



## Historic Town of Hyde Park

Supervisor's Office  
4383 Albany Post Road  
Hyde Park, NY 12538  
(845) 229-5111, Extension 104, (845) 229-0831 Fax

**Aileen Rohr, Town Supervisor**

*"Working with you for a better Hyde Park"*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Hyde Park's "Downtown Initiative" Makes Giant Leap Forward

DATE: March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

CONTACT: Aileen Rohr, (845)229-5111 Ext. 104

Hyde Park's plan to create a modern, walkable downtown will take a big stride forward this summer with the installation of modern pedestrian infrastructure on the east side of Route 9, north from Water Tower Road to the entrance to the shopping center known as Park Plaza.

Supervisor Aileen Rohr today announced that the Town received approval to put the long-planned project out to bid. Included are the construction of wider sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities, expanded green space, new curbing, drainage, and landscaping from the NY State Department of Transportation which is providing the majority of the funding for the project. The monies come from a Transportation Assistance Project grant awarded in 2014.

In the first phase of the project, existing trees in the DOT right-of-way will be removed, which must be done before the end of March. Property owners and residents should be aware that the trees being removed will be replaced with more drought- and disease-resistant species in the summer when the second phase is underway.

"Well placed sidewalks will make Hyde Park a safer and more inviting place for residents to walk, and will ultimately attract new investment " said Town Councilwoman Emily Svenson who obtained the grant that funds most of the project.

Members of the Rohr administration have made creating a walkable center in the historic town a priority. As a community that largely developed post World War II, Hyde Park lacks the centers residents and visitors flock to in older communities. Those began as small scale villages with "towns" later sprouting up around the village nucleus. . Dutchess County communities considered the best for walkability, including Rhinebeck, Red Hook, Wappingers, Fishkill, and Millbrook, were villages first, and those remain intact, and now contained by surrounding towns.

Hyde Park, however, developed in the automobile-centered, linear pattern common across the nation after the war, "It has been said that our town lacks a heart, the sense of place many expect for a historic community," says Rohr. To counter that, other initiatives are underway, including the development of an affordable commercial sewer district and taking advantage of other monies available to improve pedestrian access to services and shops.

"The sidewalk connection with consistent landscaping will help create the design unity that Hyde Park needs to attract new businesses," concludes David Ray Town Councilman for the district.

"As a life-long resident I am so pleased to see the plans we developed with the Department of Transportation coming to fruition. The improved sidewalk infrastructure will provide a safe connection for residents and tourists to our many assets - our neighborhoods, historic sites, businesses and trails," agrees Rohr, Hyde Park's Supervisor.