

DRAFT MINUTES PENDING APPROVAL

CB8 Traffic and Transportation Committee Meeting

March 20, 2018

Downey's Bar and Grill
5790 Mosholu Avenue
Bronx, NY 10471

Committee Members Present:

Dan Padernacht - Chair
Sylvia Alexander
Eric Bell
Eric Dinowitz
Diomarys Escaño
Daniella Fuchs
David Gellman
Myra Joyce
Dan Padernacht
Laura Spalter

Committee Members Absent:

Margaret Donato
Georgia Santiago
Herb Young

Community Board 8 members present:

Rosemary Ginty
Paul Ellis
Bob Bender

Guests: Allen Dillon, Mike O'Sullivan, Meghan Cowley, Marion Cregan, Mary Hemings, Edward Nolan, David Bush, Nancy Moukas, Paul Meissner, Flonne Sanchez, Jeremy J. Allen, Karen B. Porcher, Steve Hughes, Theresa Ellis-Reich, Anne Leonard, Anita Reyes, David Castillo, Lou Pora, Jodi Kavir, Pardeep Deoi, Patricia Laska, Toni Anderson, Trevor Welsh, Rob Spalter, Herb Eysser, Steven Tu, Arthur Heller, Marion Buffington, Shannon Kelley, Bernadette O'Donnell, Mike McCormick, James E. Watson, Michele March, L.R. Stevens, Judy Emerson, George Elliot, Denis Kitson, Martin Beirne, Barbara Beirne, T. Weaver, J.B. Levitt, Jeffrey L. Otto, Leslie Hogan, Thomas Doddato, Leslie Doddato, Laurie Hogan, Michael Courtney, Margaret Courtney, Adam Lessuck (FDNY), Maureen Kelly, Tara McMaster, Rob Baron, Jeanette Castillo, Barbara Velez, Toni Butler, K Pagliaro Meyer

DI O'Toole (NYPD), Det. Ramos (NYPD), P.O. Cordero (NYPD), Shari Hall (KRVC), Brendan Fitzpatrick (Assemblyman Dinowitz), Michael Hinman (Riverdale Press), Joshua Stephenson (Councilman Cohen), Keith Kalb (DOT), Matt Arancio (DOT), Darisa Alcantara (DOT), Lopez (DOT), Patrick Kennedy (DOT), Robert Press (Bronx Chronicle), Kathryn Broihier (Kingsbridge BID), J. Sproull (Kingsbridge BID)

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Committee Chair Dan Padernacht called the meeting to order at 7:50 p.m.

Chair Padernacht thanked Downey's Bar and Grill for their hospitality in hosting the meeting.

The meeting focused on the New York City Department of Transportation ("NYCDOT") presentation of its May 2017 plan for Broadway Corridor. The plan was posted online for the public to view. Plan remains unchanged. Construction of this project is set to begin April 2018.

Representatives of the DOT, political leaders and NYPD were introduced. Members of Community Board 8 not on the T&T Committee were introduced.

Nivardo Lopez, Bronx Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation introduced the presentation. He spoke of the resolution passed by Bronx Community Board No. 8 that rejected the plan as a whole but approved some items and requested studies on others.

Patrick Kennedy of the NYC DOT Bicycle Unit gave the presentation and said it will be online the next day. The time frame for the project construction is April 2018 through September 2018.

Members of T&T Committee asked questions and commented on pedestrian, biking and driving issues in the proposed project area. Sylvia Alexander outlined several situations regarding bikers not obeying traffic laws. These include bikers going the wrong way, riding on the sidewalks, going through red lights. Commissioner Lopez said they are working with NYPD to address dangerous situations by bikers, drivers, and pedestrians

Laura Spalter asked for a study on the effects of the new traffic lights. Commissioner Lopez stated that traffic lights don't make people drive more slowly, but he said they will study the traffic signals and have results early next year. The assertion by Commissioner Lopez that traffic lights do not slow traffic was contradicted by several individuals at the meeting.

Commissioner Lopez stated that they are not removing existing travel lanes, but Ms. Spalter stated that they are de facto removing traffic lanes because they are adding to the sidewalk (bus island) to pick up passengers. This will result in buses stopping in the lane of traffic to pick up and drop off passengers.

Dan Padernacht, T&T Committee Chair asked how bike-on-pedestrian accidents are reported and if DOT has evaluated the number of bike-on-pedestrian accidents. Commissioner Lopez said there's not that much data. In other places where bike paths were installed they have not seen jump in accidents. Commissioner Padernacht followed up by asking if we see there are issues with the bike lane, at

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what point does DOT say changes are needed. Commissioner Lopez stated they are constant communication with community.

The 242nd part of the plan included the construction of a bus island. The question was raised as to evaluating the effects after it is installed. Commissioner Lopez stated that he is open to evaluating and moving the island if there are issues.

In response to the insistence that traffic lights do not cause cars to slow down, Rob Spalter brought up the fact that on the Grand Concourse the traffic lights are timed so that vehicles traveling at approximately 28 mph would not encounter a red light and does indeed result in slowing down vehicles.

Bob Bender asked about the buses along VCP dropping off and picking up kids. There is a concern that the large number of youngsters crossing the bike lanes would create a potential for conflict and asked how that will be controlled. The response was that DOT has been working with the precinct on that issue. Buses are not laying over along the park. They will continue working with the Parks Department and NYPD to increase safety.

Paul Ellis stated that at the presentation last year there were many comments and questions. Commissioner Ellis asked if they are going to consider those comments and make changes based on input from community. Commissioner Lopez stated that they felt any changes from the proposed plan would make it less safe for motorists, pedestrians, bikers, and buses.

Rosemary Ginty stated that she is disturbed and insulted on behalf of the community that after 7 hours of public testimony, the DOT came back with no changes to its plan for Broadway Corridor. Ms. Ginty stated that she has never seen anything so dismissive of the wishes and needs of a community. R. Ginty stated that West 242nd deserves far more attention than is shown in the presentation.

When asked how the work will affect traffic, Commissioner Lopez stated that a lot of the work involves markings and applying paint to the roadway, beginning in early spring. Parts of the project involve pouring concrete, so the disruption will be significant but for a short time period.

When asked how double parking be addressed, Commissioner Lopez stated that the design of the roadway is such to discourage double parking.

NYPD Deputy Inspector O'Toole, Commanding Officer of the 50th Precinct, said he is working to improve traffic conditions on Broadway. The 50th Precinct is aware that speeding, double-parking and buses are a problem. They took care of the buses by designating a layover site and now they will deal with the double parking.

There was a suggestion that signage should be used to warn bikers and athletes getting on and off busses.

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Allen Dillon of Parkview Sports stated that there was no communication with the businesses on West 242nd Street since May 2017. He stated that no one is behind this plan besides Council Member Cohen and the DOT.

Chair Padernacht asked Commissioner Lopez if DOT had spoken to the businesses since last year. The answer was no.

Chair Padernacht asked whether DOT is prepared to make changes if the plan actually increases traffic. Chair Padernacht wanted to know whether DOT was prepared to act quickly if the plan did not bring the anticipated results.

Commissioner Lopez stated that DOT will watch results over a year. If necessary, changes can be made to the plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Submitted by Vice-Chair Myra Joyce.