

Town agrees to prepare Jay Road grant request

Written by MARK JAEGER

Wednesday, 05 October 2011 16:22

The Fredonia Town Board has agreed to have the engineering firm Bonestroo prepare the paperwork needed for a state grant request that could make costly improvements to Jay Road a little more manageable.

Consulting engineer Allan Schmidt told town officials it would cost between \$2,000 and \$4,000 to prepare a preliminary analysis of deficiencies of the four-mile stretch of Jay Road between Highway 57 and Highway I. The analysis is needed to apply for state Town Road Improvement Program funds.

Safety concerns and traffic volume are considered in the competitive grant process, Schmidt said.

"I don't want to say you have a high chance of getting a grant, because a lot of communities are likely to be seeking the funding," he said.

If the state grant is awarded, the town would have to pay 50% of the project costs.

Schmidt said he couldn't say how much the project would cost at this time, adding, "it is not going to be inexpensive."

The final cost will depend on the roadway configuration, but he said minimum cost would likely be about \$100,000 a mile.

Officials said the tax impact of the road project could be minimized by spreading the job over two years, or by doing just portions of the stretch.

The road has been a source of concern for town officials for some time, especially with the difficult turning angle trucks face when approaching and leaving the Cedar Valley Cheese factory, located at the southwest corner of Jay Road and Highway 57.

When the project was discussed last year, officials said the road work could involve creating turn lanes at the Jay Road and Highway 57 crossing and cutting back a hill further west.

Applications for the TRIP fund grants are due Nov. 1, so town officials felt they had to act quickly on authorizing setting the application into motion.

If the town missed the filing deadline, it would have to wait for the next two-year cycle to apply. That would not be until 2013.

Town Chairman Richard Mueller urged board members to pursue the grant.

"Even if we get the grant, we don't have to agree to do the project. The application doesn't commit us to anything," Mueller said.

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Supervisors unanimously approved asking Bonestroo to prepare the grant application.