

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF ULSTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE MIKE HEIN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COUNTY EXECUTIVE HOSTS HERBERT POPPEL (KERHONKSON BRIDGE) GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY

Kingston, NY (September 21, 2009) - Ulster County Executive Mike Hein was joined today by Lori DuBord from Congressman Maurice Hinchey's Office, Town of Wawarsing Supervisor Ed Jennings, Ulster County District 1 Legislators and representatives from Kerhonkson's Fire Department, First-Aid Squad, Lion's Club and business community, for a groundbreaking ceremony commemorating the beginning of the construction process to replace the Herbert Poppel Bridge, in Kerhonkson, New York.

The span, which connects U.S. Route 209 and U.S. Route 44/State Route 55 had been judged by state agencies to be structurally deficient for over a decade and was finally closed to traffic in the later part of 2008.

In March, 2009 Ulster County applied for stimulus funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and, with the assistance of Congressman Maurice Hinchey, secured \$4.7million for replacement of the bridge. This is the first stimulus funded bridge project to get underway in Ulster County.

"This project was a very long time in coming," said County Executive Hein. "I fully appreciate the burden placed upon the emergency services, residents and business community in the Kerhonkson area. Since taking office for the first time this past January, my office has worked very hard to get this project going and I am grateful to Congressman Hinchey for his efforts to secure the funding.

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I also appreciate the ongoing efforts of the countless individuals and organizations that advocated for this project and persevered over an extended period of time. Not only will this project will provide jobs for local people during the construction process, when it is completed it will help revitalize the hamlet and yield benefits to the Kerhonkson community for many years to come.”

"We're finally going to have a new bridge that will help improve public safety, enhance the quality of life for area residents, and promote economic growth," Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) said. "This project is a perfect example of how the economic recovery package we approved in Washington is having a positive impact back here in New York. The federal funds being used for this project will create construction jobs now and help attract new businesses and jobs in the future, while also making life easier and safer for area residents."

Ulster County Legislator Mary Sheeley (D-Dist. 1) said, 'We've been looking forward to this time for many years. The combined efforts of community members, local leaders, the voice of our new County Executive and Congressman Hinchey were a winning combination for the residents and business people of the Kerhonkson area.”

“It's about time,” said Ulster County Legislator Joe Stoeckler (D-Dist.). “This is a good example why we needed a County Executive, to speak with one voice to advocate for the interests of the people of Ulster County. I applaud County Executive Hein, Congressman Hinchey and everyone who played a role in bringing this project to fruition.”

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