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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Transportation Committee**
Wednesday December 1, 2021, 6:30 PM
Conducted Remotely on Zoom

Minutes

Present: Rit Aggarwala, Michele Birnbaum, Alida Camp, Craig Lader, Valerie Mason, John Phillips, Rita Popper, Barry Schneider, Tricia Shimamura, Russell Squire, Charles Warren, Elaine Walsh, Peter Borock (public member)

Absent (Excused): Lowell Barton, Lori Bores, Rebecca Dangoor, Billy Freeland, Rebecca Lamorte,

Resolutions for Approval:

Item 1 - Disapproval of “No Parking” signage request in front of 205 East 92nd Street/The Easton

Item 2 - Stop Sign/Traffic Calming at 78th St./Cherokee Pl. (unanimous)

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM.

Prior to Item 1, City Council Member Ben Kallos provided comments regarding potential future protected bike lane needs. His comments are summarized under Item 4.

Item 1: 205 East 92nd Street (The Easton) - Request for a No Parking sign in front of the front entrance

Daniel Hoinacki, a resident of 205 East 92nd Street (the Easton), presented a request for a no parking sign, about the size of two vehicles in length, to be installed in front of the Easton’s main building entrance to facilitate the safe loading and unloading of passengers and deliveries from their vehicles. He had submitted the request to NYCDOT, which conducted a field visit and didn’t see any operational concerns, but as the request was considered a “quality of life” issue, it would require CB8 approval and a signed petition containing a majority of his building’s residents (which were provided to the CB8 office).

Mr. Hoinacki explained that the East 92nd St. block east of 3rd Avenue has a steep downward grade, which causes vehicles to accelerate quickly and make it precarious for anyone stopped in front of the Easton’s entrance, especially if the vehicle is double parked in the moving lane and unable to pull to the curbside. He also noted that the large residential building (1623/1641 3rd Avenue) directly across the street has such a no parking regulation in place in front of their entrance.

The Committee Co-Chairs noted that CB8’s practice is to deny such applications, as approving such requests for an individual building would trigger an overwhelming number of similar requests across the district, and result in the loss of too many parking spaces. It was also noted that the no parking regulation across the street is a different situation, as that no parking signage applies to an area where a pull-in area for loading and unloading was in place, rather than in the general parking lane.

There was a mix of support and opposition to the proposal. Those supporting the request were sympathetic to the need to allow people to feel safer getting in and out of vehicles and allowing them to have better access to the curbside and not fear oncoming vehicles, and noted the disproportionate number of residents/guests of the Easton as compared to the two spaces that would be removed. Those who opposed the request were concerned that there is already a dearth of legal on-street parking that has been exacerbated in recent years with some curbsides used

for Citi Bike and Open Restaurants, and who feared the loss of additional parking at this location and possibly across wider swaths of Community District 8. One person suggested installation of a speed bump to slow down traffic on 92nd Street. One member suggested that the request should be for a no standing zone to prevent people with placards from using the requested space.

There were also multiple speakers who felt that CB8's precedent for not supporting no parking requests in front of building entrances is antiquated and should be revisited to be able to consider the range of factors that can be used to standardize the process while accounting for changes to how streets are now used. With the growth of e-commerce and the for-hire-vehicle industry that has resulted in sharp increases in double parking, some speakers noted their preference that dedicated loading spaces should be greatly expanded, perhaps even to every block. Revisiting the precedent to assess such requests would allow the committee to account for other initiatives such as the NYCDOT Neighborhood Loading Zone program that are also meant to address double parking. It was noted that just prior to the meeting that NYCDOT sent a letter to CB8 containing a listing of 37 proposed neighborhood loading zones they are proposing to be installed. Given that Neighborhood Loading Zones now need to be added to the January 2022 agenda, it was decided that this broader discussion on how to assess future no parking request requests from individual buildings will also take place in January and developing criteria and hierarchies for approving such requests.

A vote on a motion to support the no parking request for 2 spaces in front of the Easton failed by a vote of 3 Yes, 6 No and 2 Abstentions. The vote was as follows:

Yes (3): Aggarwala, Lader, Squire

No (6): Birnbaum, Popper, Phillips, Popper, Walsh, Warren

Abstain (1+1): Shimamura, Borock (Public Member)

The following resolution was then put forward by CB8:

WHEREAS; residents of the Easton, a residential building located at 205 East 92nd Street, have requested “no parking” signage in front of their building entrance; and

WHEREAS; East 92nd Street has a steep grade that encourages vehicular speeding and threatens the safety of people entering and exiting vehicles that must stop in the moving lane in front of 205 East 92nd Street; and

WHEREAS; Community Board 8 is sympathetic to the concerns raised, but has a practice of opposing such requests, as approving a request for any single building would set a precedent that would encourage other buildings to make similar requests that would result in too much loss of parking; and

WHEREAS; Community Board 8 is not yet ready to change its practice to deny such requests but is open to reassessing its practice in 2022;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 Manhattan opposes the request to install a “no parking” sign in front of the front entrance of 205 East 92nd Street (the Easton).

Yes (6): Birnbaum, Popper, Phillips, Popper, Walsh, Warren

No (3): Aggarwala, Lader, Squire

No (1+1): Shimamura, Borock (Public Member)

Item 2: 78th Street at Cherokee Place - Request for a Stop Sign on 78th Street

Ms. Karen Spiegel, a resident of 500 East 77th Street, presented a request for a stop sign and pedestrian crossing to be placed on East 78th Street at the intersection with Cherokee Place, along with other appropriate traffic calming measures. Ms. Spiegel described the unsafe conditions for pedestrians at this intersection, where there are no

crosswalks to aid those looking to cross 78th Street, and the recent elimination of a curb cut at the southeast corner of the intersection.

This location is a particularly dangerous high activity area. It is at the base of the pedestrian bridge leading to the East River Esplanade, where 78th Street serves as a mapped bike route. It is immediately adjacent to John Jay Park, which is heavily frequented by young children and seniors; Ms. Spiegel has noticed young children crossing alone. It is also a few hundred feet from PS 158 located between Cherokee Place and York Ave. Further exacerbating safety is the common occurrence of speeding cars that decide to not enter the FDR drive upon seeing congestion, and are unaware that there is a mid-block intersection on 78th Street with Cherokee Place since there is no warning signage in place. For cars turning from Cherokee Place onto 78th Street, it can be hard to see oncoming traffic due to illegal parking activity on Cherokee Place and a lack of daylighting where cars can legally park along the south side of 78th Street just east of the intersection.

Another constituent provided further context on the removed curb cut, explaining that NYCDOT had erred by installing it since a tree directly across the street prevented a crosswalk from being installed. NYCDOT then installed curb cuts on the NW and SW corners, but never installed a crosswalk. She also noted that this area can be especially heavily trafficked when the southbound FDR Drive is closed for construction or other incidents.

Colleen Chattergoon, NYCDOT Senior Planner and Liaison to CB8, indicated that a crosswalk would require a stop sign or traffic signal, and reported that there was a request in 2018 for a study of that intersection, which is currently ongoing, that could determine if conditions have changed to enable a stop sign and crosswalk to be installed. She also noted that NYCDOT may not have any appropriate signage in their inventory that conforms with Federal requirements that warns of approaching intersections, but she will investigate options.

Upon one member recalling a past discussion on this issue, it was confirmed that CB8 unanimously passed a resolution in October 2016 requesting a stop sign and crosswalk at this intersection. There was strong support for further action and reiteration of the past resolution.

The following resolution was then put forward by CB8:

WHEREAS; Community Board 8 Manhattan passed a unanimous resolution in October 2016 calling for east-facing stop sign and a north-south crosswalk on the eastern side of the intersection of East 78th Street and Cherokee Place; and

WHEREAS; Community Board 8 Manhattan passed a companion resolution in October 2016 by a vote of 40 yes, 1 no and 1 abstention calling for installation of one or more speed bumps on East 78th Street between York Avenue and the FDR Drive; and;

WHEREAS; the intersection of East 78th Street and Cherokee Place continues to be a dangerous intersection for pedestrians due to the lack of a crosswalk and the frequent occurrence of speeding vehicles on East 78th Street; and

WHEREAS; a pedestrian was killed at this intersection in 2016; and

WHEREAS; a curb-cut that was built at the southeast corner of the intersection of East 78th Street and Cherokee Place was removed in 2021; and

WHEREAS; curb-cuts were built on the northwest and southwest corners where a potential crosswalk may be constructed; and

WHEREAS; NYCDOT is conducting a traffic study that includes assessing the East 78th Street and Cherokee Place intersection for the viability of a stop sign or traffic signal; and

WHEREAS; there continues to be no way to safely and legally cross 78th Street at Cherokee Place, resulting in many people crossing there anyway instead of walking a block west to the intersection of York Avenue; and

WHEREAS; traffic calming measures, school zone signage, and school zone pavement markings should calm traffic and increase safety for all road users;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 Manhattan reiterates resolutions it passed in October 2016 requesting intersection improvements to East 78th Street and Cherokee Place and the adjacent block to include an east-facing stop sign, a north-south crosswalk, appropriate additional traffic calming measures as necessary including speed bumps, and appropriate signage and pedestrian markings to alert oncoming traffic to the presence of the mid-block intersection and PS 158.

Yes (9+1): Aggarwala, Birnbaum, Lader, Phillips, Popper, Shimamura, Squire, Walsh, Warren, Borock (Public Member)

No (0): None

Abstain (0): None

Item 3: Chick-Fil-A 1536 3rd Avenue - Curbside, Sidewalk & Roadway Congestion caused by Double Parking and Delivery Tents in the Parking Lane

Jared Caldwell, owner and operator of the 1536 3rd Avenue franchise location of Chick-Fil-A, responded to questions and concerns raised in response to a comment provided at the October 2021 Transportation Committee meeting and some concerns raised to the CB8 Board office, regarding curbside, sidewalk & roadway congestion caused by double parking by customers and third-party delivery companies, and the delivery tents in the Parking Lane.

Photos of vehicles double and triple parked, were displayed, as was a picture of how the tent set up in the curb lane was being used as a delivery staging area, in conflict with the intended use of the NYCDOT Open Restaurant program which permits them to use this space. A video was shown that was filmed the night of the Committee meeting that showed how the double parked vehicles cause northbound vehicles on 3rd Avenue crossing over 86th Street having to shift lanes, creating congestion during each light cycle. This video further showed a car unable to make it through the intersection by the end of the light cycle, resulting in it having to wait while blocking the crosswalk across the north side of 86th Street, with pedestrians having to maneuver around the car.

Mr. Caldwell stated that he fully agreed with the points made in acknowledging the issues, and expressed how he is frustrated that he has been unable to sufficiently address the issue. He noted that the double parking started during the pandemic, which progressively become worse over time, and he recognizes that the conditions resulting from it are not ideal for the community or his business given how it is not a hospitable situation. In terms of the tent, he explained that it was intended to be a temporary situation where bikes would use it due to the extent of the sudden growth of app-based bike delivery activity that was creating overflow activity on the sidewalk; recognizing the adverse impact bikes on the sidewalk had, having bikes operate from the tent was his attempt to keep sidewalks safe. Mr. Caldwell now estimates that approximately half of his business is generated from apps, and those companies don't share data regarding the delivery zone or most frequent destinations of deliveries.

Mr. Caldwell expressed his willingness to work with CB8 and city agencies to find ways to prevent double parking, which he estimated is 25% comprised of third-party delivery companies but is mostly individual customers. It was also agreed upon that this is primarily a traffic enforcement issue, and that Chick-Fil-A can't be expected to act against bad behavior by individuals. Ms. Chattergoon from NYCDOT also noted that the delivery tent was not permissible, but indicated that the location would be an ideal candidate for a bike corral that can be used by Chick-Fil-A, and indicated that NYCDOT would support a request by Mr. Caldwell; CB8 will send an administrative letter of support; one member asked that it be limited to the duration of the Chick-Fil-A lease.

There was much sympathy for Mt. Caldwell expressed by those who spoke on the matter, as no one wants to see a business be a victim of its own success. There were also numerous speakers who confirmed the issues and expressed frustration with the conditions and safety hazards due to the double parking and extensive bike activity, with one noting that the conditions described don't present themselves on Sundays when Chick-Fil-A is closed. One speaker suggested that single-order deliveries by car should be prohibited across NYC.

Item 4: Crashmapper Data Overview

Transportation Committee Co-Chair Craig Lader provided a brief overview of the open source data website crashmapper.org, which aggregates all reported vehicular crashes across NYC and allows users to generate statistical reports specific to geographies such as community districts. The website visualizes locations of crashes and injury types based on police reports, allowing users to see where clusters of crashes occur. The data is up to date, and goes back as far as 2012; users may choose any timeframe they wish to view, and filter the data by geography, crash type and vehicle type.

Mr. Lader then displayed some charts he made using exported crashmapper data, highlighting trends within Community District 8. The trends and findings he highlighted looking at data from 2013 to the present included:

- Crash rates in 2020 and Year-to-Date in 2021 are well below pre-pandemic levels
- Crash rates began to decrease in 2015 compared to prior years, which coincided with the lowering of the speed limits on local streets to 25 MPH;
- There were slightly more crashes on north/south avenues in Community District 8 compared to east/west cross streets;
- The crash rates on avenues in Community District 8 mirrored overall crash trends, while rates along cross streets did not decrease significantly as a result of speed limits being reduced;
- The FDR Drive was the roadway with the most crashes in Community District 8; 2nd Avenue had the highest crash rates of all avenues, followed by 1st Avenue, 3rd Avenue and then York Avenue.
- Among east/west cross streets, there were significantly more crashes in the East 60s than the East 70s, 80s and 90s. The 4 streets with crash levels significantly higher than any other across the district were East 60th, 61st, 62nd and 63rd Streets. The major 2-way cross streets (72nd, 79th, 86th) had higher crash rates than one-way streets, with the exception of 60th, 61st, 62nd and 63rd Streets.

Item 5: Discussion of Potential Future Protected Bike Lanes Corridor Opportunities in Community District 8

City Council Member Ben Kallos, whose term is ending at the end of the December, noted the progress made regarding installation of bike lanes within Community District 8 during his tenure in office, and spoke in favor of potential future protected bike lanes. He highlighted bike lanes added on 2nd Avenue and along East 61st, 62nd, 70th, 71st, 77th, 78th, 90th and 91st Streets, but noted the glaring absence of bike lanes in the 80s, and hopes that a pair of bike lanes along 84th and 85th Streets can be reconsidered. He also mentioned that there are plans being developed by NYCDOT, in conjunction with upcoming rehabilitation work related to the roof of the Park Avenue rail tunnel that will require the malls to be temporarily removed, to include bike lanes in the design of the pedestrian malls when they are reconstructed. He further noted how both 3rd Avenue and Lexington Avenue could benefit from bike lanes, and that we should be thinking collectively as to how we want our streets to accommodate micromobility modes that use bike lanes.

In terms of public comments, one constituent discussed how some bike lanes are more protected than others, and decisions regarding materials should consider how to better protect cyclists. Another constituent highlighted the need to have more river to river connectivity, and suggested East 72nd Street as a corridor that could be a candidate for a bike lane and pair with Community Board 7's request for bike lanes on West 72nd Street; it was noted that there has been strong opposition to East 72nd Street as a bike lane corridor when bike lanes were last discussed in 2016. Another constituent spoke of the need to provide protected bike lane connections through Central Park to connect to the West Side, and to ideally have protected crosstown bike lanes across Community District 8 every 10 or so blocks.

A member of the Committee suggested that Third Avenue, based on the existing profile featuring 7 lanes for vehicles and relatively narrow sidewalks, would be a good candidate for bike lanes, and it was noted that Community Board 6 has been working on plans to reimagine Third Avenue between 24th and 42nd Streets including bike lanes, a bus lane and added pedestrian space. Paul Krikler, one of the public attendees who coincidentally is one of the leaders of the effort to reimagine Third Avenue between 24th and 42nd Streets, provided additional detail on their proposal and noted that Borough President Gale Brewer just endorsed their work. He stated that he would support attempts to develop a similar plan for 3rd Avenue in Community District 8.

It was determined that the issue of new protected bike lanes would be revisited in early 2022 as the “headline” topic of a Transportation Committee meeting; the Committee will also invite Paul Krikler to present the proposal for Community Board 6 to allow CB8 to gauge if there is any interest in asking NYCDOT to develop similar plans for Third Avenue between 59th and 96th Streets.

Item 4: Old Business

A member asked about the number of summonses issued regarding double parking by vehicles participating in the stipulated fine program, which is administered by the Department of Finance. Further information on the program will be looked into.

A member noted changes NYCDOT made to signal timing at the intersection of 72nd Street and 3rd Avenue have resulted in some improvements.

Item 5: New Business

Colleen Chattergoon advised the committee that two letters were sent to the Board office earlier in the day on December 1st:

1. An update on the Neighborhood Loading Zone (NLZ) program and a list of 37 specific locations where NYCDOT would like to place NLZ signage in Community District 8;
2. A proposal to change parking regulations along 3rd Avenue to enhance commercial access between 61st and 95th Streets, which is part of an effort to balance street use needs across NYC. This proposal will seek to increase the turnover of commercial loading zone spaces in an effort to reduce double parking and improve access along the curbside.

Since these letters were received with no time to inform the board, and since feedback was requested to be provided by December 30th, the Co-Chairs indicated that CB8 will not be able to meet these deadlines, as these items need to be presented to the Committee. The January 2022 meeting will include both of these issues as agenda items.

A member of the public requested that “no parking” signage in front of 211, 213 and 215 East 83rd Streets be changed to alternate side parking, as the signage is no longer necessary since St. Elizabeth’s Catholic Church closed in 2015 and deconsecrated in 2017. Ms. Chattergoon said this would be able to occur pending a letter from CB8 that will be drafted.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:42PM.

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