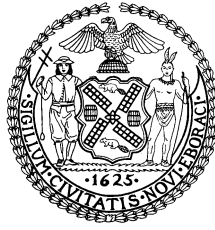


Alida Camp  
Chair

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**The City of New York**  
**Community Board 8 Manhattan**  
**Transportation Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday October 7, 2020 - 6:30PM**  
*This meeting was conducted remotely via Zoom*

**Minutes**

**Present:** Lowell Barton, Michele Birnbaum, Lori Bores, Alida Camp, Rebecca Dangoor, Felice Farber, Billy Freeland, Craig Lader, Rebecca Lamorte, Rita Popper, Barry Schneider, Tricia Shimamura, Cos Spagnoletti, Russell Squire, Marco Tamayo, Charles Warren, Jack Zimmerman, Peter Borock, (public member) Jordan Wouk (public member)

*Absent (Excused):* Valerie Mason

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

**1. New York City Transit – General Updates on Bus and Subway Service**

Marcus Book, New York City Transit Assistant Director - Government and Community Relations, provided various updates and answered questions about the state of the New York City Transit network and various operational and capital construction matters.

*Fiscal Matters:* New York City Transit is losing \$200 million in revenue every week; these losses are compounded by loss of state and local tax revenues and subsidies, leaving the MTA with a projected \$16 billion deficit by 2024. To address this shortfall, and to avoid service reductions at levels up to 50%, 8,000 layoffs, and cuts to the MTA's \$51.5 billion capital plan, NYCT is looking for \$12 billion in emergency federal aid to make it through FY 2021.

*Masks:* All passengers on NYCT subways and buses are required to wear masks, and NYCT is seeking 100% compliance. As of early October, compliance is in the high 90s, and only 6 summonses had been issued to passengers for not wearing masks as of 10/6 (16 days after fines had begun to be issued). Mr. Book explained how fines are a last resort; any passenger who does not have a mask may ask for one on a bus or in a subway station, and NYCT staff, community organizations and elected officials offices have been working together to distribute masks.

*OMNY:* Several questions were posed regarding the timeframe for reduced fare MetroCard being phased out and passengers being able to use the OMNY system. Mr. Book stated that it will likely take a couple of years to swap out the entire existing inventory of Reduced-Fare MetroCards with a comparable reduced-fare OMNY card; until that time, NYCT will continue to accept Reduced-Fare MetroCards until they have all been replaced with a comparable contactless fare card that works in the new OMNY system. As of October 2020, all 151 Manhattan subway stations and 800+ Manhattan buses are equipped with OMNY.

*Covid-19 impacts on Bus Drivers Assisting Passengers:* In response to a question raised about some reported instances of bus drivers refusing to assist passengers in wheelchairs, Mr. Book confirmed that drivers are still supposed to help passengers requiring assistance to get on and off a bus. However, if there are conditions in the field that make the driver feel unsafe (i.e. a passenger not wearing a mask, or coughing, or any instance in which a passenger has threatened a driver), the operator has the discretion to move on. In such instances, passengers should record the time, location and bus number associated with the incident so NYCT can investigate. Various speakers applauded the assistance that drivers have routinely been providing passengers.

*68th Street Station ADA Access Update:* NYCT had originally requested to present the updated plans for elevators to be installed at the 68th Street subway station at the October 2020 meeting, but requested the presentation be postponed until later in 2020 due to unresolved issues and pending federal approvals. The street-level elevator had originally been proposed to be located on the southeast corner of 68th Street and Lexington Avenue within the Hunter College property line, but this location presented various challenges and complexities, and is now proposed for the northeast corner of the intersection.

*MetroCard Mobile Sales Van:* Various speakers expressed appreciation that the MetroCard Mobile Sales Van had resumed its service, and returned to Community District 8, but reported long lines and being unable to refill reduced-fare MetroCards. Mr. Book explained that due to Covid-19 safety protocols, the van will not be handling any cash/credit/debit transactions, but will be able to transfer values from an expired MetroCard onto a new card; passengers would need to go to a subway station to add value. This solution was not viewed favorably, with concerns being about how burdensome or physically impossible it would be for many bus passengers to access machines or booths in subway stations; various members expressed the need for the MTA to be creative and use technological capabilities to more easily allow passengers to add value. One alternative option for adding value for MetroCards is EasyPayXpress, which allows passengers to have their MetroCards automatically replenish the value upon reaching a low balance.

*Select Bus Service/Bus Lane Updates:* New York City Transit committed to returning to Community Board 8 to provide post-implementation updates on M79 Select Bus Service and the dedicated bus lane on Lexington Ave. They are continuing the planning process for potential future implementation of Select Bus Service on the M96, which was included in New York City's Better Bus Action Plan that has been put on hold due to funding shortages.

## **2. Request to Change Parking Regulations near 412/414 East 75<sup>th</sup> Street**

Due to the constituent requesting this item being unable to attend this meeting, this item was tabled and will be added to the November 2020 Transportation Committee agenda.

## **3. 72<sup>nd</sup> Street East of York Ave. – Request to Change Parking Regulations to address illegal parking**

Two constituents have contacted CB8 in recent months to complain about unsafe conditions on 72nd Street east of York Avenue related to illegally parked vehicles. From 72nd Street to mid-block, there are daytime truck parking regulations posted; the rest of the block has no standing regulations in place. The constituent complaints described frequent double and triple parked delivery vehicles and illegal parking in the no standing zone, which have interfered with emergency vehicles from being able to make the U-turn and created noise pollution with the frequent honking of horns.

NYCDOT staff indicated that changing parking regulations would most likely fail to solve the issue, though replacing the no standing with stricter “no stopping” signage could be an option, in which pick-

ups and drop-offs are prohibited in all instances, unlike no standing zones where vehicles with placards can park in some instances. Since this is perceived to largely be an issue of enforcement issue, and it is evident that some of the activity is related to activity at Sotheby's and the Hospital for Special Surgery, Community Board 8 plans on inviting these stakeholders to a future hearing on this matter, and working with the East 72nd Street Neighborhood Association.

#### **4. Updates from the New York City Department of Transportation**

NYCDOT Community Coordinator Colleen Chattergoon provided the following information:

- NYCDOT has continued to work on implementing outdoor dining and open streets for schools. Outdoor dining has been expanded to be permitted year-round, and new policies are being developed to allow for heating in the outdoor dining areas. Complaints regarding outdoor dining have diminished, and compliance by restaurants has improved.
- NYCDOT has been working to return to normal milling and paving schedules and issuing permits for road work.
- Severe budget shortfalls being faced by New York City should be anticipated to impact NYCDOT.
- In response to an inquiry regarding potential use of sidewalk space for retail sales, Ms. Chattergoon indicated that she will forward the inquiry within NYCDOT. There is a rule allowing businesses to use space outside extending 18 inches from their storefront for sales.
- In regards to the new temporary bike lanes recently installed on East 61st and 62nd Streets, Ms. Chattergoon indicated that NYCDOT had responded to community concerns and changed the lane configurations east of 2nd Avenue to provide two through lanes to accommodate traffic exiting the Queensboro Bridge between 1st Avenue and York Avenue, and altered the placement of the delineation markers. . NYCDOT is working with the 19th Precinct to deal with the complaints received regarding congestion in the area. Numerous complaints have also been generated from residents of buildings on 61st and 62nd Streets who have lost direct curbside access due the placement of the bike lane, which inhibits the ability for people to be picked up and dropped off near building entrances. NYCDOT will reach out to affected buildings to try to find solutions to improve access.
- In response to congestion concerns raised in connection with 61st and 62nd Streets, one member observed how an illegally double parked vehicle on 62nd Street immediately created back-ups onto the Queensboro Bridge, and highlighted the need for NYCDOT to take a more global approach to dealing with double parking and creating dedicated curbside spaces for deliveries and passenger pick-up and drop-off activity. This is a topic the Committee will revisit in an upcoming meeting.

#### **5. Old Business**

##### **A. Streets with no street cleaning regulations**

A member noted that Lexington Ave. between 76<sup>th</sup> and 78<sup>th</sup> streets does not have any street cleaning regulations signs posted. This is one example within Community District 8, similar to other streets which CB8 highlighted in a letter sent in February 2020 requesting a list of all streets within the district that are lacking dedicated street cleaning hours when parking is prohibited. Ms. Chattergoon explained the process for changing street cleaning regulations, and the coordination between NYCDOT and the Department of Sanitation.

##### **B. Other**

- 91st Street between 2nd and 3rd Avenues (James Cagney Place) has yet to be repaired, after months of discussions in which no party has committed to making the overdue repairs and replacement of pavers. Ms. Chattergoon advised that NYCDOT is not responsible for the repairs, and neither is the Department of Environmental Protection which found no underlying issue, though the problem is known to have been caused by a sewer issue. One alternative that CB8 seeks to pursue is for NYCDOT to level and repave the street. CB8's Board Chair offered to organize a meeting with all parties (NYCDOT, DEP, RY Management) to try to find a solution.
- The constituent who requested the change in parking regulations on Cherokee Place noted that in the first two weeks following new signage being posted, the illegal parking situation has not improved, and emergency vehicles are still having difficulties making turning movements.

## **6. New Business**

There was no new business.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47PM.

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