BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 21, 2012, AT THE OFFICE OF BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8

AFFILIATION Committee Chair Committee Vice Chair CB8 CB8 CB8 CB8 CB8 Commanding Officer of the 50th Police Precinct rep. Councilman Koppell rep. Assemblyman Dinowitz CB8 committee member NYCTA NYCTA NYCTA NYCTA NYCTA
Riverdale Review

Chairman Dan Padernacht called the meeting to order at 7:32pm.

The Chair introduced Ms. Jackie Carter of the New York City Transit Authority Community Relations Department to discuss bus headway and how it effects bus service. Ms. Carter was joined by Ms. Sara Wiss, Mr. Lewis Thorwaldso, and Mr. A. Soto of the New York City Transit Authority (NYCTA).

Headway is the number of minutes between buses arriving at a scheduled stop. A headway of 10 means that a bus will arrive every 10 minutes. Ms. Carter stated that the headway on the BX7 bus during the PM rush hour (4-7PM) will go from an 8 to a 6, meaning that instead of every 8 minutes a bus is scheduled to arrive it will be every 6 minutes, thus increasing the number of buses on the BX7 route during the PM rush hour.

Chairman Padernacht stated that the wait for the BX7 at West 231st Street and Broadway can be up to 20 minutes during the PM rush and then two or three buses arrive within a few minutes of each other. The Chair inquired as to why this happens. Supervisor Soto said that delays can occur in one of many ways and gave a few examples: trucks stuck under the elevated tracks, special events, and problems on the West 225th Street bridge. The Chair asked about a plan that had been previously mentioned which called for using buses from other routes, such as extending the BX1 to pick up for the BX7 during PM Rush to compensate for the problems causing the increased headway of the BX7. The NYCTA representatives stated that no such plan had been approved. Ms. Carter added that the BX 20 bus runs rush hours and that there is no plan to eliminate that route. The NYCTA representatives stated that the Bronx will soon be introduced to the "Real Time" program. This program allows a rider to use their smart phone to find out how many minutes away their bus is from their bus stop. This would allow an individual to remain in their home or office until the bus was close.

Community Board 8 (CB8) member Michael Heller stated that bus routes have changed over the years and asked if there is a procedure to look at updating them. Ms. Carter said that costs were a key factor in the changing of many routes.

The Chair asked that the Community Board be notified of any future bus changes and Ms. Carter stated that notices go out about two weeks before any changes occur to Community Board offices. She added that the MTA is printing less schedules, and now has more schedules available online.

Chairman Padernacht announced upgrades at the West 225th Street, West 238th Street, and West 242nd Street #1 Elevated Subway stations. At West 225th Street, the northbound side is to be closed from April 2 to May 7 with northbound trains skipping the station.

A community resident stated that an elevator was out of service at the West 231st Street station of the #1 Elevated Subway line. Ms. Carter said that she would look into the matter.

The next guest of the committee was Captain Kevin Burke, Commanding Officer of the 50th Police Precinct. Captain Burke appeared at the meeting to speak about the intersection of Independence Avenue and West 235th Street. Some community residents have raised the issue of the safety at the intersection. The Captain stated that, since September 2011, there were only three reported accidents near the intersection. Two of the accidents were minor motor vehicle accidents. The other accident was a woman who was crossing mid-block by what appears to have been a preoccupied driver. The Captain said that he will station an officer in the area for the AM arrival/rush hour. Vice Chair Robert Press remarked that he believed the problem is that when the DOT changed the manner of parking on the street from parallel to angled, it created a semi-blind corner at Independence and West 235th Street. Captain Burke said that there may be somewhat of a semi-blind corner there.

The next topic of the Committee was the Slow Zone for the area encompassing West 232nd Street to West 246th Street. Dan Johnson, Staff Member for Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, stated that the Assemblyman is in communication with the Bronx DOT Commissioner on the issue.

A discussion of the Safe Route to Transit plans on Broadway at West 231st Street, 238th Street and West 242nd Streets. The Chair remarked that the plans submitted by DOT for the Safe Route plan for the intersections of West 231st Street and Broadway, as well as West 238th Street and Broadway, was supported by the Committee last year. New York City Council Member Oliver Koppell opposed the initial plan submitted for the intersection of West 242nd Street and Broadway. In response to the Councilman' concerns, DOT revised its plan and submitted to the Committee and the Councilman's office for review. Andrew Sandler, Staff Member for Council Member Koppell, stated that the Councilman is opposed to the revised plans as he believes the extension of the sidewalk would inhibit traffic at the intersection. Chairman Padernacht asked the committee to review the revised plans and if possible, visit the site. The Chair stated that the discussion will be tabled for a future meeting. New Business: Ms. Vivian Dejesus, a board member of the Cannon Heights building, located at 3400 Fort Independence Avenue, said that there was no light or stop sign on Fort Independence Avenue from West 238th Street to Heath Avenue which does not give pedestrians a safe place to cross the street. Ms. Dejesus requested that a traffic device be placed at the intersection of Fort Independence Avenue and Bailey Place. Chairman Padernacht will send a letter to DOT on the issue.

The January minutes were approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:19 PM.

Dan Padernacht Chairman Traffic & Transportation Committee