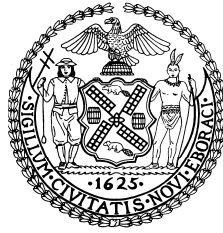


Nicholas Viest
Chair

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, October 3, 2012
New York Blood Center
310 East 67th Street (Conf. Room 1 & 2)
New York, NY
6:30pm

Minutes

Present: Michele Birnbaum, Molly Blayney, A. Scott Falk, Larry Hockert, Jonathan Horn, Peggy Price, Barry Schneider, Judith Schneider, Helene Simon, Teri Slater, Charles Warren, & Hedi White

Excused: Rita Popper, David Menegon (Public Member)

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

1. A presentation by the Metropolitan Museum of Art on the construction plan for the Museum's Plaza project. (Joint item with Parks and Landmarks Committee)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art presented their construction plan for the first two phases of their plaza reconstruction project.

Phase 1 of this project is scheduled for 10/15 – 11/15/12 and is primarily a preparatory phase. This phase will involve temporary changes to curbside regulations on Fifth Avenue as follows:

- Between 80th and 81st Street, the MTA bus stop will be removed for the one-month duration of Phase 1. Passengers will use the stops to the south (between 78th & 79th Streets) or to the north (between 84th & 85th Streets).
- The tour bus stop located between 83rd & 84th Streets will be temporarily removed and relocated between 86th & 87th Streets. This will cause the loss of six parking spaces for the duration of phase 1, but will not interfere with MTA buses stopping on that block.
- There will be no changes to the parking regulations on the east side (left side) during either phase, and two moving lanes will be retained at all times.

Phase 2 is scheduled for 11/16/12 – 12/16/13 and will have no changes in curbside regulations.

The museum also reported on their revised plans for the project, including the elimination of the restaurant kiosk from their initial plans, and a substantial reduction in the number of chairs and tables planned for the initial opening of the plaza; they will reassess the number of

tables and chairs after the first year that the plaza is open. The Met is planning special treatment of the fencing during construction to have a more appealing look than a standard construction site.

2. Update on the 81st Street Pedestrian Bridge

A presentation was made to the Committee by the consultant for the City Department of Design & Construction on the present status of the Bridge. The approvals are in place and they are going into the final design stages for construction to start in September, 2013. The Bridge is scheduled to be completed by March of 2015. The Committee was pleased that a change was made in the configuration of the ramp at East 81st Street to accommodate the apartment buildings in the area. Concern was expressed about the potential for crime on the bridge and the issues of bikers riding fast on the bridge, particularly because of its length. There was also a continuing concern about the 8 foot fence facing the buildings and the blending of the bridge into the neighborhood. After discussion the following resolutions were adopted:

WHEREAS CB8M is concerned about the safety of pedestrians at night who are walking on a very long bridge with no way to get off before the end of the bridge, and

WHEREAS CB8M is also concerned about the safety of pedestrians who have to share the bridge with bikers who may be travelling at a high speed because of the length of the bridge;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that CB8M recommends that security cameras be installed on the East 81st Street pedestrian bridge and phones or call boxes also be installed for the protection of those walking on the bridge, particularly at night;

FURTHER RESOLVED that CB8M recommends that signs be posted at the appropriate places on and near the bridge telling bikers to walk their bikes on the bridge.

Approved 11 Yes, 1 No and 0 Abstention

Yes: Birnbaum, Blayney, Hockert, Horn, Price, B. Schneider, J. Schneider, Simon, Slater, Warren, White. No: Falk.

WHEREAS, CB8M is concerned that the overall design of the 81st Street pedestrian bridge still does not fit with the surrounding neighborhood despite a number of changes made to the bridge;

WHEREAS, there is particular concern with the eight foot high fence that faces the buildings and the fact that the bridge is in an area with some parks and esplanades;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that CB8M urges the DOT and the DDC to make further changes to the 81st Street pedestrian bridge so that it blends into the surrounding neighborhood in a better way and to ameliorate the impact of the eight foot high fence facing the buildings in the area.

Approved 11 Yes, 0 No and 1 Abstention

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

3. Discussion of the 86th Street Streetscape Improvements

NYC DOT gave an update on the East 86th Street Streetscape Improvement Project, which they have been working on for several years with the East 86th Street Association. The basic elements of this project include replacing the curbs on 86th Street between Park and Second Avenues with granite curbs and expanding the size of tree pits and installing a few additional tree pits where possible (to be maintained by the E. 86th St. Assoc.). Future improvements will include benches, bus racks, and trash receptacles.

To reduce the cost of these improvements, this project will incorporate some elements from other existing programs that are already funded:

- Safety improvements for routes to priority schools and bus improvements will allow the installation of “neckdowns” that increase space and reduce distances for pedestrians waiting to cross streets. School-safety neckdowns are planned for the NW & SW corners of 84th & Madison and the SW corner of 85th & Madison, plus the NW & SE corners of 86th & Park.
- New “bus bulb” sidewalk extensions will extend the sidewalk into the curbside no-standing lane at certain locations on East 86th Street to provide more space for pedestrians waiting at bus stops, and allow buses to stop without needing to pull over. These bus bulbs can also serve as neckdowns at some locations.

After some discussion about the bus bulbs and how off-board fare collection on the M86 route might speed the buses and improve traffic flow on 86th Street, the committee passed the following resolution by a vote of 11 yes, 1 no, 0 abstentions:

WHEREAS CB8M welcomes the East 86th Street streetscape improvements presented by the Department of Transportation,

WHEREAS DOT’s plans include the installation of bus bulbs along East 86th Street that will provide space for riders waiting for the M86 buses,

WHEREAS off-board fare collection would reduce the amount of time the M86 buses spend loading passengers boarding at these stops, and thus speed traffic on East 86th Street,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CB8M requests that DOT and New York City Transit launch Select Bus Service–style off-board fare collection on the M86 bus route.

Approved: 11 Yes, 1 No, 0 Abstentions

Yes: Blayney, Falk, Hockert, Horn, Price, B. Schneider, J. Schneider, Simon, Slater, Warren, White

No: Birnbaum

The committee also requested that DOT come back to the committee when launching their Wayfinding System Signage program, so that CB8M can suggest locations for inclusion in the program, including this area.

4. A discussion of locations for countdown timers and/or audible pedestrian crossing lights.

DOT liaison Josh Orzeck informed the committee that countdown timers are scheduled to be installed on all major avenues in our district within the next year. The committee decided to postpone discussion of suggested locations at which to request audible signals until November, to give the members time to consider appropriate locations to suggest and to allow members of the public to submit their suggestions via the board office.

5. Old Business

There was no old business.

6. New Business

There was some discussion of recently announced changes to the traffic lane allocation on the Central Park Drives. The committee will place this item on the agenda for the November meeting, as a joint item with the Parks and Landmarks committees.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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