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Statement by Ellyn Shannon
MTA Must Gain Control of the Suffern NY Station from NJ Transit
at the MTA Board Meeting
MTA Headquarters, 2 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
September 25, 2019

Good Morning, I'm Ellyn Shannon speaking on behalf of the Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council. On Monday I spoke about the Suffern NY station and how it is an aberration as it is owned by NJ Transit. It's time for the MTA and New York State to take ownership of the Suffern Station and make it accessible for all passengers.

While we are rooting for NJ Transit's comeback, we are also aware that NJ Transit over many years was stripped of much of their financial resources and that they are having difficulty maintaining their New Jersey facilities. It is hard to fathom that they would want to hold on to a station with so many safety liabilities – let alone a station that is in NY State!

The parking lot is a hazard to able bodied passengers, let alone anyone with a disability. It has an uneven surface that exists when you tear up a street... in New York, streets that are torn up and then smoothly paved over but that is not the case in Suffern.

Also, the Suffern station must be made accessible. The closest accessible station is in New Jersey – but New York's paratransit cannot cross the border, forcing those users to travel 30 minutes north to Harriman for an accessible station. That is not acceptable.

Stations are the gateway to New York's Towns and villages. Yesterday, I was up in Suffern. Seeing what Mayor Ed Markunas, his staff and the Suffern community is doing is remarkable. They are turning Suffern into a thriving economic hot spot, with Transit Oriented Development (TOD), diverse and delicious restaurants, a comedy club, and revitalizing their historic theater. The film industry has taken note and are filming there!

That is why the Suffern station, must become a Metro-North asset and a place of pride for the region, not the safety embarrassment that it currently is. The State of New York via the MTA must take the Suffern station back and make it accessible. This investment will add to the economic revitalization of the area and improve riders' quality of life.