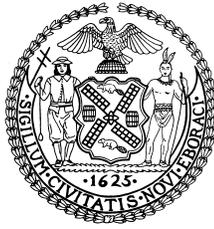


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**The City of New York**  
**Manhattan Community Board 8**  
**Transportation Committee**  
Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 6:30 PM  
*Lenox Hill Hospital*  
131 East 76th Street, Einhorn Auditorium

Minutes

*Present:* Elizabeth Ashby, Michele Birnbaum, Lori Bores, Daniel Dornbaum, A. Scott Falk, Andrew Kalloch, Craig Lader, Rita Popper, David Rosenstein, Barry Schneider, Charles Warren; Devin Gould (Public Member), Jordan Wouk (Public Member)

*Excused:* David Menegon, Sharon Pope

The Meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM.

**1. Madison Avenue at 96th Street Traffic, Bus, and Safety Improvements** *(requested by DOT)*

Following a March 2016 presentation to CB11 in East Harlem, DOT came to the Committee regarding a project they wish to implement this spring. Per the agency's website:

“In response to community concerns about traffic and pedestrian safety, and a request from the MTA to improve street conditions for the M96 bus, this project proposes traffic, bus, and safety improvements at Madison Avenue and E 96th Street and surrounding intersections. The project area includes E 96 Street and E 97 Street from 5th Avenue to Madison Avenue, specifically looking at traffic, bus, and safety concerns associated with crosstown traffic traveling to and from Central Park. The project proposal includes ten neckdowns, a pedestrian island, curb regulation changes to improve traffic and bus movements to and from the park, and traffic signal changes to better coordinate crosstown travel.”

DOT noted that it can take 7.5 minutes for the M96 to travel from Park to Fifth Avenues under the current configuration. There are long pedestrian crossings with heavy turning traffic, blocked intersections, and poor visibility for both drivers and pedestrians.

Some of the main elements of this proposal include the following:

1. E. 96th St. at Fifth Ave.:
  - a. Increase to two through lanes for eastbound traffic exiting the 96th St. Transverse, and add a new right-turn bay for traffic turning south onto Fifth Ave.
  - b. Reducing from two left-turn lanes down to one, for westbound traffic on 96th Street turning south onto Fifth Ave.
  - c. Adding two pedestrian neckdowns to reduce crossing distances:
    - i. Concrete neckdown on NE corner
    - ii. Painted neckdown on SE corner
2. E. 96th St. at Madison Ave.:
  - a. Change signal timing to improve traffic flow and pedestrian crossings

- b. Create dedicated left-turn lane for eastbound traffic on 96th St. turning north onto Madison Ave.
  - c. Designate two right-turn lanes for westbound traffic on 96th St. turning north onto Madison Ave., and maintain one through lane
  - d. Add pedestrian refuge island on the east side of the intersection
  - e. Add three concrete neckdowns, on NE, NW, and SW corners, to shorten crossings
3. E. 97th St. at Madison Ave.:
- a. Change signal timing to improve pedestrian safety and vehicle turns
  - b. Create left-turn bay for northbound traffic on Madison Ave. turning west onto 97th St.
  - c. New no-standing zone on 97th Street to the east of the intersection of Madison Ave., to help keep the intersection clear
  - d. Adding three pedestrian neckdowns to reduce crossing distances:
    - i. Concrete neckdowns on NE & NW corners
    - ii. Painted neckdown on SE corner
4. E. 97th St. at Fifth Ave.:
- a. New peak-hour bus lane and new no-standing segment to improve bus & truck turns
  - b. Change in parking regulations to match timing of rush hour regulations on Fifth Ave.
  - c. Adding two pedestrian neckdowns to reduce crossing distances:
    - i. Concrete neckdown on NE corner
    - ii. Painted neckdown on SE corner

DOT noted that neckdowns, or curb extensions, serve to reduce crossing distances and increase visibility for both pedestrians and drivers; painted neckdowns are used where drainage issues preclude the installation of concrete neckdowns.

The Committee passed the following resolution to APPROVE the proposal:

WHEREAS the Department of Transportation wishes to improve safety and traffic flow in the area bounded by 96th & 97th Streets and Madison & Fifth Avenues; and

WHEREAS DOT and New York City Transit wish to reduce travel time on the M96 bus; and

WHEREAS DOT proposes a series of traffic, bus, and safety improvements including ten pedestrian neckdowns, a pedestrian island, and changes to curb regulations and traffic signal timings to achieve these goals,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 approves the proposal for traffic, bus, and safety improvements in the area bounded by 96th & 97th Streets and Madison & Fifth Avenues, as presented; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 requests that NYPD provide traffic enforcement for at least the first two weeks following implementation of these changes.

*Approved: 9 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain, plus 2 Public Members voting Yes.*

*Yes: Ashby, Bores, Falk, Kalloch, Menegon, Pope, Popper, Schneider, Warren; Gould, Wouk  
(Public Members)*

*Abstain: Birnbaum*

## **2. Discussion of possible elimination of left turn and split signal phase for northbound traffic on York Avenue at 79th Street.**

The Committee again revisited an item of longstanding concern. In 2009, without prior notification to CB8, DOT changed the traffic signals at the intersection of 79th Street & York Avenue to add a “trailing”

(delayed) left-turn signal arrow for northbound traffic turning west onto 79th Street; there is no corresponding dedicated left-turn lane. At the December 2009 full-board meeting, by a unanimous vote of 33-0-0, CB8 passed a resolution to restore the signals, but no changes were made.

In January 2016, by a unanimous vote of 39-0-0, CB8 passed a resolution asking DOT to remove the left-turn signal arrow, but DOT responded that they would do so only if the board requested to eliminate the left turn from northbound York Avenue to westbound 79th Street.

Betty Cooper Wallerstein of the East 79th Street Neighborhood Association explained to the Committee about the specific dangers at this corner, and asked the Committee to support her association's resolution to eliminate the turn in order to restore standard traffic signals at this location. Co-Chair Scott Falk reminded the Committee that Council Member Kallos supports this resolution.

After additional feedback from the public and from CB8 members regarding the perceived dangers at this intersection, the Committee unanimously passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS Community Board 8 wishes to improve safety at the intersection of 79th Street & York Avenue; and

WHEREAS DOT has confirmed that they will remove the left-turn signal arrow for northbound traffic on York Avenue only if CB8 requests to eliminate the left turn from northbound York Avenue to westbound 79th Street,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 asks the Department of Transportation to eliminate the left turn from northbound York Avenue to westbound 79th Street, and to restore standard traffic control signals at the intersection of York Avenue & 79th Street; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 urges DOT to add Accessible Pedestrian Signals at this intersection, simultaneous with the change in traffic signals.

*Approved: 11 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain, plus 2 Public Members voting Yes.*

*Yes: Ashby, Birnbaum, Bores, Dornbaum, Falk, Kalloch, Lader, Popper, Rosenstein, Schneider, Warren; Gould, Wouk (Public Members)*

### **3. Presentation by New York City Transit re: Second Avenue Subway service plan.**

Marcus Book from New York City Transit presented preliminary information on the service plan for the Second Avenue Subway. When service begins on the Second Avenue Subway, the Q train will serve the new 96th, 86th, and 72nd Street stations and the existing 63rd Street F station, and then run express along the Broadway line from 57th Street to Coney Island; as a result, the Q will no longer stop at Fifth Ave./59th St. and Lexington Ave./59th St. in Manhattan nor run to Astoria in Queens.

NYCT proposes to restore the W train as of fall 2016, to replace Q service in Astoria and to run as a local train in Manhattan, terminating at Whitehall Street/South Ferry. The Q will temporarily terminate at 57th Street until the launch of service on the Second Avenue line, and will no longer stop at 49th Street. The N train will run local in Manhattan below 34th Street.

Information was provided regarding an NYCT public hearing on this service proposal scheduled for April 7, the day after the Committee meeting.

#### **4. Continued discussion of a request for low-floor buses on the M66.**

In May 2014, CB8 successfully requested that New York City Transit replace the older buses on the M31 bus route with new low-floor equipment that is easier to board; subsequently the Committee considered a similar request for the M66 bus, which also serves many of the same “hospital corridor” institutions as the M31 bus. New York City Transit has said that this is currently impossible due to low clearances at certain points on the Central Park Transverse roadways. A member of the Committee asked what plans NYCT has for future equipment replacement on these height-restricted routes.

The Committee will ask NYCT and DOT to provide a list of the height clearance restrictions on all of the transverse roadways.

#### **5. A request to change the parking regulations on the north side of East 67th Street between 2nd & 3rd Avenues, including reducing the NYP press parking zone to extend only the length of the Fox 5 building and changing the 7 AM - 7 PM to regular alternate-side parking wherever it exists on that side of the block.**

The Committee continued discussion of longstanding complaints, primarily from the residents of 220 East 67th Street, regarding chronic double parking and misuse of the press parking zone in front of the Fox 5 studio on East 67th Street. Two representatives from Fox 5 were present at this meeting: Brian Quinn (Senior Manager, News Operations & Production) and Kent Von Hertsenberg (VP, Finance).

In addition to the many complaints expressed at prior meetings, residents reported persistent problems with extremely loud overnight trash removal, which the station’s representatives said they would investigate and resolve. Fox 5 also said they would work to resolve the other complaints. In response to a suggestion for community meetings, Mr. Quinn proposed a system for complaints to be filtered between the Community Board and his office, but he did not wish to give his direct contact info to the general public.

Members of the Committee discussed reducing the size of the press parking zone, but the neighbors made it clear that they did not want to reduce the press van parking, but instead wanted to see two changes: (1) The NYP zone should be properly sited to align with the length of Fox’s studio, and (2) the 7 AM – 7 PM zone must be restored to alternate side parking, which could give the residents a fair opportunity to use those parking spaces.

The Committee then passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS, there have been persistent complaints from the neighborhood about abuse of press parking privileges on the North side of East 67th Street between Second and Third Avenues; and

WHEREAS Community Board 8 has indicated to Fox 5 that it would consider taking away the press parking on that block if there were continued problems; and

WHEREAS there has been a lack of enforcement of violations of press parking rules, which are difficult to enforce; and

WHEREAS there are problems with double parking, a congested street on a bus route, and general noise at late hours,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 asks the Department of Transportation to extend and relocate the NYP press parking zone to properly align with the property lines of Fox 5’s building at 205 East 67th Street; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 asks DOT to change all “No Parking 7 AM – 7 PM” regulations on the north curb of East 67th Street between Second & Third Avenues to instead be standard Alternate Side Parking; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 urges NYPD to rigorously enforce the parking regulations on this block.

*Approved: 8 yes, 1 no, 0 abstain, plus Public Members voting 1 Yes and 1 No.*

*Yes: Birnbaum, Bores, Dornbaum, Falk, Lader, Popper, Schneider, Warren; Gould (Public Member)*

*No: Kalloch; Wouk (Public Member)*

**6. A request for a new Revocable Consent to install a planted area at 825 Fifth Avenue** (*Requested by DOT, Division of Franchises, Concessions and Consents*).

The petitioner wishes to extend their existing planted area approximately five feet further from the property line, to align with the neighboring buildings. A motion was made to approve the request, but a substitute motion to disapprove failed by a vote of 2-7 (plus 1 Public Member voting no). The Committee then passed the following resolution to APPROVE the request:

BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 approves the request for a new Revocable Consent to install a planted area at 825 Fifth Avenue, as presented.

*Approved: 7 yes, 2 no, 0 abstain, plus 1 Public Member voting Yes.*

*Yes: Bores, Dornbaum, Kalloch, Lader, Popper, Schneider, Warren; Gould (Public Member)*

*No: Birnbaum, Falk*

**7. A request for a new Revocable Consent to install a fenced-in planted area and steps at 134 East 74th Street** (*Requested by DOT, Division of Franchises, Concessions and Consents*).

The entries to this building are being relocated, and the new planted area and steps will occupy roughly the same footprint as the prior configuration.

The Committee unanimously passed the following resolution to APPROVE the request:

BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 approves the request for a new Revocable Consent to install a fenced-in planted area and steps at 134 East 74th Street, as presented.

*Approved: 11 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain, plus 1 Public Member voting Yes.*

*Yes: Birnbaum, Bores, Dornbaum, Falk, Kalloch, Lader, Popper, Schneider, Warren; Gould (Public Member)*

**8. Old Business.**

There was no old business.

**9. New Business.**

There was no new business.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A. Scott Falk & Charles Warren, Co-Chairs