

Alfred University students to survey Route 417 residents

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Is extending water and sewer lines from the Village of Wellsville east along Route 417 to County Road 12 (Elm Valley Road) feasible? That's what two AU students are attempting to answer with a project they are undertaking this month; they'll get the grade, and the Town of Wellsville will get some useful information to determine if the project is worth pursuing. Debra Davis, a senior from Andover, and Shane Donahoe, a junior from Syracuse, are enrolled in Dr. James Booker's class on environmental economics. They chose the water/sewer expansion project because it offers a real-life application for the type of analyses they are learning to conduct in the course. As the first step in completing the project, they will be sending surveys to residents and businesses along Route 417 (the Andover Road). "We will be asking residents basic questions about the quality and quantity of their water supplies; the condition of their septic systems; and if they think there would be advantages to being hooked to municipal water and sewer systems," said Davis. "Every time we consider extending water and sewer lines, we have to consider if the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs," said Councilman Robert Sobeck, who is working with Davis and Donahoe on the project. Among the variables the students will be considering in their cost/benefit analysis will be potential savings on fire insurance for residents if they are part of a municipal water system; increased property values from having municipal water and sewer; and the potential for economic development along Route 417 if water and sewer are available. Davis and Donahoe will be completing their project by the middle of November and will present the results to the Wellsville Town Board. If results show the project is feasible, the Town of Wellsville can use the findings in grant or loan applications to install the lines.