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State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
P.O. Box 600
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0600

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

JAMES S. SIMPSON
Commissioner

September 9, 2013

The Honorable George Nebel
Mayor, Borough of Mantoloking
340 Drum Point Road, 2nd Floor
P.O. Box 4391
Brick, NJ 08723

Dear Mayor Nebel:

Thank you for your letter regarding homeowner access during the Route 35 Reconstruction project. I appreciate the opportunity to address your concerns.

The Borough of Mantoloking was provided roadway design plans in January 2013, several months ahead of the field office meeting referenced in your letter. The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) had an Officials Briefing on the project on March 21, 2013 and a meeting with the Borough Engineer on March 26, 2013. Coordination with the Borough Engineer also took place on utility issues over a period of several months.

In addition to extensive property damage, Route 35 was breached at three locations. The roadway and the associated drainage system was compromised. The NJDOT performed immediate emergency repairs and followed up with plans to reconstruct Route 35 on an accelerated schedule.

Now that the bulk of the utility work on Route 35 has been accomplished (by NJNG), actual reconstruction of the roadway commenced after Labor Day. Because Route 35 through Mantoloking and Bay Head has one lane in each direction, we have to provide the contractor with a work zone construction barrier so that the traffic can safely travel as work progresses in each roadway area. Work zones of ¼ mile are separated by a mile of open roadway that allows traffic to flow without confused shifting of lanes by motorists. For the 2.3 miles of roadway in Mantoloking, this translates to only a few work zones at any given time.

In any given ¼ mile work zone, the trenches for utilities and drainage will only be as long as can be supported by a trench box (to avoid collapse of side walls into the trench). Completed work will be backfilled immediately and the contractor will move forward. Emergency vehicles will be allowed to drive behind the barrier curb up to a trenched area within 50-100 feet of any property that requires emergency service. The emergency access plan will be worked out between the contractor and the local emergency services. The residents will always be provided pedestrian access to their properties. Critical reconstruction building supplies can be brought in after providing 48 hours of notice to the Department. We are actively coordinating the issue of mail delivery alternatives.

The NJDOT cannot reconstruct the roadway and replace utility lines without limiting direct vehicular access to properties for certain periods of time. We will make every effort to keep that time frame as short as possible. The NJDOT will make reasonable accommodations for emergency vehicles as well as critical supplies for any home rebuilding work within the work zones. We are hopeful that residents and Borough officials will realize the public need to have an all-weather passable road through the barrier island for daily commerce as well as emergency evacuation. We ask for your help and cooperation as we perform this critical infrastructure upgrade.