

Russell Squire  
Chair

Will Brightbill  
District Manager



505 Park Avenue, Suite 620  
New York, N.Y. 10022-1106  
(212) 758-4340  
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)  
[www.cb8m.com](http://www.cb8m.com) – Website  
[info@cb8m.com](mailto:info@cb8m.com) – E-Mail

**The City of New York**  
**Community Board 8 Manhattan**  
**Congestion Pricing Task Force**  
*Monday, January 31, 2022 – 6:30 PM*  
*Conducted Remotely on Zoom*

**Minutes**

*Present:* Michele Birnbaum, Lori Bores, Alida Camp, Billy Freeland, Ed Hartzog, Craig Lader, Sharon Marshall-Pope, and Barry Schneider.

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM.

**Item 1: Recap of any new developments from the State, City or MTA**

The co-chairs of the Task Force reported that the Governor’s proposed Executive Budget includes some provisions specifically intended to aid implementation and enforcement of congestion pricing. The budget proposes that the “theft of services” law, which is the law that makes fare evasion illegal and prosecutable, would be amended to add language making it illegal to not pay any fee assessed on “...any toll highway, parkway, road, bridge or tunnel or to enter or remain in the tolled central business district”. According to Streetsblog, this would mean toll evasion could be prosecuted as a violation, a Class A misdemeanor, or Class E felony, which are punished by fines or, in the case of felony convictions, prison.

Also proposed in the Executive Budget is a change to the state’s Vehicle and Traffic Law to make it explicitly illegal to drive through a toll with a defaced or illegible license plate. There already is language in the law that makes defaced license plates illegal, but this specifies evading tolls with defaced or illegible license plates as illegal as an enforcement mechanism when congestion pricing starts. The new law would read, “It shall be unlawful for any person to operate, drive or park a motor vehicle on a toll highway, parkway, road, bridge and/or tunnel facility or to enter or remain in the tolled central business district ... if such a number plate is not easily readable, nor shall any number plate be covered by glass or any plastic material, and shall not be knowingly covered or coated with any artificial or synthetic material or substance that conceals or obscures such number plates or that distorts a recorded or photographic image of such number plates.” Violating the new paragraph triggers a fine of \$100 to \$500.

The Executive Budget would also makes it illegal for any vehicle owner to “register, reregister, renew, replace or transfer” vehicle registrations if the vehicle identification number is attached to a registration that’s been suspended or if a tolling authority has requested a unpaid toll or fine block be placed on the registration.

It was noted that Governor Hochul put forward two nominations to the Board of Directors of the MTA that were confirmed, including Janno Lieber as Chair and CEO, and Elizabeth Velez as a member at

large. Ms. Velez has made statements supporting strong community input in advance of congestion pricing beginning.

## **Item 2: Coordination with Neighboring Community Boards**

As discussed at the December 2<sup>nd</sup> Task Force meeting, there was interest in coordination with neighboring Community Boards on issues of mutual interest regarding Congestion Pricing. Manhattan Community Board 11 Chair Xavier Santiago was in attendance and indicated that CB11 has had numerous discussions regarding congestion pricing but has yet to take any formal positions. He did note that his board has noticed increased pressures on parking in their community during the pandemic from commuters from outside Manhattan that are destined for the proposed congestion zone, resulting in some discussion and interest in residential parking permit programs. Mr. Santiago also noted that some CB11 members have expressed concerns regarding the potential impact of Congestion Pricing on taxis and the potential burdens of people with mobility challenges. He also described his personal experiences while living in London and experiencing their Congestion Pricing model firsthand, and why he viewed their residential parking program in a positive light. One of the Task Force Co-Chairs also noted it has been reported that London is considering a Vehicle Miles Traveled based fee to replace the existing congestion pricing program.

## **Item 3: Continuing discussion of boundary zone issues and policies to be recommended by the Traffic Mobility Review Board**

As the Task Force works to develop a set of recommendations regarding issues impacting residents and businesses in the vicinity of the boundary zone and policies related to fees and operations that will be determined by the Traffic Mobility Review Board, discussion continued in which participants identified a list of potential recommendations that the Task Force should further consider. The below list includes all items brought up at this meeting and is intended to be further expanded if anyone submits additional suggestions in advance of the next Task Force meeting.

- Providing municipal parking in the outer boroughs near subway stations
- Discounts for residents living outside the congestion zone but who garage their vehicles within the congestion zone
- Discounts or exemptions for people performing medical-related trips
- Broadening medical exemptions beyond the language in the Congestion Pricing law exempting authorized vehicles transporting persons with disabilities
- Establishing a residential parking permit program in neighborhoods outside the congestion zone
- Tolling all entrances/exits of the Queensboro Bridge
- Discounts or exemptions for vehicles crossing into the zone for a very short time (such as to accommodate alternate side parking activities, or if construction forces a vehicle to cross into the congestion zone)
- Accommodations for small businesses that will face financial strains
- Accommodations for non-profit businesses
- Offsets for those who pay tolls on non/MTA crossings (including the TZB)
- Discounts or exemptions for Motorcycles
- Revisiting taxi policies and considering eliminating all congestion fees for all yellow cabs (not just below 96<sup>th</sup> St.)
- Providing no exemptions beyond those stipulated in the congestion pricing law
- Recommending hours in which tolls are in effect and timeframes of definitions for peak vs. off peak
- Discounts/exemptions for vehicles carrying more than a defined number of passengers (HOV) discounts

- Policies for School Buses

#### **Item 4: Old & New Business**

There was no old or new business discussed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Alida Camp & Craig Lader, Co-Chairs*