearly does not take into account the current residential nature of the neighborhood. A NYSDOT review of this roadway is long overdue. I urge you to act expeditiously in the best interests of the people of the Town of Amherst and the Village of Williamsville. Safety is the paramount concern, and I know that the longer we wait, the longer my constituents remain at risk. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Sean M. Ryan
New York State Senator
61st District

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