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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Transportation Committee
Wednesday April 6 2022, 6:30 PM
Conducted Remotely on Zoom

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.

Present: Michele Birnbaum, Lori Bores, Lorraine Brown, Billy Freeland, Paul Krikler, Craig Lader, Rebecca Lamorte, Valerie Mason, Rita Popper, Cos Spagnoletti, Charles Warren, Peter Borock (public member)

Absent (Excused): Rebecca Dangoor, Sharon Pope-Marshall, Barry Schneider

Resolutions for Approval:

Item 2 – Recommended Locations for New Accessible Pedestrian Signals

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

Item 1: Presentation by the NYCDOT Office of Freight and Mobility, including efforts regarding mitigation of truck loading/double parking

Huma Husain from the New York City Department of Transportation's Office of Freight and Mobility (DOTOFM), presented an overview of the many initiatives and programs that DOTOFM is working on. The DOTOFM and its Freight Mobility Unit aims to reduce the impact of trucks on communities and infrastructure while improving the sustainability and efficiency of truck deliveries.

The City's freight vision is to "enhance the economic vitality and quality of life for all New Yorkers by providing for the safe, equitable, efficient, and responsible movement of goods". They are guided by a Freight Strategic Plan – Delivering New York: A Smart Truck Management Plan for NYC, which was released in 2021. The plan identifies 4 main pillars incorporating safety, sustainability, freight efficiency and partnerships & knowledge, which include 32 strategies and 101 initiatives spanning the next 5-10 years. Some programs and goals contained in these pillars that are currently or may be of particular interest to CB8 are as follows:

- Expansion of the Off Hours Deliveries Program. This program aims to shift deliveries to off-hours (7PM to 6AM); currently there are 1,100 locations citywide included in this program, with a goal of expanding to 5,000 locations by 2040.
- Expansion of the Neighborhood Loading Zone (NLZ) Program (which was presented to CB8 at prior Transportation Committee meetings). To date, 28 NLZs have been implemented in Community District 8, and 184 citywide, which are in effect weekdays 8AM to 6PM. NYCDOT is now pursuing dedicated signage to better identify NLZs from standard no parking zones. It was noted that 8 locations previously proposed within our district have yet to be installed, and are undergoing further review.
- A Micro-Distribution Center (MDC) Pilot program, which aims to address the illegal and disruptive loading and unloading activities currently being performed on curbsides and sidewalks that result in double parking, congestion and unsafe pedestrian conditions. The program seeks to identify opportunities to conduct loading and unloading activities at designated off-street and curbside locations both in public and private rights of way (including public plazas, inside buildings and in garages), and promote last mile delivery options that are efficient, sustainable and equitable, including usage of green or human powered modes such as hand carts,

cargo cycles and small electric vehicles. Research of current best practices and industry/community needs is ongoing, and the initial launch of the program is anticipated for 2023.

- The Commercial Cargo Bike Pilot Program is looking to be expanded to a permanent program. It was launched in December 2019, and now has 7 companies operating over 400 cargo bikes that can load, unload and stage wherever commercial vehicles can park; they are exempt from parking meter payments. The goal of NYCOFM is to install 4-5 bike corrals by the end of 2022, and to enroll over 2,500 cargo bikes by 2026. As 2 cargo bikes are estimated to be equivalent to 1 van or box truck, this program would have a significant benefit to air quality, as 20 cargo bike miles per day replacing 20 van/box truck miles would reduce CO₂ by 7 tons per year. As it transitions to a permanent program, NYCOFM is pursuing annual permitting for businesses operating 5 or more cargo bikes for commercial purposes, exploring a cargo bike loading only curb regulation, and pursuing legislative changes to ensure that all e-cargo bikes are compliant with New York State law.
- A Green Loading Zone Program Pilot Program is under development, which will provide dedicated space for low or zero emission vehicles to deliver and distribute goods in or near congested and environmental justice areas.
- Bridge Strike Mitigation inter-agency coordination involving NYPD, MTA, New York State DOT and the Port Authority of NY/NJ, focusing on reducing short-term infrastructural impacts and eliminating long-term infrastructure damage with signage, pavement markings, technology education and outreach.

Other programs and initiatives also described in the presentation included:

- Expanding the NYC Clean Truck Program to Industrial Business Zones citywide and support the installation of alternative fuel infrastructure.
- Reducing the number of older transport refrigeration units and pilot zero emission refrigerator technology.
- Updating the NYC Truck Route Network and publishing a new Truck Route Map
- A Freight Decarbonization Study, in partnership with NYCEDC that will explore barriers to truck electrification and assess potential locations on-street or adjacent to garages/municipal lots where truck charging can be supported.
- The Blue Highways Program, which aims to use NYC waterways for freight movement with landside transfers to sustainable last mile delivery modes such as cargo bikes and electric vehicles.
- Street improvement projects on freight corridors
- Truck safety engagement
- Expanding partnerships within the public and private sectors to increase awareness and understanding of freight activity.

The presentation generated a series of questions on the current and future initiatives. There was interest expressed in the Micro-Distribution Center Program being tested in Community District 8; Ms. Husain said CB8 should respond to the Request for Expressions of Interest upon its release if it wishes to participate. The program would operate under NYCDOT purview on streets and curbsides, though NYCDOT remains open to exploring opportunities for storefronts to be used for the pilot program. A member suggested using MDCs spaces to store deliveries for business that can't be performed off hours, allowing them to be made the next day using cargo bikes or other green modes. In regards to who would pay for MDCs, it is the intention that the spaces would be shared and that no company would have exclusive rights to a space, though specific policies have yet to be determined.

There were multiple questions regarding the new NLZs that have been installed in Community District 8 in regards to the need for more enforcement, clearer signage, and specific time limits in which vehicles may stay in a NLZ, and possible changes of signage to be no standing rather than no parking. Enforcement was a particular focus of comments; it is performed by parking enforcement agents, and there was interest in having a mechanism for people to report abuse of NLZs. Matthew Rossa of NYCDOT noted that it is too early to make determinations since the NLZs have barely been in place for 2 months, that education on the program continues, and that the program will continue to be assessed and changes may be considered as necessary.

Other questions or comments regarded the amount of funding required for these programs, overall enforcement issues regarding deliveries, concerns about the ongoing illegal de facto micro distribution center activity taking place and the double parking that takes place in bus lanes. One member suggested MDCs be permitted in bus

lanes during times they are not in effect. One member suggested e-bike racks where parking can take place and to help discourage illegal usage on sidewalks. In response to a question about sideguards on trucks, there are incentive programs in place that could be expanded to further promote safety initiatives.

Item 2: Accessible Pedestrian Signals and Determining Priority Locations for new signals in Community District 8

As a result of a ruling by a federal judge, New York City is required to install 9,000 accessible pedestrian signals (APS) over the next 10 years. According to an article on Gothamist.com, 147 new APS are to be installed by June 30, 2022, 400 are to be installed during the 2023 fiscal year (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023), and 500 the following year. NYCDOT is soliciting input from the public in regards to where APS should be installed, and an opportunity existed for CB8 to provide its recommendations to NYCDOT.

Transportation Committee Co-Chair Craig Lader presented a map he created depicting the 15 locations in which APS are currently installed within Community District 8, including 3 near the office of Lighthouse International on 59th Street and some near Cornell and Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospitals. He noted that the District has a disproportionately low numbers of APS intersections compared to the rest of Manhattan; the 15 intersections equate to 5% of all 263 signalized intersections in Community District 8, while 9% of all Manhattan intersections have APS, and while Community District 8 has 11% of Manhattan's signalized intersections, only 6% of Manhattan's APS intersections are located in the district.

The discussion that followed generated suggestions that tended to focus on locations near subway station entrances, hospitals, schools, places of worship and other major institutions. It was pointed out that there is no APS at 77th Street/Lexington Avenue, which is by a subway station and Lenox Hill Hospital. One member suggested intersections near Asphalt Green, though it appears that the list of locations maintained by NYCDOT was not updated to include the APS at 91st St. and York Ave.

The following resolution was then put forward by CB8:

WHEREAS; Accessible Pedestrian Signals are a critical safety measure for persons with visual impairments and many other pedestrians; and

WHEREAS; Community District 8 has a disproportionately low percentage of intersections equipped with accessible pedestrian signals; and

WHEREAS; only 15 intersections within Community District 8, or 5% of the districts intersections, have accessible pedestrian signals, compared to the entire borough of Manhattan in which 9% of intersections have accessible pedestrian signals; and

WHEREAS; Community District 8 has 11% of Manhattan's signalized intersections, but only 6% of the borough's intersections equipped with accessible signals; and

WHEREAS; a Federal judge has ordered New York City to install 9,000 accessible pedestrian signals over the next 10 years, including 147 in FY 2022, 400 in FY 2023 and 500 in FY 2024; and

WHEREAS; New York City Department of Transportation is soliciting input from the public as to where accessible pedestrian signals should be installed; and

WHEREAS; in order for New York City to be a truly equitable place, all intersections ideally should have accessible pedestrian signals as soon as possible; and

WHEREAS; Community District 8 has many intersections where accessible pedestrian signals are needed, especially in high activity locations and areas where pedestrian safety enhancements should be prioritized, including by subway stations, schools, hospitals, houses of worship and other major institutions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 requests that New York City Department of Transportation prioritize installation of accessible pedestrian signals in Community District 8 at the following locations: near subway stations, near hospitals, near schools, near houses of worship, and near other major community institutions.

Yes (9+1): Bores, Brown, Lader, Mason, Pope-Marshall, Popper, Schneider, Spagnoletti, Warren, Borock (public member)

No (0): None

Abstain (1): Birnbaum

Item 3: NYC Stipulated Fine Program - Changes to Fines Effective May 2, 2022

In a press release issued by the New York City Department of Finance on March 9th, it was announced that the Stipulated Fine Program will have a new fine schedule for participants in the program that are scheduled to go into effect on May 2, 2022. The Stipulated Fine Program allows enrolled fleet vehicle owners to waive their right to challenge parking tickets, and agree to pay a preset reduced fine for each offense. As an example, trucks illegally double parking or illegally parking in no standing zones that would otherwise be subject to \$115 fines were required to pay \$35 under the current fee schedule.

As the Transportation Committee has prioritized the issue of addressing double parking and loading and unloading by trucks, it was decided that the issue would be brought up as an agenda item, as some members have expressed past opposition to the program. One of the Committee Co-Chairs highlighted some statistics from a 2019 NYC Independent Budget Office report indicating that the top 10 participants in the program in 2018 were assessed a total of about 636,000 summonses and paid \$35.8 million in fines, but saved \$20.4 million, and that UPS alone accounted for about 255,000 summonses. It was also pointed out that the intent of the program was both to ensure that companies pay fines that are a source of revenue to the City, and that the programs prevents traffic courts from being overburdened by a large amount of contested summonses.

The proposed new fee schedule does increase fines in most categories, including significant increases to double parking and no standing meter zone violations, but other fees are proposed to be reduced, including other general no standing zones. It was also reported that companies registered in the program received a letter stating that the fees for illegal parking in a bus lane would also be lowered.

The discussion among Committee members featured a diverse set of opinions. Some noted the disconnect between the initiatives of the NYCOFM that is looking at solutions to reduce double parking while the Stipulated Fine Program encourages such behaviors, and expressed opposition to a program that encourages illegal activities. There were also strong objections to certain fees being lowered, especially for violations in a bus lane. Others appreciated that many fees would now be higher, and hoped that would act as more of a deterrent, and some understood the fundamental reasons for the program even if they didn't like the idea of large companies who could afford fines to be provided discounts. With the broad range of views, and the belief that the changes are a fait accompli, no resolution was proposed, but a letter will be written on behalf of the Committee raising its concerns regarding the inconsistency of city policies and the opposition to reducing fines for program participants parking in bus lanes.

Item 4: Discussion regarding Subway Platform Barriers and Stations in Community District 8 where they may be feasible to construct

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority recently announced that they would be installing platform barriers at three stations as part of a pilot program. These barriers, which are commonplace in some subway systems in other cities and are in place at JFK AirTrain stations, are intended to protect passengers who are waiting for trains, and comes in the wake of several incidents where passengers have fallen or been pushed onto tracks.

The stations at which platforms will be installed are 3rd Avenue on the L line, Sutphin Blvd. on the E line, and Times Square on the 7 Line, at a cost of \$100 million. In a feasibility study issued by the MTA in February 2020, it was indicated that all stations on the Q line within Community District 8 can accommodate platform doors, along with the Roosevelt Island Station on the F Line and the 59th Street/5th Avenue station on the N/W Lines. None of the stations on the 4/5/6 Lexington IRT line could accommodate platform doors, except for the 6 train platform at the 59th Street station; the reasons provided for the lack of feasibility related to constraints such as platform widths, accessibility concerns for people with disabilities due to columns, platforms that would be unable to bear the additional weight that platform doors would require, and different models of trains that would not allow for standardized platform door locations.

Although there were some members who were supportive in concept of platform doors as a safety measure to enhance the NYC subway system, and while it was noted that barriers help keep the tracks clear of debris and contribute to lower maintenance costs and more reliable train service, the high price tag of the pilot program was viewed very unfavorably, and some members also questioned whether there are other lightweight materials could be used that may also be less expensive. Multiple members strongly believed that no money should be spent on platform doors while most of the system remains inaccessible to people with physical disabilities, and were especially vocal about the exorbitant the cost of installing platform barriers in a single station, which far exceeds the cost of upgrading entire stations to become fully accessible. There was also discussion about mental health issues that are viewed as contributing the increase in subway crime and incidents where people are pushed onto tracks, and the suggestion by some that investments in securing subway stations and addressing the mental health situation would yield more benefit than installing barriers. There was some discussion about sending a letter to the MTA to express the Committee's sentiments, ultimately it was decided against writing a letter.

Item 5: NYCDOT Updates

Colleen Chattergoon, NYCDOT Senior Borough Planner and Liaison to CB8, provided the following updates:

- The 2022 Milling and paving season has begun, and residents and CB8 members should notify the CB8 District Office of any streets that are in need of paving, and NYCDOT will do an assessment to consider whether it should be added to this year's schedule.
- Inspections and enforcement of Open Restaurants are occurring, with some restaurants being inspected for the third time. Ms. Chattergoon indicated that restaurant owners are generally being responsive and making changes to be in compliance with the current program's requirements.

Item 6: Old and New Business

A member followed up on previous inquiries regarding puddling that often occurs at the corner of 72nd Street and 2nd Avenue near the entrance to the subway. Ms. Chattergoon said that there is a need for a catch basin at that location. It was recommended that the board reach out to the Department of Environmental Protection to request a catch basin, and Ms. Chattergoon indicated that NYCDOT would provide a letter of support for that request.

A member asked about the status of community requests for Select Bus Service bus stops to be added to the M15 route a 72nd Street in both directions, and noted that the community's elected officials wrote a letter to New York City Transit stating the need and community support for such a stop. The response from NYCT was that it was only individual requests, and that it would be considered after OMNY is fully implemented in 2024. The Committee Co-Chairs confirmed CB8 passed a resolution making that specific request in October 2016.

A member asked about the bus shelter on the M15 at 79th street being removed; it was done in advance of the temporary relocation of the bus stops to accommodate construction of a new medical office building. It was noted that representatives from Extell have been invited to discuss issues related to bus stop relocation, parking and loading with the Transportation Committee, and thus far have been unable to attend.

A member raised concerns about insufficient enforcement of open restaurant structures, and asked about the process for developing the parameters of the permanent program. It was noted that a judge ruled that the permanent program should not proceed until after an environmental review is performed. Ms. Chattergoon

indicated that NYCDOT is weighing its options as to how it will respond to the ruling, but it won't impact the current temporary program.

A member made a request to address lighting on James Cagney Place, as the light was being blocked by the trees. After 3 lights were changed a few years ago, a request was made to change the remaining 6 lights that are not sufficiently providing enough light to the street level. Ms. Chattergoon said that the NYCDOT street lighting division was not planning to make the changes, but she will follow up to find out more.

A member asked about the status of resurfacing the Roosevelt Island Bridge, which has funding committed to install a new safer surface to improve safety for cyclists compared to the metal grates currently in place. Ms. Chattergoon said that NYCDOT is investigating materials and will follow up with the bridge unit; it was suggested that might be effective to use the material in the surface being used for the sidewalk on the bridge on the pedestrian side.

A member of the public asked whether the Committee plans on discussing the recent surge of deadly pedestrian incidents; one of the co-chairs indicated that Council Member Julie Menin has accepted an invitation to discuss pedestrian safety and traffic calming initiatives at the next Transportation Committee meeting on May 2nd.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:38PM.

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