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Push for an Exit 107 gets mixed reviews

ALISON HERGET/KEYPORT BUREAU

Somewhere between **Exit 105** and **Exit 109** on the Garden State Parkway, some are still wondering, could a new interchange with a corresponding green sign — **Exit 107** — be coming?

It has been three years since the Middletown Township Committee, in response to requests by residents in the Lincroft section, adopted a resolution asking for a study of a possible **Exit 107** on the Parkway. The resolution asked Monmouth County to request a study by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority.

The idea for a new interchange came from residents who said the volume of traffic on local roads in Lincroft was getting out of hand. The new **exit**, they said, would help alleviate traffic by providing a northbound entrance to the Parkway in Tinton Falls.

But today, **Exit 107** is getting mixed reviews.

Carol Baker, co-president of the Lincroft Village Green Association community group, said adding an interchange to the Parkway in Tinton Falls is just one of the suggestions the group has made to control traffic problems on local roads.

"We're interested in some sort of way to get people to the Parkway and not use (**Exit**) 109," Baker said. "I don't know that anything is going to happen with (**Exit**) 107."

Although many Lincroft residents said they have been suggesting ideas for years, the traffic debate has taken on a recent urgency. A Nov. 1 accident on Newman Springs Road, also known as Route 520, killed an 18-year-old Long Branch motorist and his 22-year-old female passenger. The accident occurred near Hilltop Circle.

"I always think that you should strike while the iron is hot, and now the iron is hot," said Middletown Mayor Thomas G. Hall, who said he is coordinating meetings with police, business owners, Brookdale Community College and county officials, to brainstorm ideas on how to make local roads in Lincroft safer.

Hall said **Exit 107** likely will be one of the many ideas discussed at the meetings.

Baker and the Lincroft community group also have made other suggestions, such as creating a new **exit** on Route 18 to Laird Road, which ultimately could reduce traffic on Route 520, she said.

Tinton Falls Mayor Peter Maclearie could not be reached for comment Friday.

The last study done on the possibility of adding an **Exit 107** was completed prior to 2003 by the state Highway Authority, which then oversaw the Parkway, said Joseph Orlando, spokesman for the Turnpike Authority.

Orlando said the study determined that adding a Parkway **exit** in Tinton Falls was "impractical because of its location and its proximity to the other interchanges."

"It was a very in-depth study of the project, and it came back 'No,'" Orlando said. "I don't

believe we're studying it again."

But Mary Ellen Hintz, of Phalanx Road in Lincroft, said the possibility needs to be re-examined.

"**(Exit) 107** has been kind of dead-ended," she said. "But it shouldn't be."

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