

Alida Camp
Chair



505 Park Avenue, Suite 620
New York, NY 10022
(212) 758-4340

Will Brightbill
District Manager

(212) 758-4616 (Fax)
info@cb8m.com – E-Mail
www.cb8m.com – Website

The City of New York Community Board 8 Manhattan

Transportation Committee
Wednesday, September 5th, 2018 - 6:30PM
New York Blood Center Auditorium
310 East 67th Street (between 1st and 2nd Avenues)

MINUTES

Please note: The resolutions contained in the committee minutes are recommendations submitted by the committee chair to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolutions are discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.

Present: Michele Birnbaum, Lori Bores, Alida Camp, Billy Freeland, Greg Kirshenbuam, Craig Lader, Valerie Mason, Sharon Pope, Barry Schneider, Tricia Shimamura, Charles Warren, Jordan Wouk (public member)

Absent (Excused): David Menegon, Rita Popper

Absent (Unexcused): Rebecca Lamorte, Peter Borock (public member)

Resolutions for Approval:

***Item 2: Continued discussion on the DOT proposed Second Avenue Parking Protected/Curbside Buffered Bike Lane from 68th Street to 59th Street (pages 3 & 4)**

***Item 3: Revocable Consent: 1275 York Avenue – Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center installation of an Underground Fuel Oil Tank (pages 5 & 6)**

**unanimous*

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 PM.

Item 1: Discussion on parking placard abuse and presentation by the Office of Council Member Keith Powers regarding proposed legislation

Emily Walsh, Chief of Staff for Councilman Keith Powers, described three proposed City Council Bills regarding abuse and misuse of parking placards, which have been a persistent problem within Community District 8 and across New York City:

Intro 314 – A reporting bill that would define the term “parking permit” as a document, card, or sticker that is displayed in or on a motor vehicle and that indicates permission to park in a certain area has been granted; the bill would also require NYPD to submit a quarterly report on the illegal use of parking permits to the City Council.

Intro 927 – This bill would require the Department of Transportation to create an electronic database that allows relevant city agencies, including the NYPD, to track all issued city-issued parking permits.

Intro 932 – This bill would require the revoking of city-issued parking permits for individuals who are found guilty of misusing valid parking permits or creating or using fraudulent parking permits and would prohibit future issuance of such placards to such individuals.

In response to questions posed by Committee members, Ms. Walsh indicated that if the legislation were signed into law, it was likely that windshield placards would be able to be scanned and have their authenticity determined in real time. She added that the legislation does not currently include provisions for fines, and the legislation does not aim to limit future issuances or placards or reduce the current number of placards that are currently in distribution. It was also not clear whether the legislation would address placards issued by entities other than New York City, such as media outlets, certain unions and religious institutions.

The Committee determined that due to the preliminary nature of the discussion and the outstanding questions that require further investigation, no action was to be taken, and Keith Powers' office would be invited to a future meeting to continue the discussion and provide updates on the topic.

Item 2: Continued discussion on the DOT proposed Second Avenue Parking Protected/Curbside Buffered Bike Lane from 68th Street to 59th Street

Ted Wright, NYC DOT Director of Bikes and Greenways, joined by Ed Pincar, NYC DOT Manhattan Borough Commissioner, returned to Community Board 8 to present an updated proposal to add a bike lane on 2nd Avenue between 68th and 59th Streets, and to modify the intersection of 2nd Avenue between 60th and 59th Streets to allow bikes and pedestrians to cross the Queensboro Bridge entrance/exit intersection on the east side of the street.

The core elements of the proposal were largely unchanged. As described in the July 2018 Transportation Committee Minutes, the key components of the proposal are as follows:

- *2nd Avenue between 68th and 60th Streets: The proposal calls for a continuous 6-foot wide bike lane with a 3-foot buffer between 68th and 60th streets along the curbside on the east side of the street to replace the existing shared moving/bike lane. The far left moving lane would continue to carry vehicular traffic during peak periods (weekdays 7AM-10AM, 3PM-8PM), and then would be used as a parking/loading lane during off-peak hours, which would allow the bike lane to be protected from traffic during non-peak periods. Flexible barriers were not an option due to maintenance and snow removal conflicts. There would be minimal impact to traffic capacity overall with no change to general traffic throughput on 2nd Avenue during the times of day with the highest traffic volumes.*
- *Between 60th and 59th Streets at the Queensboro Bridge: DOT proposes a new bike/pedestrian island to be constructed at the intersection of 2nd Avenue and 59th within the 2nd Avenue right-of-way, which would be the landing spot for bikes and pedestrians during the 2nd stage of a 3-stage crossing. In the first phase, a southbound bike/pedestrian crossing would be added to allow crossing of 60th Street and the bridge exit, while vehicular traffic on 2nd Avenue has the green light. The second phase, during which time eastbound traffic on 59th Street has the green light cycle, would allow bikes and pedestrians to continue their southbound movement by crossing onto the new pedestrian island. The third stage would permit bikes and pedestrians to continue southbound on 2nd Avenue and to the existing sidewalk and bike lane during the southbound green cycle for 2nd Avenue.*

The proposal would result in no change to vehicular throughput or signal timing on 2nd Avenue by the Queensboro Bridge; the new island would allow the 2 far right southbound traffic lanes on 2nd Avenue used to access the entrance to the bridge to be separated from the remaining lanes of 2nd Avenue that continue southbound. Bike lanes at this complex intersection would be clearly demarcated, and separated from the pedestrian crosswalks and pathways. The new island would have bollards to provide extra protection from oncoming vehicles; curvature of the bike lane and a raised ramp will help to slow cyclists down as they enter the new island. There will be bike and pedestrian signals at each location within the three-stage crossing, but specific information on any signals to be installed were not described in the presentation; DOT's signals unit was not present to respond to requests for

details on exactly how many and precise siting. Some details regarding how the bike and pedestrian lanes would be painted were still evolving.

The project is now scheduled to be constructed in the late 2018/early 2019 timeframe. Based on feedback provided at the July meetings of the Transportation Committees of Community Boards 8 and 6, along with input from a small group of stakeholders representing Community Boards 8 and 6 who were provided a walk-through of the 59th/60th Street area of the project by NYCDOT, minor adjustments to the plan were made that would further extend some of the sidewalks and pedestrian islands to further reduce crossing distances and expand their capacity to accommodate cyclists and pedestrians. The updated presentation also provided additional detail and minor modifications regarding the pavement markings and paint, and plastic delineators to better provide clear separation between bikers and pedestrians.

The general locations of the bike and pedestrian crossing signals was described, but precise locations were yet to be finalized since it requires further investigation of location of existing utilities that can't be disturbed. DOT staff indicated that it was likely that the pedestrian signals would feature countdown clocks, but were not able to provide a firm commitment that they would be installed. Traffic agents would continue to be present during busy timeframes to manage vehicles and provide an added layer of safety.

The response from the audience assembled at the meeting was predominantly positive, though there were some speakers staunchly opposed to the plan as a whole. Among those who supported the plan, the proposed bike lane which would close what some called the "2nd Avenue Gap" was viewed as long overdue. There was some frustration expressed that construction has been pushed back since DOT's initial presentation in July; certain speakers requested the project be expedited. Other speakers expressed support for other linkages to the 2nd Avenue bike lane be improved, such as along 59th Street between 1st and 2nd Avenues, but DOT said that would have to be looked at in the future as doing so now would further delay the rest of the project.

Some speakers in opposition expressed concerns that the crossing would be very complicated and lengthy for both cyclists and pedestrians, and questioned whether this plan would in fact be safer for bikers and pedestrians in an area with such heavy automobile congestion. There were also speakers who opposed bike lanes in general and spoke in favor of increased enforcement and licensing bike users.

Multiple Committee members expressed concern about the length of some of the crossings, and whether the signal cycle timing would enable slower pedestrians to safely cross each segment, especially between 60th Street and the relief area at the base of the Bridge structure where 54 seconds would be afforded to make the crossing. There were also concerns raised about encouraging pedestrians to utilize a more complex and busy intersection than they currently must negotiate by crossing to the west side of 2nd Avenue; DOT's position is that some pedestrians at the current time ignore the signs stating crossing the bridge entrance/exit is illegal, and this proposal will give pedestrians the option to stay on the east side or cross to the west side of 2nd Avenue. The monitoring of vehicles coming off the bridge for speeding was also requested; DOT indicated there are already cameras in place at the site.

DOT indicated that they would provide notification to CB8 to any changes to the proposal before construction begins if modifications are made.

The following resolution was put forward by CB8:

WHEREAS Manhattan's Second Avenue has a protected bike lane or bike path between 96th Street and 68th Street; and then again from 59th street to the Queens Midtown Tunnel;

WHEREAS there is currently no protected bike lane on Second Avenue between 68th Street and 59th Street, creating a gap in one of the largest contiguous bike lanes in New York City;

WHEREAS there is no pedestrian or bike crossing on the east side of Second Avenue from 60th Street to 59th Street;

WHEREAS southbound bicyclists are currently forced to merge with left-turning vehicles at the Queensboro Bridge;

WHEREAS Second Avenue between 68th Street and 59th Street is a high traffic volume area and a Vision Zero Priority Corridor, with 363 total injuries between 2012-2016, including 9 pedestrians, 1 bicyclist, and 16 motor vehicle occupants killed or seriously injured;

WHEREAS the New York City Department of Transportation (“DOT”) has proposed a protected bike lane between 68th and 60th Streets that will be adjacent to a moving lane during the “peak period” weekday hours of 7am-10am and 3pm-8pm, and adjacent to a lane for loading/unloading and parking during off-peak hours;

WHEREAS DOT has also proposed several safety measures for Second Avenue at 60th Street, 59th Street, and the Queensboro Bridge, including five new pedestrian and bicycle crosswalks, two new pedestrian islands at 59th Street (one of which will be shared with bicyclists), and a new tip extension and cut through at 59th Street;

WHEREAS the proposal enables bicyclists and pedestrians to move south along the east side of Second Avenue in three phases, with signals at each phase;

WHEREAS the proposal’s first phase would feature a southbound bike/pedestrian crossing that would be added to allow crossing of 60th Street and the Queensboro Bridge exit, while vehicular traffic on Second Avenue has the green light;

WHEREAS the proposal’s second phase, during which time eastbound traffic on 59th Street has the green light cycle, would allow bikes and pedestrians to continue their southbound movement by crossing onto the new bicyclist/pedestrian island;

WHEREAS the proposal’s third phase would permit bikes and pedestrians to continue southbound on Second Avenue and to the existing sidewalk and bike lane during the southbound green cycle for Second Avenue, while left turns from Second Avenue onto 59th Street will be prohibited, thereby avoiding turning conflicts;

WHEREAS the new island at the intersection of Second Avenue and 59th Street would separate the two eastern southbound traffic lanes used to enter the Queensboro Bridge from the remaining southbound lanes, and would consist of bollards to provide extra protection from oncoming vehicles, flexible posts in between the bike lane and the pedestrian walkway, and a curvature of the bike lane and a raised ramp to help slow cyclists down as they enter the island;

WHEREAS the bike lanes at this complex intersection would be clearly demarcated, and separated from the pedestrian crosswalks and pathways;

WHEREAS this proposal will enable pedestrians to walk continuously along the east side of Second Avenue;

WHEREAS this proposal will enhance safety for bicyclists and pedestrians who follow the newly designed paths, and for occupants of motor vehicles that follow the newly organized lanes;

WHEREAS on October 21, 2009, Community Board 8 expressed support for DOT’s initiative to create protected bike lanes by a vote of 38 in favor to 1 opposed;

WHEREAS the Transportation Committee of Community Board 6 (Manhattan), which represents the affected area south of 59th Street, evaluated and voted in favor of DOT's proposal on September 4, 2018;

BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 supports the proposal presented by DOT on September 5, 2018, and urges DOT to implement the proposal by the end of 2018;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 requests that any pedestrian signal installed between 60th and 59th streets, including all crossings at the Queensboro Bridge entrance related to this project, be equipped with countdown clocks;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 requests that DOT provide monthly updates on the status of this project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 requests that DOT, the New York Police Department, and other relevant agencies carefully monitor the newly designed stretch of Second Avenue, from 68th Street past the Queensboro Bridge, monitor and enforce traffic laws, and provide monthly reports Community Board 8 on safety and traffic law compliance statistics for a period of two years from the date of implementation of this proposal and quarterly thereafter.

Approved, 11 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstention, 0 Not Voting for Cause; plus 1 Public Member voting Yes.

Yes (10+1): Birnbaum, Bores, Camp, Freeland, Kirshenbaum, Lader, Mason, Pope, Schneider;
Shimamura, Warren, Wouk (public member)

No (0): None

Item 3: Revocable Consent: 1275 York Avenue – Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center installation of an Underground Fuel Oil Tank.

Tom Kasselbaum of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center presented a request for a revocable consent for installation of an underground fuel oil tank at their 1275 York Avenue facility. The proposed tank is to be located on the north side of 67th Street midblock between York Ave. and 1st Avenue. This would support the infrastructure upgrade for emergency power for the facility.

The tank will be 28x12 feet, holding 20,000 gallons of oil. It meets all LEED requirements, and will be registered with the New York State DEC. The top of the tank will be approximately 5-8 feet below grade, and any fueling activities or repairs will be performed internally from within the facility – it will not be visible from street level, and the fuel box is located under a manhole. The site is well above flood levels.

Site excavation has begun, and a covered walkway currently exists – all necessary permits for this work have been issued by various City Agencies. The work has required the relocation of a fire hydrant and the removal of two trees that will be replanted elsewhere in Manhattan at the request of the Parks Department. Mr. Kasselbaum said he would work with the Parks Department to get the trees replanted within the neighborhood around MSK. The project is expected to be completed in early 2019.

WHEREAS Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center seeks a revocable consent to install a underground fuel tank on 67th Street for their facility at 1275 York Avenue;

WHEREAS the fuel tank will satisfy all environmental and safety regulations;

WHEREAS the work will require the removal of two trees that Community Board 8 would prefer be replanted in the neighborhood in the immediate vicinity of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 approves the revocable consent at 1275 York Avenue for installation of an underground fuel oil tank at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 requests that Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center work with NYC Parks Department to replant trees as close as possible to the location where trees removed during the excavation of the sidewalk on 67th Street.

Approved, 11 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstention, 0 Not Voting for Cause; plus 1 Public Member voting Yes.

Yes (10+1): Birnbaum, Bores, Camp, Freeland, Kirshenbaum, Lader, Mason, Pope, Schneider;
Shimamura, Warren, Wouk (public member)

No (0): None

Item 4: Old and New Business.

A constituent expressed concern about the construction permits granted by NYCDOT to real estate developers which take away parking spaces in the neighborhood for long periods of time.

There was a brief discussion of reported issues on the Soundview Ferry, with one CB8 member and one Transportation Committee member being unable to board vessels at 90th Streets due to lack of capacity on arriving boats, resulting in passengers being left behind having already activated their timed tickets. The Transportation Committee will work with the Parks Committee jointly to bring in NYCEDC to discuss preliminary operations and issues that have arisen since ferry operations have begun.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Warren & Craig Lader, Co-Chairs