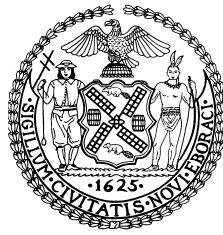


Nicholas Viest
Chair

Latha Thompson
District Manager



505 Park Avenue, Suite 620
New York, N.Y. 10022-1106
(212) 758-4340
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)
www.cb8m.com - Website
info@cb8m.com - E-Mail

The City of New York Manhattan Community Board 8

Transportation Committee

Wednesday, January 2, 2013

New York Blood Center

310 East 67th Street (Conf. Room 1 & 2)

New York, NY

6:30pm

Minutes

Present: Michele Birnbaum, A. Scott Falk, Larry Hockert, Jonathan Horn, Rita Popper, Cos Spagnoletti, & Charles Warren; Michael Dillon (Public Member)

Excused: Helene Simon, David Menegon (Public Member)

The Meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Co-Chairs Charles Warren & A. Scott Falk.

1. Continuing discussion re: audible pedestrian crossing signals at 72nd, 79th, 86th, 96th Streets.

The committee continued its discussion regarding locations for audible pedestrian crossing signals (APS). At the December transportation committee meeting, the committee had discussed the feasibility of adding APS at intersections along the two-way cross-streets within our district (72nd, 79th, 86th, & 96th Streets), and discussion was held over for the January meeting in order to allow for more public input after posting meeting notices at those locations that would be affected.

Some residents aired their concerns about this plan, including several comments about possible noise pollution, and questioned the need for widespread installation of these signals. One resident asked whether the committee had spoken to the Pedestrians for Accessible and Safe Streets (PASS) Coalition, a pedestrian organization consisting of various groups of people with disabilities.

NYC Department of Transportation liaison Josh Orzeck reported that DOT has a mandate to install 25 new audible signals citywide this year (in addition to the 48 existing APS locations) per New York City Council law. He also said that he is not aware of any complaints from the public about the existing APS devices, and explained that the signals adjust their volume according to the level of ambient noise.

Ethel Sussman from NYC Councilmember Jessica Lappin's office mentioned that her office had received some requests from constituents for more audible signals; she also reported that,

at a meeting of people with disabilities, blind constituents had said that installing more APS would make the streets safer for them.

Some committee members questioned whether the committee was qualified to select which specific locations would be appropriate for installing additional APS, whether selectively installing these signals would just leave blind pedestrians vulnerable at the next corner, and whether the committee should simply oppose the addition of any new APS within this district.

A motion was made to disapprove the installation of any additional APS within the district. After discussion, the committee approved a substitute motion to lay over this item until the March meeting of the C8M Transportation Committee:

WHEREAS the Transportation Committee would like to allow more opportunity for public input, including feedback from visually disabled pedestrians, and

WHEREAS the Transportation Committee needs time to obtain more information regarding the need for accessible pedestrian signals at specific locations within this district;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Transportation Committee of Community Board 8M will hold this item over until the March 6, 2013, Transportation Committee meeting.

Approved: 6 Yes, 1 No, 0 Abstentions

Yes: Falk, Hockert, Horn, Popper, Spagnoletti, Warren

No: Birnbaum

Public Member Votes: 1 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions

Yes: Dillon

2. MTA Bus and Subway Service review

A handful of issues were raised about bus and subway service, with particular attention to ongoing problems with the MetroCard Vending Machines (MVMs) at the 86th Street Lexington Avenue station. Since the removal of the fare booth at the uptown side of the station, there has been a continuing issue with malfunctioning and vandalized MVMs. Committee members inquired about the possibility of installing additional MVMs, but Marcus Book from New York City Transit indicated that NYCT did not have an inventory of additional machines.

The committee passed the following unanimous resolution:

WHEREAS New York City Transit has eliminated the fare booth at the uptown 86th Street Lexington Avenue 4/5/6 station; and

WHEREAS transit riders who need to purchase or add value to their MetroCards are therefore reliant on the station's MetroCard Vending Machines; and

WHEREAS the MetroCard Vending Machines at this station are often malfunctioning, vandalized, or otherwise out of service;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8M calls upon New York City Transit to reinstall the fare collection booth at the Uptown 86th Street Lexington Avenue station, and to staff the booth with a station agent from 6 AM to 9 PM, seven days per week.

Approved: 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions

Yes: Birnbaum, Falk, Hockert, Horn, Popper, Warren

Public Member Votes: 1 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions

Yes: Dillon

There was further discussion of various issues relating to bus service, and the NYC Transit representatives present promised to look into the various concerns expressed.

3. A request from Prime Butcher Baker to close the east curb lane on Second Avenue between 81st and 82nd Streets from Sunday, March 17, 2013 to Tuesday, April 2, 2013 for two Mobile Units.

Steven Traube from Prime Butcher Baker (1572 Second Avenue) appeared regarding the business's application for a Street Activity Permit, intended to allow them to park two 8-foot mobile refrigeration units in commercial parking spaces directly in front of their business for the storage of Passover meals during the days leading up to and to the end of Passover. Mr. Traube explained that using the mobile units instead of bringing in a refrigerated truck as other businesses do greatly reduces the impact on the surrounding neighborhood, because the mobile units would be much quieter; one unit would be used as a refrigerator and one would be used as a freezer unit.

This application was originally sent to the Street Life Committee, but was referred to the Transportation Committee instead. There was debate over whether this application appropriately falls under the Mayor's Street Activity Permit Office, which generally handles street fairs, festivals, block parties, greenmarkets, and so forth, rather than extended rental of parking spaces.

Committee members expressed concern about the precedent that might be set by supporting the application, and one member speculated that this application was the result of a failure to plan for the business's peak sales period; however, some also thought it might be better to work with the applicant to set specific binding conditions to which they will stipulate. The applicant agreed that he would be willing to limit the request to one unit rather than two, to reduce the requested dates down from seventeen days to six days, and to agree that they would not illegally park a refrigerator truck in front of their store if the permit is not approved.

WHEREAS Prime Butcher Baker located at 1572 Second Avenue has applied to the Mayor's Street Activity Permit Office for a permit to park two 8-foot mobile refrigeration units directly in front of their business from March 17 to April 2 for the storage of Passover meals;

WHEREAS the applicant has agreed to limit the request to park only one 8-foot mobile refrigeration unit in front of the store from Friday, March 22, through Wednesday, March 27;

WHEREAS the applicant has agreed to stipulate that if the permit application is not approved by the Mayor's Street Activity Permit Office he will not park a refrigerator truck in front of the business illegally, but will instead abide by the relevant parking regulations; and

WHEREAS the mobile refrigeration unit that the applicant proposes to park in front of Prime Butcher Baker should generate less noise and air pollution than a refrigeration truck, resulting in less negative impact on the neighboring community;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8M supports this application as amended, for one 8-foot refrigeration unit to be parked in front of Prime Butcher Baker from Friday, March 22, to Wednesday, March 27; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8M supports this permit only on a one-time trial basis, to evaluate the actual impact on the community.

Approved: 5 Yes, 2 No, 0 Abstentions

Yes: Falk, Hockert, Horn, Popper, Warren

No: Birnbaum, Spagnoletti

Public Member Votes: 1 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions

Yes: Dillon

4. A request for a new Revocable Consent to install a sidewalk hatch at 1379 Lexington Avenue.

The applicant did not appear before the committee, and no copy of the application was included with the committee's material, so this item was laid over to the February Transportation Committee meeting.

5. Old Business

Charles Whitman, resident of 45 East End Avenue, came to the committee to follow up on his building's concerns regarding the 81st Street Pedestrian Bridge. Mr. Whitman reported that the revised design has addressed certain concerns relating to 45 East End's building services, but that they have further objections to the fencing on the bridge. The committee assured Mr. Whitman that the NYC Department of Design & Construction would be coming back to the Community Board prior to the beginning of construction, and that the board office would follow up prior to DDC's next appearance before the committee.

6. New Business

There was no new business.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A. Scott Falk and Charles Warren, Co-Chairs