MTA...

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after Albany approved a mandatory .34 percent payroll tax on all employers in New York City and surrounding counties, including Suffolk. East Enders complained that they were being forced to subsidize New York City commuters while receiving paltry service from the MTA.

LIRR spokesman Joe Calderone said the MTA has since been investigating ways to increase ridership on the sparsely used Greenport line.

"We're trying to work together to increase ridership," he said of the agency's ongoing communication with Suffolk officials.

Mr. Calderone could not give specifics on train times across the line or when the new schedule will launch.

"We're ironing out the details," he said.

Commuters arriving in Riverhead would also likely bring more foot traffic to the downtown area, another reason Mr. Romaine and others had been championing the move.

Stephen Wirth, owner of Digger O'Dell's on West Main Street, said anything that brings people downtown without closing the roads is a good thing.

"That sounds great to me," Mr. Wirth said.

He described the court system as the "lifeline" of business for downtown restaurants at lunchtime, when half his patrons are lawyers, jurors and court workers.

Mr. Romaine said he also suggested running extra trains during the Riverhead Polish and Country fairs and during pumpkin-picking season on the North Fork. Mr. Calderone said that those suggestions could be implemented in the future.

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LIBRARY...

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in transforming lives," added the college's president, Dr. Shaun McKay. "Communities thrive in libraries."

Although administrators were clearly elated about the project, which many had championed for years, it was perhaps the students who were the most excited.

Student government president Mary Hughes, a general studies major from Greenport who will graduate this May, said though she would not directly benefit from the facility, it was important for future generations of students.

"If you believe in [something], you still need to nurture and advocate for it," she said.

"Now I can study without having to fight for a computer," said Christina Romeo, a first-year student at the school. "And not have to sit in my car."

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