

Woodridge, NY - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has invited the Village of Woodridge in Sullivan County to formally submit an application for \$2 million through a rarely used construction grant program in order to help fund a wastewater treatment facility. While final approval of the grant and additional environmental reviews are necessary, the EPA has been working with the congressman's office and village officials for nearly a year to review the grant request and has indicated that final approval is very likely by autumn.

In June 2007, Hinchey announced that he secured \$1 million in grant funding for the project through the USDA Rural Development and has since been working with the village and EPA officials to obtain additional federal funding to offset the costs of the new facility. The village has also been offered a 0 percent loan on the balance of the funding through the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation.

"I am very pleased that the EPA is proceeding with this grant application and recognizing that the village's alternative treatment system did not perform properly," Hinchey noted. "The costs of replacing this facility are very difficult for the residents and businesses to absorb. The federal funding through USDA Rural Development and the EPA will significantly offset the costs of building this new plant. The new wastewater facility will better serve the more than 900 residents of Woodridge while also protecting the local environment and water quality."

The Village of Woodridge is currently under a Consent Order from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to construct a new wastewater treatment facility to replace the current wastewater system that has failed. The current system was constructed with some federal funding in 1982 under the EPA's Innovative/Alternative (I/A) Wastewater Treatment program. The program stipulated that EPA would help to replace the facility in the event of the event that the I/A technologies did not work adequately. The village has been working since July 2005 to design and raise funding for a new facility, which is estimated at \$8.4 Million. Village officials and engineers have been working with the EPA for more than a year to document the technological failure of the I/A system and provide necessary information to support additional federal funding for the construction of a new system at a new location. The current plant has been deemed beyond repair and has been cited for discharging pollution into the Neversink River, an important trout stream.

Village of Woodridge Mayor Ivan Katz thanked Hinchey for his ongoing assistance with the federal agencies. "The Village has been working tirelessly to bring down the cost of building the

new wastewater facility, and Congressman Hinchey has supported and advocated for the village at every step of the way. We did a lot of work to provide the necessary documentation to the EPA and appreciate the agency working with our engineers to make the anticipated funding possible. We look forward to proceeding with this project as soon as the final approvals are in place."