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**The City of New York  
Manhattan Community Board 8  
Transportation Committee**  
Wednesday September 4, 2019, 6:30 PM  
*New York Blood Center - Auditorium*

**Minutes**

*Present:* Lowell Barton, Michele Birnbaum, Alida Camp, Rebecca Dangoor, Billy Freeland, Craig Lader, Rebecca Lamorte, Rita Popper, Barry Schneider; Tricia Shimamura, Marco Tamayo, Charles Warren, Peter Borock (public member), Jordan Wouk (public member)

*Absent (Excused):* Lori Bores

*Absent (Unexcused):* Valerie Mason

**Resolutions for Approval:     **Item 2, Item 4 (unanimous)****

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 PM.

**Item 1: Discussion of Traffic Safety with the 19<sup>th</sup> Precinct Traffic Enforcement Unit**

Detective Brian Lombardi, who was joined by officers from the 19<sup>th</sup> Precinct's Traffic Enforcement Unit, provided an overview of the work performed by the 6 person unit. Thus far in 2019, collisions are down 12% from 2018; pedestrian collisions are down 31%; over 8,000 hazardous violations for moving vehicles have been written in 2019 for infractions including speeding, failing to yield to pedestrians, red light violations, etc.; speeding violations are up 18%. Bus lanes are patrolled, and enforcement is done in coordination with a citywide task force unit. Regarding bicycles, the unit regularly works with local elected officials on bicycle education initiatives. The unit has issued 804 summonses so far in 2019, which is up 86% compared to 2018.

Detective Lombardi urged anyone to report non-emergency traffic infractions to call the 19<sup>th</sup> Precinct at 212-452-0613, or to contact him at [Michael.lombardi@nypd.org](mailto:Michael.lombardi@nypd.org). All inquiries will be looked into by traffic agents to investigate.

The following is a summary of the topics discussed:

- The unit performs e-bike confiscation and legal motorcycles; so far in 2019, about 70 e-bikes have been confiscated. When groups of motorcyclists create traffic disruptions, the unit investigates with a goal of confiscation, as they seek to avoid chases due to the danger it would create.
- Block-the-box was identified by numerous speakers as an ongoing issue; violations can result in tickets, but only certain levels of traffic agents are authorized to write such tickets.
- York Avenue was identified as an area in need of additional enforcement, especially at 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, between 61<sup>st</sup> and 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, and near 79<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Since the completion of the bike lane on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue near the Queensboro Bridge, residents from 300 East 59<sup>th</sup> Street reported that the newly constructed bike lane on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue has created access and safety issues for their building's residents. The 19<sup>th</sup> Precinct will do a field reconnaissance report.

There have also been observed regular instances of cyclists using the general traffic lanes rather than the bike lane when crossing the intersection with the bridge entrance.

- Truck vendors that idle are an ongoing issue; the 19<sup>th</sup> Precinct noted that there are legal issues since some of the idling that takes place comes from secondary motors, which may not be subject to the idling laws. It was also reported that a food truck regularly parks in the bus stop at 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue at 86<sup>th</sup> Street, which could be subject to towing and will be looked into by the 19<sup>th</sup> Precinct.

**Item 2: Presentation by Asphalt Green Regarding Parking Changes to Accommodate Bus Parking on 90<sup>th</sup> Street Between York Ave. and East End Ave.**

Asphalt Green Executive Director Maggy Siegel and Head of Security Frank Coppola presented their request to permanently change parking regulations near the 555 East 90<sup>th</sup> Street building of Asphalt Green to accommodate school bus pick-ups and drop-offs. The request is to create a no standing except school buses, 8 AM to 5 PM Monday to Friday, which would result in the removal of 6 general parking spaces during that timeframe.

In prior years, buses primarily parked alongside Asphalt Green's field on York Avenue between 90<sup>th</sup> and 91<sup>st</sup> Street. In the Summer of 2018, York Avenue construction required a temporary relocation for buses loading and unloading onto East 90<sup>th</sup> Street; this change was perceived as a much safer location for children to board/exit buses, as entering through the 555 East 90<sup>th</sup> Building allowed them to avoid having to cross the entrance to the Marine Transfer Station. The changes were implemented in advance of the 2019 Summer Camp season weekdays between 7 AM and 7 PM on short notice, with the intention that CB 8 would review the request to make this change permanent. NYCDOT does not permit seasonal parking regulations, so these changes would be in effect on a year-round basis; this would also enable schools that use Asphalt Green to utilize the parking spaces during the school year for school buses who bring children to school-related activities.

Based on the hours that buses arrive and depart Asphalt Green, the minimum timeframe in which the no standing is requested is 8 AM to 5 PM; these hours were viewed by the committee as preferable to the current 7 AM to 7 PM restriction to maintain general parking to the fullest extent possible. There were some members who did not wish to see any parking removed, given the extent of parking spaces across the community that have been removed in recent years for various purposes.

**WHEREAS**, Asphalt Green is requesting regulations for 6 parking spaces adjacent to 555 East 90<sup>th</sup> Street be changed from general alternate side parking to no standing 8 AM to 5 PM on weekdays except school buses; and

**WHEREAS**, School Buses dropping children off at Asphalt Green Summer Camp arrive between 8:00 and 8:30 AM and depart between 4:30 and 4:45 PM;

**WHEREAS**, it is perceived to be safer for children arriving for Asphalt Green programming by bus to enter through their 555 East 90<sup>th</sup> Street building versus the York Avenue entrance, as it avoids the need for children to have to cross the entranceway to the East 91<sup>st</sup> Street Marine Transfer Station,

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Community Board 8 Manhattan supports the change of parking regulations for 6 spaces near 555 East 90<sup>th</sup> Street from general alternate side parking to "No Standing except School Buses 8 AM to 5 PM Monday to Friday".

*Yes (10):* Michele Birnbaum, Alida Camp, Rebecca Dangoor, Craig Lader, Rebecca Lamorte, Rita Popper, Barry Schneider, Tricia Shimamura, Charles Warren, Peter Borock (public member),

*No (2):* Lowell Barton, Marco Tamayo

*Abstain(1): Jordan Wouk (public member)*

**Item 3: Presentation by NYCDOT Regarding Electric Vehicle Curbside Parking Stations**

Felicia Tunnah and Susan McSherry from NYCDOT, and Jen Robertson from the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability gave an informational presentation on a pilot project that will result in the installation of curbside electric vehicle charging infrastructure that accommodates on-street parking. The project is a partnership between Con Edison and NYCDOT, as part of a broader effort to encourage electric vehicle ownership and test operational feasibility and business model of curbside electric vehicle charging. The pilot project is funded by Con Edison, with no budgetary impact on New York City; a broader project beyond the 4-year pilot would be a new project that would follow a competitive bidding process. The presentation provided an overview of electric vehicle and charging station technology, the environmental issues that have resulted in an increasing market share of electric vehicles, and New York City’s goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions resulting from cars and trucks.

The pilot will result in the installation of 50 “level 2” curbside chargers (which typically require 4-6 hours to fully charge a car) across New York City; each charger would accommodate 2 vehicles. Site selection will be based on proximity to major institutions and commercial activity, and where the chargers would have high visibility and the potential for strong utilization. The presentation displayed a rendering of the charger, which would be placed on the adjacent sidewalk; there will be no advertising on the chargers, though the company name will be displayed. The height was described as comparable to those of LinkNYC kiosks, but will be much narrower; the attached cords have counterweights so there won’t be a tripping hazard. These parking spaces would have special parking regulations that would restrict parking to electric vehicles that are actively charging (except for overnight periods, when active charging would not be a requirement but spaces would still be restricted to electric vehicles only). Vehicles not actively charging would be in violation of the parking regulations and prone to receiving a parking ticket; persons charging their vehicles will get a message on their mobile device that their vehicle is charged and it is time to move the car.

NYCDOT is considering various locations within Community District 8 to install a total of 3 chargers, impacting 6 parking spaces; locations being considered include East 66<sup>th</sup> Street between York Ave. and 1<sup>st</sup> Ave., East 73<sup>rd</sup> Street between Madison Ave. and 5<sup>th</sup> Ave., East 77<sup>th</sup> Street between Lexington Ave. and Park Ave., and East 83<sup>rd</sup> Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. and Lexington Ave. Following the completion of the outreach process, final site selection is anticipated by the end of September 2019, with installation expected in spring 2020. Reaction to the pilot project was mixed, with some support for the effort as it related to addressing air quality concerns, while some other speakers objected to the perceived loss of general parking spaces that would result and the potential visual impacts of the charging infrastructure.

**Item 4: Discussion of School Day Ambulette/Bus Parking at 309 East 94<sup>th</sup> Street**

This item was requested by iBrain, a non-profit school located at 309 East 94<sup>th</sup> Street, for students with traumatic or acquired brain injuries where students arrive by ambulette. iBrain is requesting the parking regulations be changed for 4 spaces in front of 309 East 94<sup>th</sup> Street to accommodate ambulettes only from 8AM to 5PM Monday to Friday; this change would also accommodate clients of another business located in the building serving a population that has some clients arrive by ambulette. Parking in front 309 East 94<sup>th</sup> Street has a history of being restricted to ambulette parking, as the location had previously been the site of a dialysis center.

**WHEREAS**, iBrain is a non-profit school located at 309 East 94<sup>th</sup> Street serving students who arrive by ambulette; and

**WHEREAS**, iBrain’s school hours are 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM;

**WHEREAS**, parking regulations in front of 309 East 94<sup>th</sup> Street had been restricted to ambulettes in the past;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Community Board 8 Manhattan supports the change of parking regulations in front of 309 East 94<sup>th</sup> Street from general alternate side parking to “No Standing except School Buses 8 AM to 5 PM Monday to Friday” to accommodate 4 ambulettes.

*Yes (13):* Lowell Barton, Michele Birnbaum, Alida Camp, Rebecca Dangoor, Billy Freeland, Craig Lader, Rebecca Lamorte, Rita Popper, Barry Schneider, Tricia Shimamura, Marco Tamayo, Charles Warren, Peter Borock (public member),

*No (0):* None

**Item 5: Discussion of Proposed Bus Shelters on Madison Avenue**

This item was brought to the attention of CB8 by the Madison Avenue Business Improvement District (BID), which learned that NYCDOT was working with its bus shelter contractor JC Decaux to develop plans to install a maximum of 11 bus shelters along Madison Avenue between 59<sup>th</sup> and 79<sup>th</sup> Street. NYCDOT was invited to discuss the proposal, but declined to formally appear as there was no formal proposal to present at this time; the proposed shelters would represent a small portion of a 350 shelter expansion of the existing citywide franchise contract, which has yet to be finalized. NYCDOT also indicated that for citywide contracts such as theirs with JC Decaux, it was not necessarily possible for NYCDOT to appear at every community board meeting where shelters may be installed.

Madison Avenue BID President Matthew Bauer indicated that the Madison Avenue BID has long opposed bus shelters due to the visual impacts shelters would have on the character of the Madison Avenue retail district resulting from the disconnect between the design of the standard JC Decaux shelters and the historic district and special preservation district in which Madison Avenue is situated; it also has been opposed because of the narrow sidewalks along Madison Avenue, which at about 13’ wide are unable to accommodate standard shelters that require 3’ clearance from the curb and 7’ clearance requirement for pedestrians. Mr. Bauer noted that there is a new design being proposed that would be 32 inches wide, but he stated it would continue to block storefronts and too narrow to be effective street furniture. He also emphasized that the proposed shelters would generate revenue through advertising that may be illuminated, which was viewed by the Madison Ave. BID as the primary objective of the proposal and would be prohibited under historic district guidelines. Mr. Bauer indicated that the Madison Avenue BID was willing to purchase and maintain city benches within the bus stops along Madison Avenue, as the need for people to be able to sit while waiting for buses was recognized.

While there was agreement among attendees and board members that the advertising on shelters would be problematic and context was a critical issue, there were differing views on whether bus shelters of an appropriate design should be installed. Those who are opposed made statements that mirrored the issues that Madison Avenue BID raised. There were some speakers who were strongly supportive of general efforts to install bus shelters on Madison Avenue to address the needs of bus passengers seeking protection from the elements and who wish to sit while waiting for a bus; it was also noted that the issue of bus shelters is an equity issue given the demographics of bus passengers on the routes that serve Madison Avenue.

Ultimately, no action was taken since there was yet to be a formal proposal with specific details to review.

**Item 6: Updates from the New York City Department of Transportation**

**6a: Update on the York Avenue Traffic Study**

**6b: Discussion of Safety Issues Related to FDR Drive Southbound Exit 13 (East 71<sup>st</sup> Street)**

The following updates were provided:

- Colleen Chattergoon, DOT Liaison to Community Board 8 Manhattan, confirmed that the York Avenue Traffic Study that had previously been requested by Community Board 8 to look at the entirety of York Avenue up to 96<sup>th</sup> Street, has yet to be initiated, and that no other studies of York Avenue have taken place. It must wait until DDC completes ongoing a sewer and water project that will continue into 2020, as traffic impacts from the construction would impact the data collection and analysis that needs to occur. When the study is initiated, it will also investigate issues related to the FDR exit at 71<sup>st</sup> Street and entrance and the traffic impacts of the new Memorial Sloan Kettering facility. There had been constituent outreach to Community Board 8 regarding unsafe conditions at the FDR Drive entrance/exit at 73<sup>rd</sup> and 71<sup>st</sup> Streets, but the constituents were not attendance to address the Committee.
- Ms. Chattergoon also reported that the Lexington Avenue Bus Lane will be implemented in September 2019. Flyers have been posted along Lexington Avenue alerting constituents to the work, and no issues have been reported to DOT. The impacts will be reviewed after the lane has been in service for one year.

**Item 7: Old Business**

A member asked for an update on the impacts of the pedestrian island that was installed at the intersection of 79<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Ms. Chattergoon said she would investigate.

A member had reported that private coach buses operated by Hampton Luxury Liner had been laying over with drivers leaving the vehicles at the bus stop at 86<sup>th</sup> Street and Lexington Avenue, where only expeditious pick-ups of passengers are permitted. Ms. Chattergoon will reach out to the operator to address the matter. There was no new business discussed.

**Item 8: New Business**

There was no old business discussed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Charles Warren & Craig Lader, Co-Chairs