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The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8

Transportation Committee

Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2016, 6:30 PM
Rockefeller University
1230 York Avenue, Caspary Auditorium

Minutes

Present: Michele Birnbaum, Lori Bores, Alida Camp, Sarah Chu, Daniel Dornbaum, A. Scott Falk, Andrew Kalloch, Craig Lader, Sharon Pope, Rita Popper, Barry Schneider, Charles Warren; Devin Gould (Public Member), Jordan Wouk (Public Member)

Absent (Excused): David Menegon

The Meeting was called to order at 6:37 PM. Councilmember Ben Kallos spoke regarding the proposed crosstown bicycle lanes.

Co-Chair Scott Falk announced that Community Board 8 will sponsor a free Bike New York “Street Skills 101” bicycle safety class on February 24 at Memorial Sloan Kettering’s Rockefeller Research Laboratory auditorium.

1. A request for a new Revocable Consent to install a snowmelt system and fenced-in area at 132 East 73rd Street. *(Requested by DOT, Division of Franchises, Concessions and Consents)*

A representative for the applicant was present, but he was unable to answer questions regarding the snowmelt system, so this item will be laid over until the Committee’s next meeting on March 2. It was noted that this project also includes a total of 7 planters, and that CB8 had approved the Landmark application for this project.

2. A request for a new Revocable Consent to install a fenced-in area and stoop at 177 East 64th Street. *(Requested by DOT, Division of Franchises, Concessions and Consents)*

Architect Anthony Harrington appeared on behalf of the petitioner to present a request for a new revocable consent at 177 East 64th Street. This building has steps down to its main entrance and a separate flight of stairs down to the basement; the basement stairs are currently behind a 2’ 9.75” high fence, but the main entry stairs are not fenced off.

The curb and step space at 177 East 64th Street will be enlarged 14.5 inches out from the property line, to align with the neighboring building’s curb and fence. The new fence’s height will be 4’ 6”, consistent with the Dept. of Transportation limit.

The Committee passed the following resolution to APPROVE the application:

BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8 approves the request for a new revocable consent to install a fenced-in area and stoop at 177 East 64th Street, as presented.

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

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

No: Birnbaum, Camp

Abstain: Wouk (Public Member)

3. A discussion of painted Crosstown Bicycle Lanes (with no removal of parking spaces or vehicular travel lanes) on the following streets:

- **East 67th Street between York and Fifth Avenues**
- **East 68th Street between Fifth and York Avenues**
- **East 77th Street between Cherokee Place and Fifth Avenues**
- **East 78th Street between Fifth Avenue and Cherokee Place**
- **East 84th Street between Fifth Avenue and FDR Drive**
- **East 85th Street between East End and Fifth Avenues**

On November 18, 2015, CB8 passed a resolution requesting that DOT propose “a network of painted crosstown bicycle lanes on the Upper East Side, to be implemented in the short-term.” In addition, CB8 asked DOT for a longer-term proposal for “a network of crosstown bicycle routes on the Upper East Side, using the safest appropriate design.”

In response to the first portion of CB8’s November 2015 resolution, Craig Baerwald, a project manager for DOT’s bicycle program, presented the agency’s proposal for painted crosstown bicycle lanes. Also present to answer questions were Manhattan Deputy Commissioner Nina Haiman and Ted Wright, DOT’s Director of Bicycles & Greenways.

The agency is proposing painted bike lanes, with no lost parking or travel lanes, along the following six streets:

- East 67th Street between York and Fifth Avenues
- East 68th Street between Fifth and York Avenues
- East 77th Street between Cherokee Place and Fifth Avenues
- East 78th Street between Fifth Avenue and Cherokee Place
- East 84th Street between Fifth Avenue and FDR Drive
- East 85th Street between East End and Fifth Avenues

Those six streets are currently unstriped, with 30’ (or more) of width. The streets would be striped with the following markings, from left to right:

- 7.5’ parking lane
- 5’ painted bicycle lane
- 10’ travel lane
- 7.5’ parking lane

In addition to the six streets above, DOT is proposing the following connections between the East River Esplanade and the crosstown lanes:

- Shared-lane markings on Gracie Square (East 84th Street, east of East End Avenue) in both directions, East and West.
- Shared-lane markings going northbound on East End Avenue between 84th & 85th Street
- Shared-lane markings going southbound on York Avenue between 78th & 77th Street
- Shared-lane markings going northbound on Cherokee Place between 77th & 78th Street

Some of the streets were selected for their connections to the East River Esplanade, Central Park, and/or Lexington Avenue subway stations. In addition, 77th & 78th Street would have crosstown lanes on both the Upper East and Upper West Sides, the same way 90th & 91st Street have crosstown lanes on both the Upper East and Upper West Sides.

DOT's presentation said that the intended benefits of the proposal would be (1) to add critical new connections to the bike network, and (2) to increase safety, by organizing the roadway, increasing awareness of bicycles using the roadway, and reducing speed to calm traffic. As part of DOT's implementation of the new lanes, they would coordinate safety outreach by two DOT programs: The Street Ambassador program safety outreach would include giveaways of lights and bells, and the Commercial Bike Unit would also do safety outreach timed to implementation of the new lanes.

Many residents provided feedback and questions, and several of these residents expressed concerns about the specific locations or about bike lanes in general; some others spoke in support of the proposal.

There were safety concerns expressed regarding the 67th and 68th Street lanes, which seemed to come from both those who supported bike lanes and those opposed to bike lanes. Concerns specific to this pair of streets included the presence of the M66 bus, NYPD's 19th Precinct, a firehouse, a synagogue, the Russian Embassy, and Fox-5 (which was reported to have a serious issue with double parking). DOT confirmed that there are painted crosstown bike lanes on other one-way streets with NYCT bus routes. A number of people asked why DOT didn't select a pair of streets closer to 72nd Street (e.g., 70th & 71st Streets), in order to connect to the 72nd Street Terrace Drive bike lanes that cross Central Park.

Double parking was mentioned as a problem for the other streets with proposed bike lanes as well, but the strongest concerns with double-parking centered on 67th Street and around Lenox Hill Hospital on 77th Street: Multiple residents mentioned that Lenox Hill Hospital has both valet parking and their emergency room located on 77th Street, and expressed concern that this could cause issues with blocking the bike lanes.

Some residents were concerned about putting bike lanes on 84th Street between Fifth and Madison, a block that they said has been restriped for the M86-SBS route. There were also a number of people concerned about the block of 84th Street between Madison and Park Avenues, which is closed to vehicular traffic for part of the day. Other complaints regarding the proposal for 84th and 85th Streets involved slow traffic on both blocks, speeding traffic at other times on 85th Street, and the presence of residential buildings, clinics, and schools.

A few people asked whether DOT should consider putting painted bike lanes on *all* crosstown streets on the Upper East Side, rather than the proposed six bike lanes that might serve to funnel an increased amount of bike traffic onto just those particular streets.

Some people also asked why DOT was prioritizing the preservation of parking spaces, rather than the safest designs possible; it was noted that the second half of CB8's November 2015 resolution asked for a further long-term proposal for a network of lanes using "the safest appropriate design," but the first half had specifically requested a network of simple painted crosstown lanes.

The Committee did not take a vote at this meeting. DOT will return at the March 2 meeting for further discussion of their proposal.

6. Old Business.

Following the discussion of crosstown bike lanes on East 67th Street, some residents asked to have the Committee discuss chronic issues of double parking near Fox 5's studios at 205 East 67th Street, and abuse of press placards and the press parking zone. One of these residents said they had been told that NYPD's 19th Precinct was "not allowed" to ticket cars on the north side of that block.

The Committee will add a discussion of parking regulations near the Fox 5 studio and NYPD parking enforcement to an upcoming agenda, most likely for the next meeting on March 2.

7. New Business.

Roger Watkins appeared on behalf of the Moise Safra Center (130 East 82nd Street) with a request regarding their construction crane operations. The city has been requiring them to remove the crane at 4 PM each time it is used, which means that they are only able to work for 3-1/2 to 4 hours on a given day, with 4 hours spent each day either erecting or removing the crane.

The Moise Safra Center would like CB8 to consider allowing them to leave the crane in place overnight only when the crane is needed to erect steel for more than two days (every two to three weeks). They say this would speed the work and reduce the number of times the crane will need to be erected and removed, and reducing the inconvenience to the neighborhood. In return, they would hire a 24-hour pedestrian crossing guard for the intersection of 82nd Street & Park Avenue, to the west of their site.

The Committee will add this item to the March 2 agenda, to allow time for posting meeting notices throughout the surrounding area.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:28 PM.

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