

CLINTON AVENUE CSX CROSSING PROJECT STATUS

February 1, 2020

The upgrades and repairs to the crossing are, primarily, a New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and CSX project. The Borough has a relatively minor role due to the fact that some of the upgrades will be completed in the Borough right of way. Further complicating the situation is the fact that NJDOT is utilizing Federal Highway Administration funding for the project.

The short story of the history of the project is that it stalled in early April, 2018. CSX required that Northvale put up \$17,600 into an escrow account to cover CSX engineering services pertaining to Borough property. Probably due to financial reasons, the Borough did not respond to the request for escrow funds.

Upon assuming office in January, 2019, I started working with Congressman Gottheimer's office, Senator Booker's office and other local Mayors to determine who the appropriate, high level CSX contacts were. After several phone calls and email exchanges with two senior CSX Vice Presidents, the only conclusion that one could come to was that absolutely nothing was going to happen at the crossing until the Borough put the escrow funds in place. The 2019 Council took the appropriate action, funded the project and in doing so "turned it back on".

The scope of the project is well beyond repairing the roadway and includes safety enhancements.

1. Pedestrian gates and new roadway gates with LED lighting will be installed.
2. The gate on the approach heading east will be moved, probably to the knoll. The knoll will have to be re-graded. The gate on the approach heading west might also be moved.
3. Drainage improvements will be made. This work might expand in scope because there are signs of more extensive water damage. The DOT will repair the catch basin that is immediately to the west of the tracks.
4. Repaving the roadway, sidewalk work and rails work are all part of the project.
5. The sidewalk west of the tracks will be moved to the south, into what is currently the knoll area, to create greater separation of pedestrians from the roadway. Connecting the new sidewalk to the street will be an ADA curb cut.
6. Timeline: NJDOT and CSX originally estimated that the project would be shovel ready in, approximately, mid-November, 2019. Engineering design, the need to obtain permits, plus the applications for the federal funding were the estimated lead time components. Unfortunately, the federal involvement has delayed the project. The current estimate is that the project will be initiated in spring, 2020. The Mayor and Council and the Borough Engineer have been working closely with both the NJDOT Railroad Engineering Department and Congressman Gottheimer's office in an attempt to ensure that the schedule doesn't slide out any further.
7. The latest update from the Railroad Engineering Department is that they are awaiting final signatures of approval on the construction phase funding for the

project. They anticipate that it should only be a few more weeks until CSX has the green light with the federal funding in place.

8. The crossing will be closed for approximately five days.

Patrick Marana