

December 3, 2024

Jenny Baez, NYSDOT
Scott Geiger, WSP

We were excited to see the designs you presented for the Sleepy Hollow segment of the Route 9 Complete Streets project during our meetings on October 15, 2024 and November 4, 2024. Your team has made commendable progress and addressed many issues our residents experience every day. The outreach to our Village and the shared school district is appreciated. Because the project involves so many details and context of daily life in Sleepy Hollow, we are writing to convey further local knowledge which will help you create a project that addresses our community's needs.

The primary objectives we need to express are:

- Removing traffic signals at the main intersections is an excellent decision. We are hoping the project can provide more space for pedestrians, cyclists, and wheelchair users. Add crosswalks for all directions and more carefully control the speed and direction of motor vehicles.
- It is desirable to keep New Broadway a two-way street. Otherwise, this project must include mitigating measures in Webber Park, which may be more expensive than adjusting the Route 448 roundabout.
- Separate, continuous, protected facilities for walking, cycling, and driving will create the safety and efficiency residents require in order to shift their travel choices away from driving.
- Work within the existing curb-to-curb width as much as possible. This will preserve recently constructed infrastructure and the trees therein. The result is reduced costs, carbon emissions and construction disruptions.

The Appendix lays out interwoven design feedback that will work to create a seamless, safe experience for all road users.

Thank you again for all the hard work and dedication to improving our Village. We look forward to continuing a cooperative discussion about designing the best project for Sleepy Hollow's future.

Sincerely,

Martin Rutyna, Mayor, Sleepy Hollow
Jared Rodriguez, Trustee, Sleepy Hollow
Daniel Convissor, Resident, Sleepy Hollow

Cc: Andrea Stewart-Cousins, New York State Senate
MaryJane Shimsky, New York State Assembly

Appendix

The Route 9 Complete Streets Project grew from the activism and outreach conducted by residents and officials in the five Villages. This diverse coalition of stakeholders want our villages to have truly safe walking and cycling conditions. The key to achieving this is deploying engineering judgments which leading design approaches to create places that welcome everyone to safely use the public realm within the project corridor. We emphasize “international best practices” given the state of U.S. road and pedestrian facilities, which yield one of the highest per capita traffic fatality rates among western nations.

We are seeking design flexibility around lane widths in the corridor. USDOT's Flexibility in Highway Design guide says 10-foot and 11-foot lane widths are acceptable and permissible. Arterial motor vehicle lanes in the Netherlands are 10.75 feet wide from curb to curb. The Route 9 project should set a maximum lane width of 11-feet. Several studies have proven that smaller lane widths make streets safer, contributing to motorists paying deeper attention to the roadway and slowing down.

The designs presented include buffer space between moving lanes and barriers. Some plans show designated, wider-than-typical buffers between moving lanes and parked cars. Extra buffer space undermines safety by making motorists feel more at ease at higher and higher speeds. This is counterproductive to our shared goals.

Each round of design refinements has shown continuous center medians. These medians reduce the amount of road space that might accommodate wider sidewalks, mobility lanes, protective barriers, and greenery. Center medians also provide a straight line for people to drive faster than they otherwise might choose to. Together, these extra widths add up to a roadway that has not received a proper “road diet.” Not only does this limit space for non-motorized travel and greenery, hardscape medians inflate construction costs. We concede there are appropriate locations for center medians, particularly at intersection approaches. Medians are not necessary along full roadway lengths.

As we mentioned during the October 15 meeting, the point of the Preliminary Engineering process is to create a design that is more likely to be constructed. Considering that Broadway is fully interwoven between and within our communities, construction will only occur if the Villages directly advocate and lobby for implementation funding. That advocacy will be made easier if the project meets the Village's expectations (as communicated here and as approved by our Transportation and Parking Committee in the “Sleepy Hollow Mobility Lane Possibilities for the Route 9 Complete Streets Project” document transmitted to you on June 25, 2024) and minimizes construction expense and disruption by keeping existing infrastructure in place as much as possible. For example, in 2016, Broadway's curbs, sidewalk, ADA ramps, and street lights were fully reconstructed between Wildey Street in Tarrytown and Beekman Avenue in Sleepy Hollow, except on the east side along school property. Some years earlier, the sidewalks and curbs were rebuilt on Broadway between Beekman Avenue and Pocantico Street. Demolishing these assets with remaining useful life is inadvisable from an economic and environmental perspective; this may run counter to the goals of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA).



At the November 4 meeting, we were glad to see the team exploring ways to have people cycling separated from motorists in Sleepy Hollow. While a shared use path on the east side of Broadway is an improvement, we believe further progress is necessary. Broadway's sidewalks here regularly accommodate high volumes of pedestrians. The corridor also

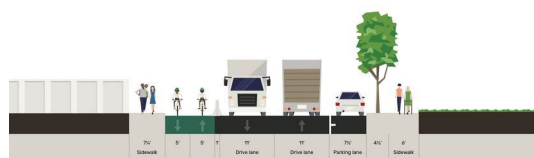
contains steep grades. Thus, a shared use path would generate conflicts between people walking and people rolling. Therefore, Sleepy Hollow needs three dedicated transportation facilities on Route 9: one for motor vehicles, one for walking, and one for people rolling (cycling, scooting, wheelchairs, etc). Our residents have long demanded this configuration so their families can have the freedom to safely travel via their own feet, cycles and mobility aids. Additionally, lifting cycling/rolling facilities out of the roadway and up a curb is desirable – this design feature could be maintained. Fortunately, there is enough room to make this work.

Tarrytown Border to Beekman Avenue

The designs shown thus far are excessively wide, eliminating the planting strip and trees on the west side of Route 9. That would significantly degrade the experience for people who live or travel on the street. It would also kill a 150-year-old ginkgo tree in front of the Immaculate Conception church at College Avenue. This is not acceptable to our residents. In addition, we hope the trees on the east side of Route 9 can be preserved, but if they cannot, new plantings should be a variety of larger species that will provide a substantial tree canopy for future generations. At minimum, the oldest ginkgo tree at the Immaculate Conception Church should be preserved and receive accommodations for continued healthy growth.

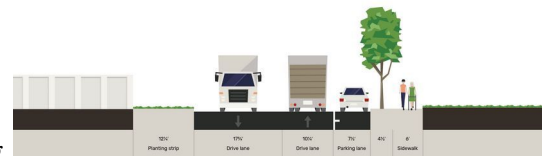
Between the Village border (at Patriots Park) and Depeyster Street, the curb-to-curb width is narrower than in most locations along the corridor. Fitting the requested facilities requires fully using the planting strip between the eastern curb and the stone wall that retains the school yard's hill. The planting strip slopes up toward the wall, so preserving the wall's integrity may require elevating the sidewalk above the roadway level using

Rt 9 @ College Ave (N proposed, facing S)



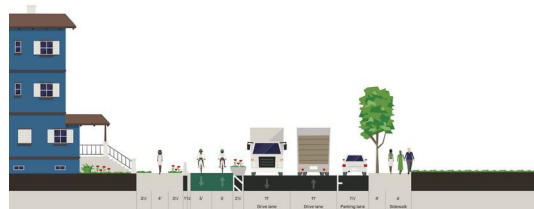
new fill. The cross-section widths from east to west are: a 7'+/- sidewalk, a 10' 2-way mobility lane, 1' for a barrier, 22' for two motor vehicle lanes, a 7.5' parking lane, 4.5' of planting strip, and a 6' sidewalk. (See the diagrams here or online at: [existing](#), [proposed](#).)

Rt 9 @ College Ave (N existing, facing S)



On the block between Depeyster Street and Chestnut Street, the roadbed width transitions from narrow to wide, so should employ a combination of tactics from the prior paragraph and the following one. Between

Rt 9 @ Beekman Ave (S proposed, facing S)



Chestnut Street and Beekman Avenue, the street is around

Rt 9 @ Beekman Ave (S existing, facing S)



42 feet wide from curb-to-curb, an appropriate amount of space for carrying two motor vehicle lanes, a parking lane and a barrier protected mobility lane on the east side. (See the Chestnut Street diagrams on line: [existing](#), [proposed](#). The Korean Church area cross sections are available at right and below, as well as online: [existing](#), [proposed](#).) And outside that width, room is available for sidewalks on both sides. With these modifications, taking land or cutting down trees is unnecessary.

WSP's staff dismissed our earlier proposals, saying buffer spaces are needed. Real world experience on

Route 9 in Tarrytown demonstrates the widths we propose are satisfactory for vehicle movements. The block south of Main Street is comprised of two narrow travel lanes (10' and 11.5') and two narrow parking lanes (7.5' each). People drive more carefully at this location and vehicles of all types are able to pass.

Car parking in the metered parking spots on Broadway between Beekman Avenue and Depeyster Street is lightly used during the day due to price rationing. During the day, paid parking on the west side has sufficient capacity if east side parking is repurposed to other pedestrian or cycling facilities. At night, ample free parking is available in the area, including street spaces south of Depeyster Street, and the school parking lots. Nearby office buildings' parking lots may be usable as well.

The sidewalks in this area are regularly busy, forcing people to walk on the grass at times, so these sidewalks should be 6' wide, though narrowed to 5' in spots immediately adjacent to trees. Crosswalks are needed at College Avenue and Chestnut Street. Additionally, the decorative Sleepy Hollow sign by the southeast corner of Depeyster Street is a tourist attraction, with long lines of people waiting to take photographs in October. It is wise to create a pedestrian area around the sign or relocate the sign out of the pedestrian right of way to allow for improved congregation there. Benches would be a good addition and fencing can be installed to separate the area from the school campus as necessary to accommodate school district leadership security concerns. The following are additional design requests within the vicinity of school district property:

- At the high school driveway, add a refuge between the inbound and outbound lanes. The refuge should extend into the sidewalk and mobility lane.
- Dramatically tighten the curb radius to shorten crosswalks and moderate the speed of people driving. Buses and trucks can turn wide to enter and exit the driveway.
- The driveway between 239 and 245 North Broadway is wide, and the driveway's apron is wider. Walking on the sidewalk across this driveway is unnerving, especially with kids. It needs to be narrowed and have curb extensions added to moderate driver speed. Doing so also makes it possible to better align the proposed crosswalk from the Korean Church driveway (see next paragraph).
- As discussed on November 4, the proposed crosswalk with a median refuge at the Korean Church driveway is a welcome addition, though this should be moved northward, into the church's driveway, in order to match up with the high school kids' typical crossing location. This driveway is rarely used, and there is a curbside wall north of the driveway, so a design exception is warranted to allow the crosswalk to terminate in this driveway. This crosswalk should be a raised crosswalk. In the current proposal, the motor vehicle lanes' horizontal transition from the double yellow line to the median refuge is too gradual. The transition needs to be much shorter, plus be constrained by curbs on all sides to ensure people drive at safe speeds and are carefully traversing the area.
- Between the Korean Church driveway and Beekman Ave, the median is unneeded and encourages straight, fast driving.

Beekman Avenue / Route 448 Intersection

Several of the sidewalks are too narrow and pressed up against moving vehicles. Most egregious is the sidewalk wrapping around the southwest corner from Beekman Avenue to Route 9, which sees notable pedestrian volumes every day. The following are recommended design modifications:

- Add crosswalks on Route 9 on the south end of the intersection, as well as between Beekman Avenue and Route 448. People will cross at these locations anyway, so these crossings must be made safe. The shape and size of the roundabouts push the Beekman Avenue and Route 448 crosswalks far away from the preferred pedestrian path. And the 448 crosswalk is up a significant hill and has a cross slope while traversing Route 448.
- If the current Hudson Terrace proposal (one way eastbound) remains, the draft drawings show the transition from the roundabout using the angles of a slip lane. This is dangerous. This should be a perpendicular right turn. It would be safer if Hudson Terrace were made one way from Route 448 to Route 9. It fixes the lack of a yield area between the roundabout and the crosswalk. It also resolves sight distance issues for people driving north on Hudson Terrace onto Route 448. Plus it makes it easier to use a stop sign at the Pine Street intersection instead of a traffic signal.
- There are pros and cons of where to implement the transition between having the 2-way mobility lane on the east side of Route 9 (south of Route 448) and the west side of Route 9 (north of Route 448). Ideally it will be by New Broadway in order to create direct connectivity to the Webber Park neighborhood and Downtown.

It will be helpful if New Broadway can remain a two-way street at Broadway. If not, please see the next section. Some or all of these problems can likely be addressed by adjusting the size and shape of the roundabouts. Roundabouts need not be perfectly circular.

Webber Park Mitigation

As mentioned on multiple occasions, making the southern block of New Broadway one way northbound will significantly impact the Webber Park neighborhood. In particular, sending all southbound traffic out via Pine Street is quite problematic because this street is narrow and residential in character. Pine Street should have less through traffic, not more. Because Pine Street is so narrow, trucks and school buses cannot navigate the right angle turn at the street's midpoint. If New Broadway's direction is changed, the Route 9 Complete Streets process must include the measures necessary to mitigate the cascade of impacts. This set of mitigation measures cannot become the municipality's responsibility. Overall, it may be more efficient to invest the effort and funds in modifying the Route 448 roundabout to keep New Broadway operating as a two-way street.

WSP staff explained they do not want to move the Route 448 roundabout further north because of the hill on southbound Route 9. Let us compare that guideline to the existing conditions. The current traffic signal means trucks stop and start on steepest parts of that hill all the time, and this does not impede motor vehicle flow or impact safety.

Additional mitigation measures for New Broadway becoming one-way include the following:

- “No Trucks” signs on New Broadway at Maple Street and on Pine Street at New Broadway.
- Add 2 speed humps on the eastbound leg of Pine Street and 3 speed humps on the southbound leg of Pine Street. These are necessary to control the speed people drive on this small residential street.
- Add traffic calming (chicanes, humps, etc.) on New Broadway between Broadway and Pine Street to moderate driving speeds because the one way street will feel wider.
- Encourage southbound drivers to exit the Webber Park neighborhood via either end of Gordon Avenue. This can be accomplished by adding traffic calming on the whole length of New

Broadway. Gordon Avenue is a curved residential street that needs traffic calming as well.

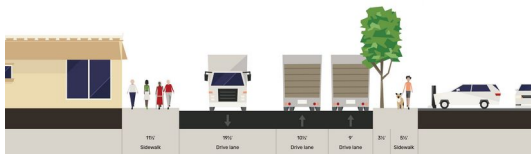
- Completing the sidewalk network on Gordon Avenue, Van Ripper Avenue, Crane Avenue.
- A traffic signal is contemplated for the Pine Street / Route 448 intersection. Signals are a big expense, both up front and long term. Could it be a stop sign for westbound vehicles on 448? It can be placed at the existing crosswalk.
- Making Hudson Terrace one-way southbound from Route 448 can make a stop sign even more feasible. Some traffic calming devices can be implemented in advance of the stop sign.
- A contraflow cycling facility will be needed on New Broadway from Pine Street to Broadway. The neighborhood's key destinations are to the south and getting there via New Broadway is flat and direct. Cycling would become untenable if people had to detour to Gordon Avenue or Pine Street -- both routes have serious hills and add measurable distance.

Note: The drawings have mislabeled Pine Street as "Pine Close." The road is Pine Street the whole way from Route 448 to New Broadway. Pine Close is just the dead-end block to the east.

Route 448 to Pocantico Street

The existing planting strip and sidewalk on the west side of Broadway should remain untouched in most locations. The western-most motor vehicle lane should be upgraded to a barrier protected 2-way mobility lane.

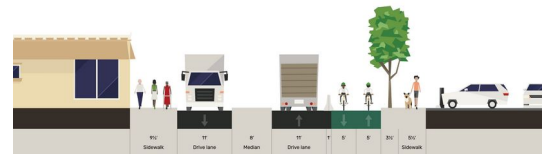
Rt 9 @ Lawrence Ave (S existing, facing S)



The concept shown at the November 4, 2024 meeting did not include a pedestrian refuge at the Lawrence Avenue / Gordon Avenue intersection. Including this feature in the plan is important. (See diagrams here, or on line: [existing](#), [proposed](#)). We request the following modifications and features:

- Add a curb extension on

Rt 9 @ Lawrence Ave (S proposed, facing S)



Lawrence Avenue on the northwest corner to slow turning movements from southbound Broadway to Lawrence Avenue.

- Remove the bus stop on Broadway across from Lawrence Avenue. It has very low ridership, no reciprocal stop in the opposite direction, and the previous and next bus stops are nearby. This stop can be consolidated into the adjacent bus stops.

Pocantico Street Intersection



Key difficulties with the WSP/DOT proposals for the Pocantico Street intersection are:

- Makes driving from southbound Broadway to Pocantico Street a very gentle transition, allowing people to drive at excessive speeds, similar to current conditions. Drivers routinely reach 45 mph southbound on Route 9 and enter Pocantico Street at excessive speed.
- Driving from northbound Broadway to Old Broadway

would allow unsafe speeds and invite mistaken turns.

- Lacks a protected mobility lane on the west side of Broadway.
- The sidewalks are narrow, particularly on the east side, and the southwest corner.

A long term transformation of Old Broadway is being contemplated. Increasing public space for pedestrians and creating a tourist welcome center. One step in implementing this vision is eliminating through traffic on Old Broadway by converting the street's southern end to be a pedestrian area. The plaza should have mountable curbs so emergency vehicles and fuel tanker trucks can have direct access to Old Broadway. The street can be resurface the street with paving blocks and treated as a woonerf north of the plaza.

All of these difficulties can be addressed by using a different island shape within the proposed roundabout. (See diagram, above.)

Pocantico Street to Pierson Avenue

Tourism season (August – November) yields high volumes of people walking between Philipsburg Manor and the Old Dutch Church, major international points of interest. Thus, the western sidewalk of Broadway between Pocantico Street and Pierson Avenue must be wider. The following additional modifications are requested:

- The median should be eliminated between the intersections. This provides more space for other purposes and adds horizontal variation for motorists, which helps moderate speeds.
- The drawings show Philipsburg Manor's driveway engineered for rapid motor vehicle access. The design needs reworking to have motor vehicles make a regular 90 degree turn and come up over the sidewalk and mobility lane.
- A refuge should exist between the inbound and outbound lanes.
- The gas station on Old Broadway needs distinct entrances and exits.
- Change the painted bike lanes to a 2-way protected mobility lane on the west side of Route 9.

Pierson Avenue Intersection

The drawings provided by WSP/DOT thus far contain several problematic features at this location including the following:

- The cemetery entrance looks like a road instead of a driveway, which will result in mistaken turns and excessive speed in the driveway. Pedestrians are often present in the driveway at this location.
- The cemetery's exit is made right turn only.
- Motorists heading north on Old Broadway to Route 9 northbound can go at excessive speed in to and out of the roundabout.
- The roundabout's entrances from northbound Route 9 and northbound Old Broadway are right next to each other, creating ambiguity of who should go first.
- People driving south on Route 9 who are bound for Dell Street or northern Gordon Avenue will lose direct access.
- The sidewalks are too narrow. Tourists will spill over into the roadways.
- Lacks a protected 2-way mobility lane and a connection to Bellwood Avenue / Pierson Avenue.

More broadly, this area is Sleepy Hollow's main tourist gathering location, containing our most well-known landmark the Old Dutch Church. Public pedestrian space must be maximized, reduced motor vehicle space can be converted to a plaza with amenities such as greenery and seating. If a standard roundabout configuration is used, tourists will think the roundabout's central truck apron and island is a place to hang out. We often have pedestrians crossing Route 9 at unmarked locations. The Village is unable to enforce pedestrian behavior at this location due to such volumes of pedestrians.



All of these issues can be addressed by using a “priority square” type configuration. (See diagram. Adjust apron dimensions as needed for turning trucks.)

General

Additional feedback on the proposed design is as follows:

- Sidewalks need to continue their grade and material across driveways and streets. Same for any mobility lanes if they are raised. (If a mobility lane is at street level, install a hump that motor vehicles must traverse before crossing the lane).
- Crosswalks need dedicated lighting.
- Between intersections, roadway medians make poor use of the road space. They should be removed and the space allocated to wider sidewalks, mobility lanes, trees, bus stops, etc. Where medians are needed, they should have low curbs instead of paint.
- Where median refuges are needed for people crossing the street, they should have high curbs.
- The roundabouts shown have most of their entrances and exits as tangents, pointing to the edge of the circle. This allows driving at excessive speeds. Safely engineered roundabouts have entrances and exits that are radial, pointing more toward the middle of the circle. Of course, long trucks need space to turn, but that space should be on aprons, keeping paths tight for passenger vehicles.
- Roundabouts entrance and exit lanes need to be narrowed to control how fast people drive.
- Every gas station needs bollards on the sidewalk to prevent driving or parking on the sidewalk. This is a recurring problem.
- Install shelters for all bus stops in the project area. While Westchester County's policy only puts shelters at stops with high ridership, that is due to budgetary issues. This project is operating outside that budget and Sleepy Hollow desires to do better for our bus riders.