

Spring 2019 Project Update

REHABILITATION OF A PORTION OF COLUMBIA CO. RTE. 18 (AKA FISH AND GAME ROAD) FROM DAMITA DRIVE TO NYS RTE. 217 – FED. AID PIN#8760.99

The Columbia Co. Dept. of Public Works continues to progress the project to rehabilitate an approximate 2.1 mile-long stretch of our Co. Rte. 18 (aka Fish and Game Rd.) in the Town of Claverack. This section of Co. Rte. 18 is the last piece of the overall approximate 4 mile-long Co. Rte. 18 between NYS Rte. 66 and NYS Rte. 217 to be upgraded to current County Highway standards since it was taken over by the County from the Town of Claverack in the late 1970's. This upgrade is critical for many reasons given the fact that Co. Rte. 18/Fish & Game Rd. carries the 3rd highest volume of daily traffic of the approximate 90 County-maintained roads (270 total miles) that the CCDPW is responsible for.

This important highway rehabilitation project was awarded federal transportation program funding in 2014 and in 2015, the County retained Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. of Albany NY as its professional highway design consultant partner to progress the design and ROW (right-of-way) phases of the project. Since late 2015, we have completed the following project design and ROW tasks for this project:

- Corridor Topographic and ROW Survey and Mapping
- Preliminary Design and preparation of Design Approval Document (aka Design Report)
- Environmental Screenings/Assessments
- ROW incidental tasks – including title searches, parcel appraisals, parcel appraisal reviews; parcel mapping
- Coordination with all utility providers along the Co. Rte. 18 corridor (National Grid; NYSEG; Verizon; Mid-Hudson CATV)
- Detailed Highway, Drainage and Structure (Large Culvert) Design
- Public Information meeting/EDPL Hearing

It should be noted that in utilizing Federal transportation funding for highway/bridge projects, there are numerous administrative and other procedural steps that need to be followed, accomplished and/or approved. As we have progressed the aforementioned list of project design and ROW-related tasks, there are several time-consuming NYS & Federal funding agency reviews of some of these tasks that must be approved and authorized before we can move on to the next step(s) in the complex Federal-aid transportation project development process. The accomplishment and completion of these many varied project procedural steps and tasks, along with the lengthy funding & agency reviews/approvals are what combine to cause the overall development of a Federal-aid highway or bridge project from initial preliminary planning to the commencement of construction to typically take anywhere from 4 to 8 years to complete.

As of the spring of 2019, the project design details remain the same as originally conceived, with the general highway improvements consisting of:

- Rehabilitation/Recycling of the existing paved travel lanes
- Improvement of the existing grass/gravel shoulders to a paved shoulder
- Drainage ditch improvement/small culvert replacements
- Replacement of two (2) Large Culverts, both located just west of Co. Rte. 18/Tishouser Rd. intersection)
- Guiderail installation to current standards
- Highway signage upgrades to current standards
- Intersection improvements at Schroeder Rd/Co. Rte. 18.

The last major steps that we need to complete prior to actual construction are overhead utility improvements, ROW acquisitions and preparation of all final construction bid documents, which we expect to be accomplished over the next 12-15 months. We hope to commence construction work on this project in mid to late 2020.