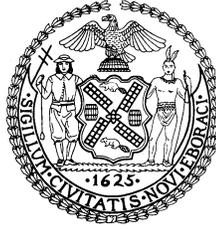


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## The City of New York Manhattan Community Board 8

### Transportation Committee

Wednesday, March 4, 2015, 6: 30 PM

Lenox Hill Hospital, 131 E. 76th St., Einhorn Auditorium

### Minutes

*Present:* Michele Birnbaum, A. Scott Falk, Craig Lader, Rita Popper, Peggy Price, Barbara Rudder, Charles Warren; David Menegon, Jordan Wouk (Public Members)

*Absent (Excused):* Lori Bores, Lorange Hockert; Hedi White

The Meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM, when the co-chairs announced the appointment of Jordan Wouk as a new public member of the Committee.

### **1. Update on the East 81st Street Pedestrian Bridge.** *(Joint item with Parks Committee)*

Committee co-chair Charles Warren gave an update on the status of the East 81st Street Pedestrian Bridge project, which project consists of three main components:

1. An ADA-accessible ramp onto John Finley Walk, to be constructed on East 81st Street
2. The replacement of the pedestrian bridge over the FDR Drive at East 81st Street
3. A new 452-foot ramp from the pedestrian bridge down to the lower esplanade level

In February, CB8M passed a resolution asking the Public Design Commission (PDC) to delay consideration of this project until the community has had the chance to work with the Dept. of Design & Construction (DDC), Dept. of Transportation (DOT), and Dept. of Parks & Recreation (Parks) to address various concerns about the proposed designs, and asking DDC to halt work until PDC has approved the project.

At a second “working group” meeting held on Feb. 19, representatives from CB8M, the East 79th St. Association, some of the buildings near the project site, and the offices of several elected officials were joined by Parks & DOT’s Manhattan Borough Commissioners and DDC’s Deputy Commissioner of Infrastructure, along with other staff members from these agencies. During that meeting, the city agencies were asked to go back and rethink the entire project, including whether the entire bridge can be moved north by a block or more, and whether the bridge could be demolished but not replaced. The agencies are currently discussing the project internally, and should be responding to the Community Board soon.

As of Feb. 19, DDC did state that they would push back construction of the ADA-accessible ramp onto John Finley Walk toward the end of the project, giving time to work out proposed changes to that ramp and its location; in addition, although temporary fencing will be required sooner, DDC indicated that the permanent fencing materials are not planned for installation until Spring 2016 or later.

Although DDC had been planning to close the pedestrian bridge and begin its demolition in mid-March 2015, they have since then pushed the start of significant activity back to the end of March or beginning of April at the earliest, with a pre-construction meeting to be scheduled soon as well as a further working group meeting.

The Public Design Commission has not yet announced when this project will be considered; their next meeting is scheduled for March 23, but this project is not on the agenda for that date. (Additional PDC meetings are set for 4/20, 5/11, 6/1, and 6/22/14.) It was noted that the public is permitted to speak on these hearings, and that CB8M's Board Office has a recent copy of the blueprints for the project available to view upon request.

## **2. A request to change the direction of the SBS off-boarding ticket dispensers from facing the street to facing the sidewalk.**

Committee member Rita Popper reported that DOT & NYC Transit's usually installs the Select Bus Service off-board fare kiosks facing the street, so that riders have to stand near the curb in order to pay; this leads to crowding in front of the machines, making it more difficult to use the machines to obtain the fare receipt.

The Committee passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS Select Bus Service (SBS) stations have MetroCard Fare Collector and Coin Fare Collector machines on the sidewalk, for riders to pay before boarding; and

WHEREAS the majority of SBS Fare Collector machines have been installed with the machines facing the curb; and

WHEREAS this orientation requires riders to stand in a limited area between the Fare Collector machines and the curb when paying for their tickets; and

WHEREAS riders who have obtained their tickets often stand in the same limited area until boarding the bus, causing crowding in front of these machines; and

WHEREAS installing the Fare Collector machines with their backs to the curb would allow riders to move behind the machines after purchasing their tickets, which would help alleviate the crowding in front of the machines; and

WHEREAS NYC Transit is planning to launch Select Bus Service on the M86 crosstown line in 2015; and

WHEREAS certain M15-SBS stations and Fare Collector machines may be relocated after completion of the Second Avenue Subway project in the coming years;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 Manhattan asks the NYC Department of Transportation and New York City Transit to install Select Bus

Service fare-collection machines facing away from the curb at any new SBS stations within Community District 8 Manhattan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 Manhattan asks DOT and NYC Transit to consider whether those fare-collection machines that face the curb at existing SBS stations within Community District 8 Manhattan can be turned to face in the opposite direction (away from the curb).

*Approved: 4 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain, 0 not voting for cause, plus 2 Public Members voting Yes.*

*Yes: Falk, Lader, Popper, Warren; Menegon, Wouk (Public Member)*

*Abstain: Birnbaum*

### **3. Discussion of the possible elimination of the westbound M86 stop at 92nd & York, which is proposed for consolidation with a stop on York Avenue between 90th & 91st Streets.**

As part of the planned launch of M86-SBS, NYC Transit is proposing to move two existing westbound M86 stops to a consolidated location: The initial stop on 92nd Street & York Avenue and the next stop, currently on York Avenue between 90th & 91st Street, would be combined into a single new SBS station on York Avenue between 91st & 92nd Street.

The concerns raised by the Committee about this proposal include the following:

- Riders coming from south of the new stop would now be required to cross 91st Street, which is across from the future Marine Transfer Station.
- Select Bus Service is intended to speed and improve riders' trips, but this consolidation seems unlikely to save time; unlike SBS that replaces limited-stop service, the M86-SBS plan is not focused on streamlining stops and achieves its primary improvement in trip speed through off-board fare collection.
- The distance from the current stop north of 90th Street to the next stop, at 86th Street, is 0.21 miles, which is already tied for the longest distance between two M86 stops on either side of Central Park. The proposed change would create an even larger gap of one-quarter mile between the first two stops on the westbound M86-SBS.
- Having the M86 and M31 both stop on the same block allows for rider flexibility, for those riders who could start their trips using either of the two routes.

Committee members and area residents both expressed a desire to retain both the M86 and M31 stops on 92nd Street, and then to keep a second stop on York (at or near the current stop location near 90th).

The Committee passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS NYC Transit is planning to launch Select Bus Service on the M86 crosstown line in 2015; and

WHEREAS NYC Transit proposes to move the first two westbound M86 stops, which are currently located on 92nd Street west of York Ave. and on York Ave. north of 90th Street, and combine them in a new stop on York Avenue between 91st & 92nd Street; and

WHEREAS this relocation would require some riders to unnecessarily cross 91st Street, across York Avenue from the future Marine Transfer Station (which is now under construction);

WHEREAS combining these two stops will create a quarter-mile gap between westbound M86 stations; and

WHEREAS combining these two stops will not result in an appreciable increase in travel speed for bus riders; and

WHEREAS the community wishes to retain the existing stop locations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 Manhattan urges New York City Transit to retain the two existing westbound M86 stops on East 92nd Street west of York Ave. and on York Ave. north of East 90th Street, instead of moving and combining these stops.

*Approved: 4 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain, 0 not voting for cause, plus 1 Public Member voting yes & 1 Public Member abstaining.*

*Yes: Birnbaum, Lader, Popper, Warren; Menegon (Public Member)*

*Abstain: Falk; Wouk (Public Member)*

#### **4. Continuing discussion of wheel guards for trucks and buses.**

In June 2014, CB8M passed a resolution calling for both New York City and NYC Transit to require wheel guards on vehicles weighing more than 10,000 pounds. Mayor de Blasio recently announced a pilot program to equip 240 trucks with side guards, prompting the Committee to revisit this issue. After some discussion, the Committee decided to send a letter to the Mayor to express our support for this program, and to restate our desire to see this expanded to the rest of the city fleet; the Committee will also resend a copy of the resolution to NYC Transit, which has not announced any plans to implement underride guards.

#### **5. Old Business.**

Committee member Rita Popper again suggested that NYC Transit should use only low-floor buses on the M66 route, which serves the hospital corridor and Lincoln Center, after our success in getting low-floor buses on the M31 route. NYC Transit has previously stated that the Transverse Drive through Central Park does not have enough vertical clearance for the height of these buses; it was suggested that the Committee should verify whether that information is correct.

#### **6. New Business.**

A resident complained that on Friday, February 27, she waited on First Avenue at 72nd Street for an uptown M15 bus from 4:23 to 5:13 PM, a total of 50 minutes. In addition, she reported that there is no sign at this location that indicates where the nearest M15-SBS stop is, although this stop was previously a stop for the M15 Limited. The co-chairs said they would contact NYC Transit to request an explanation for the delay on February 27, as well as to discuss possible posting at M15 local stops that would list the nearest SBS station locations.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
A. Scott Falk and Charles Warren, Co-Chairs