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The City of New York Manhattan Community Board 8

Transportation Committee

Wednesday, April 3, 2013
MSK-Rockefeller Research Laboratories
430 East 67th Street (First-York) Room RRL-B20
New York, NY
6:30pm

Minutes

Present: Lori Bores, Jeffrey Escobar, A. Scott Falk, Jonathan Horn, Rita Popper, Teri Slater, Charles Warren, & Hedi White; David Menegon (Public Member)

Excused: Michele Birnbaum, Helene Simon

The Meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Co-Chairs Charles Warren & A. Scott Falk. In order to accommodate some residents from Roosevelt Island, the agenda was rearranged.

1. A discussion of the Q102 Bus line on Roosevelt Island.

After receiving complaints from residents of Roosevelt Island regarding morning rush hour service, CB8M invited representatives of MTA Bus Company to discuss the Q102 bus route, which runs between Queens and Roosevelt Island and is the only local bus that takes passengers off of the Island.

Residents reported that there have been problem on the Q102 route since the winter, after years of dependable service. The bus that previously left R.I. between 8:07 & 8:17 “doesn’t come anymore,” and then the next bus onto Roosevelt Island goes out of service on the island and returns to Queens without passengers. When residents have tried to take the bus south, in order to remain on the bus while it returns to Queens, they have been told that the line terminates at Goldwater Hospital and is going out of service (thus the buses exiting the Island without taking passengers).

MTA Bus Company representatives said their operations planning division is reviewing the service on this line, and indicated that they are having traffic issues with keeping to the schedule; they also said that there are more people taking the bus onto Roosevelt Island during the morning rush than riding to Queens.

RIOC Transportation Manager Cy Opperman, a Yorkville resident who worked for MTA for many years, gave a detailed report regarding what issues he sees with the Q102 and how

inadequate Q102 service causes overcrowding on the RIOCR Red Buses. Mr. Opperman asked for the Q102 line manager to attend RIOCR and/or RIA board meetings and also for MTA to post the bus schedules/guide-a-rides.

The Committee asked whether there was a liaison coordinating between the MTA and RIOCR, and was told that this was not happening. The Committee asked Ethel Sussman from Councilmember Jessica Lappin's office to help facilitate periodic meetings between MTA and RIOCR, which might help address some of these issues and also might allow greater schedule coordination between the R.I. Red Bus and the Q102.

Susan Czelusniak from MTA Bus Company agreed to return for the April 17 CB8M Full Board Meeting (to be held on Roosevelt Island) so that additional R.I. residents who come to speak during the public session can have their statements heard by the MTA directly. She also agreed to get back to the Board with a report on what was being done to deal with the issues raised at the meeting.

2. A discussion of the Queensboro Bridge Bike Connections.

Joshua Benson and Alan Ma from NYC DOT's Bicycle Program made a presentation regarding a proposal to improve bicycle connections to the Queensboro Bridge (QBB) and complete the construction-related gap in the First Avenue bike lane/bike path (as a result of DEP's now-completed 59th Street Water Main project).

There currently exists an enhanced shared bicycle lane on First Avenue that terminates at East 56th Street, and a protected bike path north of East 61st Street; there is no path or lane on First Avenue between 56th and 61st Streets. The QBB bike path leaves cyclists at the SW corner of First Avenue and E. 60th St., in this gap in the bicycle network; the current route that cyclists are supposed to take to reach Second Avenue is to ride up First Avenue to 61st Street, then ride over to Second Avenue and past the mouth of the QBB.

DOT proposes to add the following in the area around the bridge:

- an enhanced shared lane on First Ave. between E. 56th & E. 59th St. (extends enhanced shared lane three blocks north of its current termination)
- a two-way protected bike path on First Ave. between E. 59th & E. 60th St., beneath the QBB
- a one-way protected bike path on First Ave. between E. 60th & E. 61st St. (extends protected bike path one block south, and adds two new concrete pedestrian refuge islands)
- shared bicycle lanes in each direction on East 59th Street between First and Second Ave.
- an enhanced shared lane on Second Ave. between E. 59th and 58th St. (extends enhanced shared lane one block north of its current start)

DOT indicated that the project benefits were as follows:

- increased safety for all roadway users
- better continuity of the bicycle network
- safe connection from QBB to downtown bike routes
- shorter pedestrian crossings & greener streets, due to planted pedestrian refuge islands

There were several questions and comments from the public. Several people spoke in favor of the project, while some others expressed concerns about safety and potential traffic impact. DOT indicated that they did not expect this project to cause congestion, because there are currently only four moving lanes of northbound traffic at 59th Street and again north of 61st Street.

Multiple members of the public and of the Committee expressed safety concerns about the northwest corner of E. 59th St. and First Ave., with possible conflicts between cars turning left on 59th St. from the south, cyclists turning right onto 59th St. from the north, and pedestrians crossing to the north and south. There was also discussion about enforcement issues for various road users.

After an extended discussion, the Committee laid this item over to our May 1 meeting for continued discussion and asked DOT to take a closer look at the specifics of their proposal for the NW corner of 59th St. & First Ave.

3. A request for a new Revocable Consent to install an electric snowmelt system at 21 East 70th Street (*continued discussion*).

This item was carried over from the March 6 meeting, when the applicant had not brought copies of any schematics or construction plans. This time the applicant was able to present the plans for their proposed snowmelt system on the sidewalk in front of 21 East 70th Street.

The Committee passed the following unanimous resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 8 Manhattan approves a Revocable Consent to install an electric snowmelt system at 21 East 70th Street.

Approved: 8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions

Yes: Bores, Escobar, Falk, Horn, Popper, Slater, Warren, White

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

Yes: Menegon

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

Petition is for a revocable consent to install a sidewalk hatch on East 91st Street for basement access to 1379 Lexington Avenue. The Committee passed the following unanimous resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 8 Manhattan approves a Revocable Consent to install a sidewalk hatch at 1379 Lexington Avenue.

Approved: 8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions

Yes: Bores, Escobar, Falk, Horn, Popper, Slater, Warren, White

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

Yes: Menegon

5. A new Revocable Consent to install a fenced-in area and snowmelt system at 119 East 78th Street.

Petitioner is seeking to install an electric snowmelt system and to add a fenced-in garden in front of 119 East 78th St., matching the fence line of other townhouses on this block. The Landmarks Preservation Commission has issued a certificate of appropriateness for the planned work.

The Committee passed the following resolution by a committee vote of 6-1-0, with 1 public member voting yes.

WHEREAS other townhouses on this block have fences and gardens in front of their entrances, and

WHEREAS the proposed fence does not extend further than other fenced-in gardens on this block, and

WHEREAS the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission has issued a certificate of appropriateness for the proposal,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 8 Manhattan approves a Revocable Consent to install a fenced-in area and an electric snowmelt system at 119 East 78th Street.

Approved: 6 Yes, 1 No, 0 Abstentions

Yes: Bores, Escobar, Horn, Popper, Warren, White

No: Falk

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

Yes: Menegon

6. A new Revocable Consent to install a snowmelt system at 680 Madison Avenue.

Petition is for a revocable consent to install an electric snowmelt system in front of the E. 61st St. entrance to 680 Madison Avenue (on the northern sidewalk). The Committee passed the following resolution by a committee vote of 7-0-0, with 1 member not voting for cause and 1 public member voting yes.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 8 Manhattan approves a Revocable Consent to install an electric snowmelt system at 680 Madison Avenue.

Approved: 7 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions, 1 Not Voting for Cause

Yes: Bores, Escobar, Falk, Horn, Popper, Slater, White

NVFC: Warren

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

Yes: Menegon

7. Old Business

There was some brief discussion about the benefits of snowmelt systems and whether these systems might be an appropriate form of mitigation to request from certain applicants appearing before the Land Use committee seeking building variances.

8. New Business

Community resident Valerie Mason asked about future plans for a Second Avenue bike path, as indicated by a presentation at the February CB8M Second Avenue Subway Task Force meeting regarding revised plans for a subway entrance at the Southeast corner of East 69th Street & Second Avenue. The Committee indicated that no official plans for the restoration of Second Avenue had yet been presented to CB8M by DOT, but that this would be discussed closer to the end of surface construction for the SAS project.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

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