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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Transportation Committee**
Wednesday, November 2, 2022 6:30 PM
Conducted Remotely on Zoom

Minutes

Present: Mohit Agrawal, Michele Birnbaum, Rebecca Dangoor, Billy Freeland, Paul Krikler, Craig Lader, Rebecca Lamorte, John McClement, John Phillips, Sharon Pope-Marshall, Rita Popper, Judy Schneider, Russell Squire, Charles Warren, Peter Borock (public member), Stephanie Reckler (public member)

Absent (Excused): Lori Bores, Valerie Mason

Resolutions for Approval:

Item 2: Disapproval of use of Pick-Up Trucks in the NYCDOT Car share Program

Item 3: Revocation of Allen Stevenson School's Open Street (East 78th St. between Lexington & Park)

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

Item 1: MTA Presentation - Stroller Pilot Program on M31 Bus Route

Howie Levine, Senior Accessibility Officer for the MTA, provided a series of updates regarding MTA accessibility initiatives and gave a brief presentation on a pilot program regarding the use of open strollers on New York City Transit Buses.

The MTA's Bus Open Stroller Pilot Program seeks to provide dedicated space for a stroller to be kept open on buses, as the current policy for caregivers to fold strollers before boarding is a barrier to access for many that can slow the bus down for all passengers. The MTA formed a working group with disability advocates, parent advocates and bus drivers to help determine a solution that provided an opportunity to accommodate open strollers and maintain as much seating as possible

The resulting pilot program is being rolled out on one to two bus routes per borough, including the M31 which serves Community District 8 on York Avenue; routes were determined in part based on the bus models operating on the routes, and factors related to ridership and geographic equity. The program sets aside a dedicated "parking" space for one open stroller, entirely separate from wheelchair securement areas and priority seating for persons who are unable to stand. There are two bus models included in the pilot – one carves out an area for a stroller in the front by removing one or two seats, the other model features an area across from the rear door in which seats are flipped up. Exterior decals indicate which buses have a "dedicated stroller area".

The accessibility updates provided by Mr. Levine included the following:

- In an agreement reached to settle two lawsuits between the MTA and disability advocacy groups, the MTA has committed to making 95% of subway stations accessible by 2055, along with interim milestones that are to be achieved; Mr. Levine did note that there are funding contingencies that could have an impact on accomplishing the goal.
- There are now 140 subway stations that are accessible, which means they have elevators/ramps, ADA boarding areas with minimized gaps, tactile warning strips, braille signage and accessible station agent booths.

- The current 2020-2024 MTA capital plan includes accessibility upgrades to 70 stations, with 23 now in construction (including the 68th Street-Hunter College “6” Station. 13 more stations are slated to begin construction by the end of 2022. It was noted that funding shortfalls remain a concern and could ultimately threaten these projects.
 - Both the 86th Street 4/5/6 station and the 59th Street Station (4/5/6 and N/R/W) are included in the 2020-2024 MTA Capital Plan for ADA Accessibility, which would apply to all platforms (only the uptown local platform at 86th Street is currently ADA compliant). There are no specific timeframes for project commencement at this time, other than the awards would be made by 2024.
- The installation of AutoGates at all stations is now complete. AutoGates help passengers who can’t use turnstiles pay their fare and enter/exit subway stations independently; these are available to all passengers, such as those with luggage.
- OMNY is now available for reduced-fare customers;

In response to questions from meeting participants, it was again noted that budget shortfalls may impact the ability for the MTA to achieve their accessibility goals, and that a major component of funding is assumed to be coming from revenues generated from the Central Business District Tolling Plan (i.e. Congestion Pricing). A concern was raised that there is insufficient outreach to disability advocacy groups in regards to congestion pricing, both in terms of how it will be implemented and how funding generated will be used to fund accessibility projects; it was also noted that CB8’s congestion pricing task force passed a resolution specifically addressing these issues and calling for the MTA to impanel a council on mobility for individuals with disabilities and for revenues to be heavily prioritized for improving transit access for persons with disabilities.

Questions were also raised regarding the excessive maintenance and frequent outages of elevators and escalators at the new Second Avenue Subway stations, especially 72nd and 86th Streets. It was noted that supply chain issues are an impediment to expedient repairs in some instances.

Item 2: NYCDOT Car Share Program & Proposed Community District 8 Locations

Stevie Feig, a planner for NYCDOT, presented the NYCDOT Permanent Carshare Program. The program is proposed to utilize 8 locations within Community District 8 where two parking spaces at each location would be dedicated for use by car share vehicles provided by the program partners Getaround and Truqit. Locations proposed within Community District 8 are on cross streets located nearest to the following locations: 1579 Second Avenue (on E 82nd), 1411 Third Avenue (on E 80th), 558 East 87th Street, 340 East 73rd Street, 134 East 93rd Street, 1498 Second Avenue (on E 78th), 78 East 74th Street and 301 East 90th Street.

Ms. Feig described the NYCDOT Car Share Program, which provides on-demand short-term access to a shared fleet of vehicles, typically through a membership and hourly or annual fee. A pilot program was launched in June 2018, with Zipcar and Enterprise as partners, and comprised of 230 on-street parking spaces and 55 municipal parking facility spaces being dedicated for use by the carshare vehicles. The 2-year pilot averaged 24 trips per space per month with an average of 17 households per available vehicle per month, which resulted in greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles declining by 7% and 6% respectively. Based on customer surveys, researchers concluded that for every 1 car share vehicle, 4 personal vehicles were either sold or suppressed (a potential buyer deciding not to purchase a vehicle).

Adrienne Moretz, who manages government partnerships at Getaround, presented background on the company and details regarding their participation in the NYCDOT Car Share program. She explained that Getaround’s goal is to address the fact that cars sit idle 95% of the time, and its main objectives are to provide an equitable and environmentally friendly mobility option that contributes to congestion reduction. Getaround has a presence in 1,000 cities, including 350 in the USA, and has provided 6 million trips to customers. Getaround differs from rental car companies in that it is free to join, and trips can be booked for as little as 1 hour. A customer uploads a driver’s license to the app/website; users may be as young as 19 years of age, and 10% of Getaround’s customers are over age 55. Ms. Moretz said that a large percentage of their customers are from communities of color and low-income families, and that among all of their customers about 10% have come to rely on them to the extent that they have sold or donated their vehicles. About ¾ of trips carry 2 or more people.

The cost of a Getaround car share vehicle varies based on type of vehicles, which are typically small 4-door sedans, but rates are generally around \$10 per hour, with a maximum trip of 200 miles permitted. Insurance is included in the rates, but gas is not included, and users are responsible for refueling and associated costs.

Within Community District 8, Getaround has requested 6 locations for 12 vehicles, at what they consider to be highly visible and highly trafficked locations for their vehicles near other shared transportation, such as Citi Bike, bus stops, subway stations and ferry stops. The locations they will use are spread across the district. In order to promote equity and outreach, they are offering a \$25 discount for first time use, and are partnering with community organizations such as food pantries. They also are offering discounts for NYCHA residents and persons living on assistance. Getaround does work with private garages, but Ms. Moretz explained that many won't allow their spaces to be used for Car Share purposes, and that Getaround is priced out based on the costs that private operators would charge them.

Sohail Suleman, CEO of Truqit, described their proposed role in the NYCDOT Car Share Permanent Program. Truqit is a car share company specializing in the use of pick-up trucks such as Toyota Tacomas. They started in San Francisco, and are now expanding into NYC. In San Francisco, they have provided over 300 trips per month, with 50% usage of their vehicles at peak hours. He described Truqit's goal as to empower people to do things they otherwise wouldn't be able to without a car or pick-up truck, and that may not be best served by traditional truck or van rental companies. Similar to Getaround, they have a mobile app in which customers use to unlock vehicles. The 2 sites they are requesting within Community District 8 (82nd Street & 2nd Ave. and 90th Street & 2nd Ave.) were selected based on proximity to hardware stores, goodwill locations, and the 86th Street retail corridor.

The majority of speakers who commented on the car share program expressed strong opposition, especially in regards to the use of on-street parking spaces which several speakers objected to on the grounds that it was a giveaway of a public resource to heavily capitalized private companies. They also objected to the fact that NYCDOT is only permitted to charge an annual \$475 fee per location based on established administrative costs that can only be changed through legislation. Some speakers expressed opposition to what they viewed as the continuing diminishing of on-street parking for the general public. Others were unhappy with the concept of car sharing, expressing skepticism that the benefits that project partners are projecting will actually be generated and questioning whether people would actually use the vehicles. There was especially strong opposition to the use of pick-up trucks as car share vehicles, and that NYCDOT should not be promoting the use of larger vehicles that are not environmentally friendly and can pose dangers to pedestrians.

There were also some speakers who expressed support for the program, and emphasized the opportunities that it would bring for the majority of Community District 8 residents who don't own a car and find car rental rates exorbitant, especially if they only need to use a car for a short period of time rather than for an entire 24-hour period. These speakers also were hopeful that the benefits that car sharing has generated in other cities would extend to NYC, and viewed the impact of 16 parking spaces across the entire community district being used for car sharing as de minimis.

There was widespread agreement that the nominal administrative fee that car share partners will pay for use of public parking spaces is problematic, and that NYCDOT should be working with elected officials to change the law so that car share companies pay a more significant fee or an amount reflective of market value. Among other noteworthy comments was the desire to preserve the curbside near intersections for daylighting and for car share spaces to stay clear from such areas, and for car share companies to work with private garages to make the program feasible to operate out of them. It was also noted that the outreach on this project and the announcement of proposed locations was being made after it was decided that the program would be permanent, and that there should have been more and earlier discussion with CB8 to discuss these issues.

A member proposed a resolution resolving that CB8 can't support the car share program at the current time as currently constructed, and furthermore requests that elected officials work to change the administrative law that limits how much NYCDOT can charge car share companies for use of public parking spaces, and furthermore acknowledges that any future support for the car-share program by CB8 be contingent on public outreach to

determine siting of parking space locations. Following brief discussion, a member proposed the following substitute resolution that failed by a vote of 7 yes, 6 no and 1 abstain:

BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 approves the NYCDOT Permanent Carsharing Program partnership with Getaround;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 urges NYCDOT and elected officials work together to determine how to allow the administrative fee being charged to car share companies for use of on-street parking spaces to be increased to market rate, and to explore legislative interventions to allow privately owned garages to be used for car sharing;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 urges NYCDOT to supporting daylighting of intersections and ensure that on street parking spaces used for car sharing avoid using this street space;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 8 requests that NYCDOT work with the community to determine siting of locations of car share vehicles.

Yes (7): Agrawal, Freeland, Krikler, Lader, Warren, Pope-Marshall, Schneider

No (6): Birnbaum, Dangoor, Lamorte, McClement, Phillips, Reckler (public member)

Abstain (1): Popper

The following resolution was then put forward by Community Board 8:

WHEREAS; New York City Department of Transportation has made permanent a Car Share program that would provide 16 parking spaces at 8 locations across Community District 8; and

WHEREAS; The NYCDOT Car Share program proposes six locations be provided to Getaround, which operates a car share service utilizing primarily small sedans, and two locations to be provided to Truqit for a truck share program utilizing pick-up trucks; and

WHEREAS; the use of pick-up trucks as a car share vehicle would encourage the use of larger and less fuel efficient vehicles that pose safety and health concerns to pedestrians, other drivers and the general public; and

WHEREAS; there are few situations in which someone who resides in Community District 8 may have a specific need for a pick-up truck, and;

WHEREAS; Truqit has not made a compelling case for the need for pick-up trucks to be used for car-sharing;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 Manhattan disapproves the request by Truqit to be provided use of on-street parking spaces provided by NYCDOT and the use of pick-up trucks in the NYCDOT Car Share Program.

Yes (12+1): Agrawal, Birnbaum, Dangoor, Freeland, Krikler, Lader, Lamorte, McClement, Phillips, Pope-Marshall, Schneider, Warren, Reckler (public member)

No (1): Popper

Abstain (0): None

Item 3: Follow-Up Discussion regarding Allen Stevenson School's use of East 78th Street between Lexington and Park Avenues under NYCDOT's Open Streets Program

In September 2022, the full board of CB8 unanimously passed a Transportation Committee resolution requesting that NYCDOT look into concerns raised by the residents and businesses on 78th Street between Park Avenue and Lexington Avenue in regards to the Allen Stevenson School's participation in NYCDOT's Open Street program,

and that NYCDOT work with the residents and the Allen Stevenson School to make changes to the manner in which it is currently operating. This was in response to many constituents, including residents, doctors with offices on the block, patients, and others who described how the open street was having a significant impact on access, mobility and quality of life, and various ways in which Allen Stevenson School was not complying with the policies of NYCDOT's Open Streets Program.

In a follow-up discussion in October 2022, Allen Stevenson School representatives pledged to work with residents and stakeholders of the East 78th Street block to mitigate the issues that were raised, expressing willingness to be flexible and work with residents and stakeholders to ensure that those who needed to gain access to homes and businesses would be able to do so, and place signage on the street to make clear that access should not be denied to persons visiting doctors' offices. They also said they would be open to discussing additional changes, including limiting open street activities to the space directly in front of their building. The Transportation Committee decided to further table the discussion to allow further time for Allen Stevenson School to implement these changes to the open street.

Once again, Duncan Lyon (Head of Allen Stevenson School) and Chris Acerbo (Allen Stevenson School Security Director) addressed the Committee and constituents, and provided updates on the actions they took to mitigate the issues that were reported. These measures included:

- Resident and patient access passes created by the school, with the guards being instructed to provide immediate clearance;
- A reduction of the play area to only encompass 1/3 of the block;
- Limiting the number of students playing at any one time which will cause less noise in front of doctors' offices;
- Opening of curb space so neighbors can access cars;
- Ensuring that the bike lane remains open at all times;
- Providing residents and businesses with direct contact information for Allen Stevenson School's Director of Security

An update on the status of Allen Stevenson School's play roof was also provided, Construction is complete, but the contractor has some remaining work to perform on certain building systems before final inspections can occur; it is currently anticipated that DOB will be able to provide approval at the end of 2023 or very early in 2024.

Bryan Verona, East 78th Block Association President spoke on behalf of neighbors of Allen Stevenson School, and noted that most continue to believe that the open street is not compatible with the block for all of the reasons that had been previously vocalized. He noted that he has been working closely with school officials and NYCDOT, and that they have been doing their best to be responsive to the concerns and that the situation has significantly improved since the initial CB8 discussion in September, but that the ability for the school to use their play roof in the coming months should further reduce the need for the open street to continue. Other speakers corroborated Mr. Verona's comments, both in terms of the progress that has occurred as a result of collaboration between the school and its neighbors and the belief that the open street is not appropriate for that block. Several of the doctors who have offices on the block continued to oppose the schools use of the street as part of the Open Streets Program. CB8 members generally were aligned with those views, though some members spoke of the benefits of open streets on a more general basis and that the positive steps taken were sufficient to avoid having to revoke the open street during the current school year.

Colleen Chattergoon, NYCDOT Senior Planner and liaison to CB8, stated that NYCDOT has been and will continue to be engaged in addressing this issue with the school and its neighbors, and that NYCDOT wants to give Allen Stevenson School time to see how successful the actions they took are in mitigating the issues before any further actions are taken. She indicated that the school has approval for the open street through the end of the current school year, and that any potential open street application for the 2023-24 school year from the Allen Stevenson School will take into account all of the feedback received on the current open street from the community.

The following resolution was then put forward by Community Board 8:

WHEREAS; New York City Department of Transportation has established an Open Streets Program; and

WHEREAS; The Allen Stevenson School, located at 132 East 78th Street, obtained approval from NYCDOT for an open street on East 78th Street between Park Ave. and Lexington Ave. between 7AM and 4PM on weekdays; and

WHEREAS; The Allen Stevenson School uses the open street both as a play area and as a space used for facilitating smooth AM arrival and PM dismissal of students; and

WHEREAS; Neighbors of the Allen Stevenson School have been adversely impacted by the street closures, which have resulted in restrictions to access of residents and visitors and patients of doctors with offices on the block and a degradation of quality of life due to noise and safety concerns; and

WHEREAS; the Community Board agrees with neighbors of the Allen Stevenson School that on open street on the East 78th Street block between Park Ave. and Lexington Ave. is incompatible with the needs of the residents and businesses on the block; and

WHEREAS; the Allen Stevenson School has constructed a rooftop play area that is expected to obtain approval for use by early 2023, reducing the need for the open street to be used as a play area;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 Manhattan requests that NYCDOT allow the Allen Stevenson School's open street on East 78th Street between Park Ave. and Lexington Ave. to remain in place until the school obtains all required permits and approvals for its rooftop play area, at which time NYCDOT shall revoke the open street permit.

Yes (12+1): Agrawal, Birnbaum, Dangoor, Freeland, Krikler, Lader, Lamorte, McClement, Phillips, Pope-Marshall, Schneider, Warren, Reckler (public member)

No (1): Popper

Abstain (0): None

Item 4: Discussion Regarding How to Address Parking Placard Abuse

The issue of parking placard abuse continues to be problematic both within Community District 8 and across NYC, prompting the Transportation Committee to once again try to devise recommendations to address the ongoing challenges. One of the Committee Co-Chairs provided a brief review of discussions held by the Transportation Committee since 2019 on the topic, and noteworthy policies proposed or implemented in recent years. The slides providing this history can be found below.

The co-chair also noted a NYC Council project to map all locations called into 311 in which there was a complaint about parking placards, and the concentration of locations near hospitals such as Lenox Hill Hospital. The maps can be found at <https://council.nyc.gov/data/placard-abuse/>.

Given the extent of the information provided and the late hour of the discussion, it was agreed upon that this issue would be added to an upcoming agenda of the Transportation Committee for an in-depth discussion, and to have NYCDOT staff participate and provide updates on the status of the programs that were passed into law in 2019 and Mayor's office initiatives that were proposed but were unfunded and have yet to be implemented.

Item 5: NYCDOT Updates

There were no additional updates provided by NYCDOT.

Item 6: Old and New Business

There was no old or new business.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:01 PM.

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