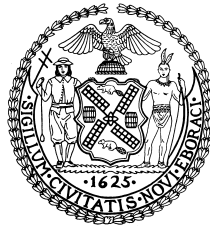


Alida Camp  
Chair

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**The City of New York  
Community Board 8 Manhattan  
Transportation Committee  
Wednesday March 4, 2020, 6:30 PM  
New York Blood Center - Auditorium**

*Please note: The resolutions contained in the committee minutes are recommendations submitted by the committee chair to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolutions are discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.*

**Minutes:**

*Present:* Michele Birnbaum, Lori Bores, Alida Camp, Rebecca Dangoor, Billy Freeland, Craig Lader, Rebecca Lamorte, Rita Popper, Barry Schneider, Tricia Shimamura, Charles Warren, Jack Zimmerman, Jordan Wouk (public member)

*Absent (Excused):* Lowell Barton, Lori Bores, Peter Borock (public member)

*Absent (Unexcused):* Valerie Mason

**Resolutions for Approval:**

**\*Item 3: Proposed changes to New York State laws regarding e-bikes and e-scooters**

**\*Item 4: Safe & Direct Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists through Central Park**

**Item 5a: York Avenue Traffic Study**

*\*unanimous*

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM.

**Item 1: NYCDOT Presentation - Queensboro Bridge Upper Roadway Deck Replacement Project**

A presentation on an impending project to replace the upper roadway deck of the Queensboro Bridge was provided by Anthony Grosso, Resident Engineer from Greenman Pederson, Inc., the firm awarded the contract for the project, and Huáscar Robles, NYCDOT Director of Community Affairs. The presentation highlighted the history of the bridge since its opening in 1909, and how it evolved from a multimodal bridge that once carried trolleys and subways. The approximately 170,000 daily vehicles currently crossing the bridge, which is significantly higher than any other east river crossing, have resulted in additional weight burdens on the bridge trusses, which are a primary contributor to its diminished bridge rating that necessitate the project.

The project will include the replacement of the bridge's upper deck, both on the main bridge and on both approaches, structural steel rehabilitation, replacement of deck joints and barriers, improvements to lighting and drainage, some painting, and installation of a fire standpipe system. This work will extend the upper deck's service life and main bridge by a minimum of 50-75 years, and result in a lighter deck system that is more durable with increased fire suppression.

The project aims to minimize public impacts, but there will be extensive disruptions required during the 6-stage project made up of 4 main stages and 2 crossover stages. Throughout the project, there will a

continuous closure of at least one lane on the upper level, with certain off-peak timeframes requiring two lanes closed; the south outer roadway and lower roadway will remain open at all times, with some safety features such as speed bumps being added on the Queens side of the south outer roadway. A crossover in Manhattan & Queens will be provided, allowing for current ramp access to be maintained without having to reverse lane operations. The stages and their anticipated schedule, based on weather and field conditions, are as follows:

Pre-stage (July 2018 – October 2020): includes mobilization, testing of fabrication, installation of the under-deck shield and temporary lighting; this stage includes some single lane closures during overnights;

Stages 1 & 2 (October 2020 to June 2021): the north upper roadway deck replacement and fire standpipe installation; this stage includes Manhattan-bound single lane closures and some double lane closures.

Stages 3 & 4 (August 2020 to April 2022): the south upper roadway deck replacement and fire standpipe installation; this stage includes Queens-bound single lane closures and some double lane closures. This is considered the most sensitive stage, as there is limited queuing available, and any traffic resulting from lane closures would have the greatest impact on CB8 where delays would occur. Extra agents will be in place to help traffic move during this stage.

Stage 5 (June 2022 to August 2022): deck replacement at crossover locations; this stage includes ongoing single lane closures and certain periods of full-ramp closures (Queens-bound 8PM to 5AM Sunday to Thursday, Queens and Manhattan Bound 8PM to 2PM Friday night to Saturday and Saturday night to Sunday);

Stage 6 (September 2022 to October 2022): deck rehabilitation at approaches; this stage includes ongoing single lane closures and full ramp closures daily Queens-bound from 8PM to 3PM weekdays and 8PM to 2PM weekends, and from 8PM to 5AM Manhattan-bound.

The project includes significant mitigation measures, including traffic agents assigned for up to 20 hours per day in both directions and 24-hour tow service. Mitigation measures will be evaluated regularly and modified as required. The contractor has penalty and incentive/disincentive clauses for early closures and late openings of lanes and for exceeding 2 project milestones. There will be an extensive community outreach effort, including direct stakeholder outreach, social media and traditional media updates, data transmission to online travel and mapping resources, a community liaison for the project, and extensive information sharing with transportation partners that will communicate impacts both to drivers and truckers on roadways both locally and across the region via variable message signs.

## **Item 2: A discussion on e-commerce makeshift delivery distribution centers on sidewalks**

This item was requested by various community board members and constituents who have reported frequent activity of e-commerce delivery companies utilizing public sidewalks as pop-up distribution centers, where workers unload boxes from trucks directly onto sidewalks and then organize them and prepare them for delivery in the neighboring area. The corner of 87<sup>th</sup> Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue is a particular hotspot for this activity, and a series of photographs was displayed showing how deliveries overwhelmed the sidewalk, creating congestion for pedestrians along with visual impacts. Additionally, the photographs provided visual evidence that these delivery workers leave behind plastic wrapping and other remnants from their unloading activity, which both have resulted in public garbage bins getting overfilled, and instances of litter on the sidewalks and in planters and tree guards.

Amazon.com was identified as one of the prime companies involved in this activity, with reports that this also occurs with deliveries from Fresh Direct, UPS & FedEx. During this discussion of sidewalk activity, it was also noted that similar issues are occurring with some brick and mortar stores receiving their deliveries and performing unloading, including Fairway Market on 86<sup>th</sup> Street and Target on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.

The Committee discussed various potential pathways forward to addressing these issues, including consideration of efforts by Councilmember Ben Kallos to use vacant storefronts for logistics to move loading activities off of sidewalks, encouraging more aggressive enforcement, and working with the Borough Board and other Community Boards who also are faced with these issues. Also, it was recognized that a better understanding of the entire delivery process from warehouse to destination was needed, along with what other cities are doing when faced with similar delivery practices. With the need for this discussion to continue, and in an effort to work with companies collaboratively, CB8 will be inviting representatives from Amazon.com, FreshDirect, UPS, FedEx, Target and Fairway to the next meeting.

**Item 3: Continuing discussion of proposed changes to New York State laws regarding e-bikes and e-scooters as described in the Governor's Proposed FY 2021 Executive Budget**

In February 2020 the Committee held an initial discussion regarding language in the Governor's Proposed FY 2021 Executive Budget. In addition to a letter that was drafted and sent to all elected officials representing CB8 that contained the Board's February 2019 resolutions regarding e-bikes and e-scooters, it was determined that more time was needed to assess the relevant language and to see if there were any developments in the legislative process that would impact potential actions to be taken by the Committee.

As there appeared to be no subsequent legislative activity, and the expectation was that the proposed legalization was on a pathway to becoming effective along with Budget as of April 1, 2020, the Committee believed that the best course of action would be to urge the Governor to remove the language from the Budget and be addressed as separate bills that would allow the issues to be discussed in a more comprehensive and nuanced fashion that such an important topic deserved, and allow for constituents to be able to identify additional community factors that should be considered in the deliberation of the legality of e-bikes and e-scooters.

The following resolution was put forward by CB8:

**WHEREAS;** the Governor's Proposed FY 2021 Executive Budget contains provisions to legalize e-bikes and e-scooters in New York State; and

**WHEREAS;** the inclusion of e-bike and e-scooter language does not allow a thorough public debate on the merits of legalizing e-bikes and e-scooters to take place; and

**WHEREAS;** Community Board 8 has held extensive discussions and taken nuanced positions on the legality of e-bikes and e-scooters that considered many local community factors;

**WHEREAS;** the issues regarding e-bikes and e-scooters are complex and varied, and additional factors of interest to local communities within New York City and across New York State should be fully considered;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that Community Board 8 Manhattan requests that Governor Cuomo and the legislature decouple e-bike and e-scooter legalization language from the FY 2021 Executive Budget and treat Class 1 e-bikes, Class 2 e-bikes, Class 3 e-bikes and e-scooters as separate pieces of State legislation.

*Yes (11+1):* Birnbaum, Camp, Dangoor, Freeland, Lader, Lamorte, Popper, Schneider, Shimamura, Warren, Zimmerman, Wouk (public member)

*No (0):* None

#### **Item 4: Discussion of safe & direct routes for pedestrians, cyclists and others through Central Park**

In December 2019, a pediatrician heading to work was killed while cycling through Central Park on the 96<sup>th</sup> Street Transverse. This tragedy highlighted the lack of options for cyclists to safely bike through Central Park and the dangers of biking on the transverse roadways. Dangers also are present for pedestrians looking to cross Central Park, especially for those who choose to walk on the existing sidewalks on the transverses. In response, Community Board 7 took action in February 2020 by passing a unanimous resolution calling for creation of a cross-agency task force to come up with long-term solutions to allow cyclists to cross Central Park safely; the resolution also included a request for better directional signage, stricter enforcement of vehicular speeds on the transverses, and consideration of other short-term solutions. Following CB7's action, there was interest expressed by some members of CB8 to look at also taking action to promote safer means of crossing Central Park by bike and on foot.

NYCDOT's liaison to Community Board 8 noted that DOT, Parks and the Central Park Conservancy have already begun to look at Central Park safety and access issues for cyclists and pedestrians, and indicated that support from CB8 of this effort would send a strong message to these agencies. Based on the tight timeframes that CB7's task force were to follow, it was decided that CB8 would develop their own language in calling for action, which would focus more broadly on the need for solutions to crossing the park and improving conditions on the Transverse's existing sidewalks, which are in need of repairs, better lighting and better snow removal. Also discussed were potential opportunities to re-envision transverse sidewalks and whether there are opportunities to allow for dedicated pathways for bikes and pedestrians in a manner that would not interfere with vehicular traffic and bus operations.

The following resolution was put forward by CB8:

**WHEREAS;** the death of a cyclist in December 2019 on the 96<sup>th</sup> Street Transverse through Central Park brought attention to the lack of safe bike routes through Central Park, and

**WHEREAS;** pedestrians who walk along the Central Park transverses face unsafe conditions, including uneven and broken sidewalks, poor lighting and insufficient snow and ice removal; and

**WHEREAS;** Central Park's transverses provide a critical link for cyclists and pedestrians, especially at times when entering the Park, especially when dark and during overnight hours when Central Park is closed; and

**WHEREAS;** Community Board 7 has recently taken actions supporting cross-agency efforts to find solutions to addressing the need for safe passage through Central Park, which would be strengthened by similar action by Community Board 8;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that Community Board 8 Manhattan requests that NYCDOT, Parks and the Central Park Conservancy develop solutions for providing safe passages through Central Park between the East and West sides by foot and by bike, and reports back to CB8 in an expedient manner;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Community Board 8 Manhattan requests that opportunities to convert existing transverse sidewalks into dedicated and separated bike and pedestrian pathways be investigated, and that any options devised don't impact existing vehicular access and bus operations;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Community Board 8 Manhattan requests that existing transverse sidewalks be upgraded in a short-term timeframe, including pavement repair, lighting and overall maintenance;

*Yes (11+1):* Birnbaum, Camp, Dangoor, Freeland, Lader, Lamorte, Popper, Schneider, Shimamura, Warren, Zimmerman, Wouk (public member)

*No (0):* None

## **Item 5: NYCDOT Updates**

### **a. York Avenue Traffic Study**

Colleen Chattergoon, NYCDOT Liaison to Community Board 8, provided an update to the February 2020 discussion regarding the status of the York Avenue Traffic Study, at which time CB8 learned that there was no longer sufficient funding available for a comprehensive study of York Avenue from 59<sup>th</sup> to 96<sup>th</sup> Streets. For years, NYCDOT had intended to conduct such a study to address existing operational issues of York Avenue, but the study had been long-delayed due to other ongoing DOT projects that would interfere with the ability to conduct a study, which also had the support of CB8 for many years.

With a smaller budget in place, NYCDOT was looking to CB8 to suggest new study area parameters, which would focus on the locations perceived to have the most safety and congestion concerns and where the most complaints are received. There was discussion of a potential comprehensive study of the portion of York Ave. between 59<sup>th</sup> and 79<sup>th</sup> Streets, which though more constrained than the original study would still include the most critical safety and traffic concerns that exist on York Avenue and would likely fit within the new budget; also discussed as an option was individual assessments of specific intersections with a goal of short-term mitigation to address congestion and safety. The Committee viewed the comprehensive approach more favorably, as they were cognizant of how changes at one location could have sweeping impacts at other locations, and thus needed to be assessed in a more systemic fashion.

**WHEREAS;** Community Board 8 is on record supporting a comprehensive York Avenue Traffic Study from 59<sup>th</sup> Street to 96<sup>th</sup> Street to address safety and operational issues, including severe congestion from 79<sup>th</sup> Street and south, and

**WHEREAS;** NYCDOT has indicated that funding for the study is now reduced; and

**WHEREAS;** York Avenue's primary choke points are primarily between 59<sup>th</sup> Streets and 79<sup>th</sup> Streets, including heavily trafficked segments near hospitals and institutions and at intersections where FDR access/egress takes place; and

**WHEREAS;** a comprehensive study looking at the corridor between 59<sup>th</sup> and 79<sup>th</sup> Streets would achieve the same goals and objectives as the original study;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that Community Board 8 Manhattan requests New York City DOT conduct a comprehensive Study of York Avenue Traffic Operations that focuses on the segment of York Avenue between 59<sup>th</sup> Street and 79<sup>th</sup> Street the York Avenue, and the cross streets that impact York Avenue's traffic conditions.

*Yes (10+1):* Camp, Dangoor, Freeland, Lader, Lamorte, Popper, Schneider, Shimamura, Warren, Zimmerman, Wouk (public member)

*No (1):* Birnbaum

### **Items 6 and 7: Old and New Business**

There was no old or new business.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned 8:35 PM.

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