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**The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8
Transportation Committee**

Wednesday, October 5, 2011

New York Blood Center, 310 East 67th Street, Conference Room 1

Present: Elizabeth Ashby, Michele Birnbaum, Molly Blayney, Scott Falk, Lorance Hockert, Jonathan Horn, Rita Popper, Barry Schneider, Judy Schneider, Helene Simon, Teri Slater, Charles Warren, Hedi White
Absent (Unexcused): Alex Tisch

The meeting was called to order by co-chair Jonathan Horn at 6:30 pm.

1. Brief update on 78th St Pedestrian Bridge construction project

Deborah Howes, the community liaison for this project provided an update. The new span is undergoing final completion and will be delivered by barge and installed on October 15th and 16th. From late Saturday night until early Sunday morning, there will be full road closure of the FDR Drive. A flyer describing this closure and the detour route was distributed and has been posted to the CB8 website. It is hoped that all work on the bridge and adjacent roadway will be completed by early November, so that full access to the esplanade can be restored.

2. Presentation by the MTA on Hunter College – 68th Street ADA Project

As part of a Federal mandate to make 100 key subway stations ADA compliant, the MTA is planning to install elevators at the 68th Street-Hunter College station of the Lexington Avenue line. Approximately 30,000 riders a day use that station and the existing stairway access is already overwhelmed. To accomplish their twin goals of adding ADA accessibility and improve pedestrian travel flow, the MTA presented a plan that would install an elevator and widened staircases at the existing 68th Street entrances (east side of Lexington) and create two new staircase entrances on 69th Street, just east and west of Lexington. According to their traffic flow studies, approximately 30% of exiting passengers head north from 68th Street and would possibly benefit from an exit at 69th Street. In addition, creation of those new entrances would shorten the time needed to complete the ADA portion of the project from approximately 48 months to 38 months, while allowing the station to remain fully operational during the construction work.

Approximately 15 to 20 residents of 69th Street, mostly from 1312 East 69th Street, appeared before the committee to oppose the project. They object to the creation of subway entrances on their “quiet, residential block”. Some residents expressed concern about increased crime from the subway entrances, the effect on their property values and a few questioned the need for this station to be made ADA accessible.

Some residents, along with several committee members, raised significant questions about the lack of certain information and detail in the MTA's presentation. It was felt by the committee that the MTA was not prepared to provide us with sufficient data to properly evaluate their proposal and possible alternative solutions. Therefore, the MTA was asked to come back to our December 7th meeting and make a more complete presentation addressing some of the questions and concerns that were raised.

The original presentation has been posted to the CB8 website. Residents present at the meeting were urged to submit any additional questions or comments to the Board office as soon as possible. They will be forwarded to MTA for response and incorporation into their December presentation. All board members are urged to review the original presentation online and submit their own comments and questions as well.

3. **MTA Service review and update**

A number of service related issues were raised, primarily concerning the frequency of bus service on certain lines (M31, M15 local, M96) and the breakdowns of both SBS payment machines and the Metro-Card machines at the 86th Street Station. The MTA representatives present promised to look into each of the concerns expressed, speaking to dispatchers or maintenance supervisors as appropriate. It was requested that the MTA provide the committee with the latest "service capacity" figures for the bus lines located in CB8.

1. **Request to adjust meter hours on east side of Lexington Avenue between 85th and 86th Street to end at 7pm instead of 10pm Mon-Sat**

This change was intended to fix an aberration in signage. All blocks of Lexington North and South of this location have meters in effect until 7pm, while this block has the same 10pm regulation as 86th Street. Susan Gottridge, representing the 86th Merchants and Residents Association requested that we hold off on this change. Their organization is beginning a study with DOT of all the existing parking regulations on 86th Street and along the adjoining avenues from 84th Street to 88th Street. She indicated that the study should be completed by January. The committee chairs will follow up with DOT and the Association on this study. **A motion was made to table the item until our February 2012 meeting.**

Approved 12-1

Yes: Ashby, Blayne, Falk, Hockert, Horn, Popper, B. Schneider, J. Schneider, Simon, Slater, Warren, White

No: Birnbaum

2. **A request to convert two alternate side parking spots in front of 429 East 75th Street to No Standing Anytime (requested by Hospital for Special Surgery)**

Hospital for Special Surgery is opening a new facility at 429 East 75th Street and will be handling out-patient and surgical follow-ups at this location. They expect patients, often in need of assistance in walking, to arrive in private vehicles and taxis, as well as ambulettes at this facility.

WHEREAS the Hospital for Special Surgery will be locating a new care facility in the entire building located at 429 East 75th Street, and

WHEREAS there will be a regular need for vehicles to drop off and pick up patients during the day, and

WHEREAS the relocation of some patient services at this location may help alleviate some of the York Avenue traffic issues,
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8M approves the request to install a “NO STANDING 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday” regulation for two parking spots in front of 429 East 75th Street.

Approved 13-0

Yes: Ashby, Birnbaum, Blayney, Falk, Hockert, Horn, Popper, B. Schneider, J. Schneider, Simon, Slater, Warren, White

3. **Discussion of proposals for licensing and registration of bicyclists and bicycles**

Committee co-chair Horn began the discussion with a recap of our Community Board’s prior work on bicycle issues, specifically our 2009 Bicycle Forum and resulting series of resolutions. He also discussed the success and failures in other communities in regard to bicycle registration systems.

The committee then heard from David Longshore, the Press Secretary for Assemblyman Michael DenDekker (34th AD in Queens). Assemblyman DenDekker had introduced bills earlier this year on the subject, although he later withdrew them. Mr. Longshore explained the reasons for both those actions, as well as provided insight into why the Assemblyman believes some action is appropriate and what the political and logistical constraints are in connection with getting something done.

Members of the public, including a representative from Transportation Alternatives were allowed to speak. Although most of the public who spoke were opposed to any registration or licensing of bicyclists, most expressed an understanding of the issues that had prompted the discussion. They acknowledged that there was a need for bicycle riders to do a better job of following the rules of the road, especially as their numbers increase.

Each member of the committee was then allowed to make their own comments and suggestions on how best to proceed. After a somewhat spirited, but cordial discussion, wording for a resolution was agreed upon and a vote was taken.

WHEREAS, Community Board 8M is concerned about the safety of all people who use our streets and sidewalks, and

WHEREAS, Community Board 8M wishes to encourage the safe, responsible, and legal use of bicycles, and

WHEREAS bicyclists who violate the law represent a danger to the health and safety of all residents, including pedestrians, other cyclists and motorists, and

WHEREAS one of the top concerns of residents on Manhattan’s Upper East Side is illegal and unsafe activity by bicycle riders, such as running red lights, illegal turns, riding the wrong way on one way streets and riding on the sidewalk, and

WHEREAS Community Board 8M has passed numerous resolutions urging increased enforcement of existing laws, better regulation of delivery bicycles and improved educational outreach to the entire bicycling community, and

WHEREAS, the NYC Department of Transportation and numerous private organizations have attempted to mount “safe riding” campaigns, and

WHEREAS, these efforts and others have produced virtually no change in the behavior of a significant portion of the bicycle riding community, and

WHEREAS, the installation of substantially more bicycle lanes, including ones approved by Community Board 8M and the upcoming introduction of an NYC Bike Share program will result in a significant increase of bicycles and bicycle riders using public roads and resources, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8M urges our state and local officials to establish a registration system for bicycles that would require a clear and visible identifier (such as a license plate) on each bicycle, and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8M urges our state and local officials to establish a system that would require some type of bicycle operating license to be issued to all adult bicycle riders, and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8M urges our state and local officials to pass legislation mandating liability insurance for all commercial use bicycles.

Approved 7-4

Yes: Ashby, Birnbaum, Blayney, Horn, Popper, B. Schneider, Slater

No: Falk, Hockert, J. Schneider, Warren

4. **Old Business**

There was no old business.

5. **New Business**

There was no new business.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Horn and Charles Warren, Co-chairs