

**Alida Camp**  
Chair

**Will Brightbill**  
District Manager



505 Park Avenue  
Suite 620  
New York, N.Y. 10022  
(212) 758-4340  
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)  
www.cb8m.com Website  
info@cb8m.com - E-Mail

**The City of New York**  
**Community Board 8 Manhattan**  
**Transportation Committee**  
Wednesday November 7, 2018, 6:30 PM  
*New York Blood Center - Auditorium*

*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.*

**Minutes**

*Present:* Michele Birnbaum, Lori Bores, Billy Freeland, Craig Lader, David Menegon, Rita Popper, Tricia Shimamura, Cos Spagnoletti, Charles Warren, Peter Borock (public member), Jordan Wouk (public member),

*Absent (Excused):* Barry Schneider, Valerie Mason,

*Absent (Unexcused):* Rebecca Lamorte, Sharon Pope

**Resolutions for Approval:**

**\*Item 1: Morton Williams Supermarket (1251 Third Avenue) – Request to change parking regulations to allow a Truck Loading Zone**

**\*Item 2: M79 Select Bus Service**

*\*unanimous*

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

**Item 1: Morton Williams Supermarket (1251 Third Avenue) – Request to change parking regulations to allow a Truck Loading Zone**

Avi Kaner, co-owner of Morton Williams, presented a request for a truck loading zone on the east side of Third Avenue between 72<sup>nd</sup> and 73<sup>rd</sup> Streets. The request is being made in anticipation of the opening of an incoming Morton Williams Supermarket scheduled to open in January 2019,

The majority of the curbside in front of the store is a New York City Transit Bus Stop, which will be unaffected by the proposal. Between the bus stop and 73<sup>rd</sup> street, there are currently two metered parking spaces and a taxi stand; the request is to convert this 45 foot segment into a truck loading zone during the hours of 7AM to 7PM. Other nearby locations nearby were considered for a truck loading, with this site being identified as the preferred location from the standpoint of Morton Williams and community stakeholders including the East 72<sup>nd</sup> Street Neighborhood Association and the office of Council Member Keith Powers.

In response to concerns about concurrent deliveries from vendors that may result in trucks double parking, Mr. Kaner explained that many vendors do not operate on specified schedules; however, Mr. Kaner committed to attempt to stage deliveries to the fullest extent possible for vendors in situations where they have scheduling input, with the goal for trucks to have curbside access and avoid double parking,

The following resolution was put forward by CB8M:

**WHEREAS** Morton Williams is opening a supermarket at 1251 Third Avenue in early 2019; and

**WHEREAS** Supermarkets generate significant truck deliveries during business and non-business hours; and

**WHEREAS** a bus stop, two metered parking spaces and one taxi-loading zone are currently present along the curbside on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue between 72<sup>nd</sup> and 73<sup>rd</sup> Street; and

**WHEREAS** a truck loading zone to replace the existing parking spaces can support commerce and reduce double parking and resulting congestion; and

**WHEREAS** the bus stop directly in front of 1251 Third Avenue will be unaffected; and

**WHEREAS** Morton Williams has committed to staging deliveries to the fullest extent possible to avoid multiple trucks unloading concurrently and supports the community's monitoring of the impacts of deliveries;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that Community Board 8 supports converting two parking spaces and a taxi-loading zone on the east side of Third Avenue to a Truck Loading Zone, 7AM to 7PM Except Sunday

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Community Board 8 requests NYCDOT to identify nearby locations to replace the parking spaces that will be lost after being converted to truck loading regulations.

*Approved, 8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstention, 0 Not Voting for Cause; plus 2 Public Members voting Yes.*

*Yes (8+2):* Birnbaum, Bores, Freeland, Lader, Menegon, Popper, Spagnoletti, Warren, Borouk (public member), Wouk (public member),

*No (0):* None

## **Item 2: M79 Select Bus Service Update**

Rob Thompson, Director of Long-Range Bus Planning for New York City Transit, and Alison Bullock, Project Manager for Transit Development from New York City DOT, provided an overview of the first year of operations of Select Bus Service (SBS) on the M79 Route, which began in May 2017. The project was implemented in response to requests from passengers and local elected officials to address slow travel times on the M79 crosstown route. Numerous intersections along 79<sup>th</sup> Street also were identified as vision zero corridors due to high incidences of pedestrian injuries and fatalities, which also were to be addressed as part of the SBS implementation. Along the route, there were .75 miles of short-segment bus lanes installed, 10 intersections that were recipients of signal timing improvements to provide additional time for buses along 79<sup>th</sup> Street (including a queue jump at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue which was upgraded in November 2018 to differentiate it from the signal for general traffic), and 12 new real-time bus displays with walking maps. There were also ticket vending machines installed at each bus stop to support off-board fare collection.

Between May 2017 and May 2018, overall speeds of M79 buses increased 8%, resulting from 5% less time that buses were stopped in traffic and 21% less time buses were dwelling at bus stops, with larger improvements occurring during the daytime hours. The improved performance has attracted new passengers, as ridership increased by 9%; this compares favorably to the ridership on other Manhattan Bus Routes which only increased by 0.5% over the same timeframe. Customer satisfaction rose to 96% for M79 SBS riders, compared to 84% satisfaction in the last survey pre-SBS.

Ms. Bullock provided traffic data that showed that travel times for all vehicles along 79<sup>th</sup> Street between 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the FDR Drive decreased by 6% in the eastbound direction and 2% in the westbound direction as a result of the signal timing improvements and reconfiguration of traffic lanes to provide dedicated turning lanes at many intersections; the breakdown by time of day showed that the largest improvement

occurred eastbound between 7AM and 10AM when travel times dropped by 9%; there were no timeframes throughout the day that saw increases in times. She explained that although the number of travel lanes had been reduced from two to one, the substandard narrow width of the lanes on 79<sup>th</sup> Street resulted in traffic issues before the reconfiguration, and the engineering work that widened the general traffic lane and provided dedicated turning lane resulted in fewer conflicts and thus improved travel times for non-bus vehicles.

Ms. Bullock also previewed an upcoming capital project that will provide additional improvements along 79<sup>th</sup> Street that are expected to further improve M79 operations and safety for pedestrians. The initial plan for 79<sup>th</sup> Street includes a 4-ft. wide bus bulb at the southeast corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 11 curb extensions located at Madison Ave., Lexington Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and York Avenue, and a pedestrian island on the east side of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. These amenities have been installed at some intersections along the 86<sup>th</sup> Street SBS route. The project will include design work which will take place between 2019 and 2021, and construction is expected to begin in 2022. NYCDOT will return to a future Transportation Committee meeting to present the detailed plans once they are designed.

Questions from the public and Board members centered on the loss of travel lanes and parking, buses using the general traffic lanes where bus lanes are available, enforcement against vehicles blocking the bus lane, and instances of long wait times for the M79. One member asked that DOT attempt to design future curb extensions to avoid the loss of parking spaces. The issue of some ticket vending machines facing the street was also brought up, which CB8 is on record with a resolution requesting they all face the sidewalk due to safety concerns. There were suggestions to improve real-time communications of service disruptions and posting of detours at bus stops where no real-time information is available, and to educate users of bus time about the current shortcomings such as buses dropping off the system if they are detoured, buses not showing up until they start their trip, and showing inaccurate data regarding the number of stops away a bus is when the next bus is currently operating in the opposite direction.

Multiple Board members also spoke about the intersection at Madison and 79<sup>th</sup> Street. This was the location of a crash resulting in a pedestrian death in October 2018, and has a history of safety concerns.

The following resolution was put forward by CB8:

**WHEREAS** a pedestrian was killed at the intersection of 79<sup>th</sup> Street and Madison Ave. in October 2018; and  
**WHEREAS** a pedestrian was also killed at this same intersection in August 2014; and  
**WHEREAS** vehicles in both incidents were turning left from Madison Ave. onto 79<sup>th</sup> Street; and  
**WHEREAS** the intersection of 79<sup>th</sup> Street and Madison Avenue has a history of being a perilous intersection for pedestrians; AND  
**WHEREAS** New York City DOT has begun planning capital improvements for East 79<sup>th</sup> Street to improve pedestrian safety, but the project is not scheduled for construction until 2022;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that Community Board 8 requests New York City DOT develop concrete solutions to improve pedestrian safety for the intersection of Madison Ave. and 79<sup>th</sup> Street, including but not limited to signal timing changes, left turn signals, leading pedestrian intervals and sidewalk improvements;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that New York City DOT prioritize the intersection of Madison Ave. and 79<sup>th</sup> Street for improvements and address this intersection separate from the rest of the 79<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor so they can be constructed as soon as possible.

*Approved, 9 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstention, 0 Not Voting for Cause; plus 2 Public Members voting Yes.*

*Yes (9+2):* Birnbaum, Bores, Freeland, Lader, Menegon, Popper, Shimamura, Spagnoletti, Warren, Borouk (public member), Wouk (public member),

*No (0):* None

**Item 3: Application for Revocable Consent (40 East End Avenue) – Application to construct, maintain and use proposed planted areas including uprightings and conduits to be located on and under the west sidewalk of East End Avenue and south sidewalk of East 81<sup>st</sup> Street, at 40 East End Ave.**

This item was tabled due to flyers not being posted in the vicinity of the project site. It will be the first item heard at the December 2018 Transportation Committee Meeting.

**Item 4: Discussion Regarding Congestion Pricing**

John Steinberg, a neighborhood resident, and Charles Komanoff, a consultant specializing in transportation and energy policy who has developed a spreadsheet model to analyze congestion pricing, discussed the current status of the congestion pricing debate in New York State, and sought the support of Community Board 8 on the issue of congestion pricing ahead of potential legislative action. Community Board 8 first went on record supporting congestion pricing concepts in March 2008; in 2014 it supported the core principles of the Draft Move NY Fair Tolling and Transportation Plan. The topic was revisited at the March 2018 Transportation Committee meeting, which resulted in a letter to Governor Cuomo written by the Chair of Community Board 8 expressing certain concerns about the Fix NY congestion pricing plan that was on the table at that time.

Mr. Komanoff expressed his belief that now is the time for the Community to go on record with its vision of an equitable approach to congestion pricing, given his belief that congestion pricing will receive attention in the State Legislature and City Council in the very near future. A resolution drafted by Mr. Steinberg was offered to the Committee to urge the adoption of a congestion mitigation plan along the lines of the Fix NYC report issued in January 2018, and urging the elected officials representing Community Board 8 to advocate for and vote for the passage of such a plan in their respective chambers. The Committee was not prepared to take action, as members were reluctant to move without specific details regarding fees, boundaries, impacts to Community Board 8, and anticipated congestion mitigation and revenue streams. They also sought data that could corroborate the theoretical benefits that congestion pricing is purported to produce in New York City, which Mr. Komanoff states his spreadsheet can generate.

The Committee decided it would be appropriate to invite Mr. Komanoff to return at the December Transportation Committee meeting to formally present scenarios and impacts through data he can generate with his model; elected officials will be invited, and the item will be posted as a proposal to reiterate Community Board 8's support of congestion pricing as a concept.

**Items 5 and 6: Old and New Business**

There was no old or new business discussed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Charles Warren & Craig Lader, Co-Chairs