

***September 26, 2016***

At the most recent Village Board Meeting, a resident expressed concern regarding ADA access to the station platforms at the LIRR-Floral Park Station. This concern is not new. The Village's concern has been enunciated to the LIRR by this board and each board with whom I have served. How could the LIRR continue to ignore this glaring deficiency and neglect an important population's access to the trains? The LIRR identifies handicapped access on the Hempstead Branch to be at the Stewart Manor station where there is a ramp. This has been and continues to be an inadequate response.

This same resident also stated that an unidentified representative of the Governor's office stated that the Village has not raised the concerns about handicap access at the Floral Park Train Station since the LIRR resurrected the 3<sup>rd</sup> Track Project this past January. If this is in fact what the Governor's representative stated, this is clearly factually inaccurate.

In early January, Governor Cuomo asked that we meet with his representatives and keep an open mind. Out of respect for the Governor and his office, we undertook these meetings in good faith. We made it clear that although we would approach this with an open mind, we had very deep skepticism of their proposals, due in no small part to the LIRR's past record. At our first meeting attended by Trustee Fitzgerald, myself, Village Administrator Gerry Bambrick and the Governor's highest ranking Long Island staff we asked that the station be renovated and that handicap access be addressed immediately, not as our price for accepting the Third Track, but because it should have been done already. The LIRR President and each of the Governor's representatives responded that all work would begin at the eastern edge of the platform and no renovations to the station are included in this project. During my and Trustee Cheng's subsequent meetings with the LIRR officials and the Governor's staff we continuously advocated to remedy this necessary and fundamental need. Further, the LIRR's moral obligation to provide handicapped accessibility to its entire ridership was addressed and contained in Trustee Lynn Pombonyo's Scoping Hearing comments and is available along with all the Board's Scoping Hearing statements on our website.

Our position continues as before. This process is replete with glaring and materially significant problems. We do not believe that the justification for spending billions of dollars and possibly devastating our village for this Third Track Project has been set forth, especially when the LIRR itself has already articulated a 7 Point plan to improve Mainline service. Nor are we satisfied that questions as to the funding for this project has been answered. Further, the environmental review process is premature and proceeding at an irresponsible pace. This is especially true because the LIRR has failed to provide sufficient details of their proposal to make a meaningful review possible, as legally required. The failure of the LIRR to provide details of the Proposal makes it impossible to completely identify the impacts of the proposal. The concept of "mitigation" in the environmental review context relates to avoiding or diminishing specific impacts of the proposal. Without an ability to fully identify the impacts of the LIRR's Third Track Proposal it is not possible to properly discuss mitigation with the LIRR.

The resident who came to the Village Board meeting is correct in that the handicap accessibility of the FP LIRR Station needs to be addressed. We believe, and have repeatedly expressed to the LIRR and the Governor's staff, that this is true whether the Third Track Proposal proceeds or not.

I ask that you stay informed and feel free to ask any questions of myself, LIRR Third Track Task Force Chairman Trustee Archie Cheng or any member of the Board anytime. We love this Village and its future is our shared concern.