

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AT THE BOARD OFFICE
SEPTEMBER 17, 2013**

PRESENT

Daniel Padernacht
Robert Press
Sylvia Alexander
Bob Bender
Tony Creaney
Margaret Donato
Anthony Fella
Maria Khury
Karen Pesce
Georgia Santiago
I.W. Stone
Daniel Johnson
Andrew Sandler

AFFILIATION

CB8, Committee Chair
CB8, Committee Vice Chair
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rep. Assemblyman Dinowitz
rep. Councilman Koppell

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 PM by Chairman Dan Padernacht. A quorum was present.

Item 1 – A request for a stop sign & crosswalk at West 259th Street & Netherland Avenue at the bottom of the W.259th Street hill by the SAR High School. The Chair advised that a request was previously submitted to DOT to investigate this intersection but no action was deemed necessary by DOT in November 2011. A new request for the same intersection can be resubmitted after 18 months and this amount of time has passed since the original request. As further background, in October 2012, prior to the 18 month period expiration, this committee passed a resolution seeking a stop sign and crosswalk at the intersection. The committee was not seeking a study of the intersection but direct action. In December 2012, DOT responded that they would not take action because the intersection was investigated within the last 18 months. The Chair placed the item on the agenda for this calendar seeking a resolution for a crosswalk and stop sign at the intersection.

The principal of the SAR School could not understand why this request was denied, unless the survey was done when students were not in school. Students cross West 259th Street to patronize the local merchants, and asked that a crosswalk be placed to increase the safety of the students. One student who appeared at the meeting stated that the cars come down the hill and it is very dangerous due to the curves and parked cars on the hill. Dan Johnson, from the office of Assemblyman Dinowitz, stated that a 12 week survey is done by DOT, and it is done on both peak and off peak hours. He suggested to request the survey be done at high volume hours AM arrival, lunch time, and dismissal.

A request for crosswalk and stop sign at West 259th Street & Netherland Avenue with specific times to survey was put to a vote of the committee. The results of the vote was 12 in favor – 0 against – 0 abstentions. Committee members S. Alexander, B. Bender, A. Creaney, M. Donato,

A. Fella, M. Khury, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, R. Press, J. Rather, G. Santiago, and H. Young voting in favor.

Item 2 - Riverdale Jewish Heritage Fair March 30, 2014 to be held on Johnson Avenue between West 235th and W.236th Streets 10am – 6pm in which Johnson Avenue will be closed. This event has been held in the past but was not held last year. Outside service vendors are expected but not known if there will be a charge to them. There will be about 20 volunteers on hand. The vote was 12 in favor – 0 against – 0 abstentions. Committee members S. Alexander, B. Bender, A. Creaney, M. Donato, A. Fella, M. Khury, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, R. Press, J. Rather, G. Santiago, and H. Young voting in favor.

Item 3 – The T & T request for no parking signs on Independence Avenue between West 246th and West 247th Streets has come back from DOT with a recommendation of “No Standing” signs be installed rather than “No Parking” as requested by the committee. The chair wanted to hear community input on the stricter recommendation by DOT. Residents spoke of an ambulance and fire truck trying to pass each other on the street. The recommendation was sent to one homeowner who passed it to the others on the block, and residents are in favor of the DOT recommendation. Discussion on the letter led to a vote of 12 in favor – 0 – against – 0 abstentions. Committee members S. Alexander, B. Bender, A. Creaney, M. Donato, A. Fella, M. Khury, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, R. Press, J. Rather, G. Santiago, and H. Young voting in favor.

Item 4 - Menorah Lighting Ceremony event. One lane of Northbound traffic on Riverdale Avenue is closed by the West 239th Street intersection for the set up and between 4pm and 5pm the small stretch is closed as up to 200 people gather to see the giant menorah lighting. There are at least 6 police officers that direct traffic around the event and provide security. The vote was 12 in favor – 0 against – 0 abstentions. Committee members S. Alexander, B. Bender, A. Creaney, M. Donato, A. Fella, M. Khury, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, R. Press, J. Rather, G. Santiago, and H. Young voting in favor.

New Business – The safety of the small stretch of street on West 253rd Street between Fieldston and Post Roads, which abuts the football field of Riverdale County School, was discussed by the committee. A community resident raised the issue and wondered about the possibility of it becoming a one way rather than two way street. Questions arose if the street was public or private, whether school buses use the road and which direction, what DOT looks at when deciding such request and which direction to make it one way. Chair is to have the CB office send out a letter to the school on the usage of the road and inquire from DOT if it is a private street.

Community residents raised the issue of Bailey Place between Fort Independence Street and West 234th Street. One resident stated that cars speed up and down the hill. Residents request that two speed bumps be placed on the street. Discussion of the location ensued and the Chair stated that DOT does not like to place speed bumps on hills. The Chair stated that he remembered a traffic calming measure being requested on Fort Independence and Bailey Avenue but was denied by DOT. Dan Johnson stated that Assemblyman Dinowitz requested stop signs and was denied. T&T Chair Padernacht wanted to see if 18 months had passed since last request to put in a new request. Discussion continued as the street is under construction with Andrew Sandler of Councilman Koppell's office saying that new curbs and sidewalks which will be installed with the impending Green Street will make the street slower. The Chair added that if cars are traveling above the 30 MPH speed limit it becomes a matter of enforcement by the police department. The vote for a new request for traffic calming measures

was 12 in favor – 0 against – 0 abstentions. Committee members S. Alexander, B. Bender, A. Creaney, M. Donato, A. Fella, M. Khury, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, R. Press, J. Rather, G. Santiago, and H. Young voting in favor. The Chair stated that the resolution will be placed on hold until the completion of the green street.

Manhattan College Construction- The No Commercial Traffic and certain Stop signs are missing from several locations on West 238th Street, Tibbett & Irwin Avenues and the chair will ask DOT to investigate.

Gutter work was redone on West 254th Street from Palisades Avenue down to the MTA station with a white line painted by the edge and it is unclear where cars should park as there is no signage.

A community resident raised traffic issues on Fieldston Road by Riverdale Country School. There were complaints of triple parking on the northbound lane by school vehicles, cars blocking driveways, buses from RCS not yielding when leaving the school campus one after another. Vice Chair Press mentioned that DOT surveyed Fieldston Road near RCS. DOT found that 96% of all drivers were going over the speed limit of 30 MPH, and DOT placed two speed bumps each way on Fieldston Road.

There was a compliment of DOT for the new crosswalks at Greystone and Riverdale Avenues.

There was a question of the SAR Lower School parking lot expansion done last year as committee member Bender said that on West 254th Street south by Sycamore Avenue it appears to be that more cars parked on the street than before. There was also a question of the possibility of sidewalks on West 254th Street in the area of the school. The Chair stated that we are still waiting for a response from DOT on the traffic measures put forward by the committee last year.

The request of Hatzolah volunteers to investigate new parking regulations was answered by the Chair. He said that as part of the new slow zone in the area, the signs on West 239th Street were changed from No Parking to No Standing. Bronx DOT Commissioner Moran is checking to see if the signs can be changed back to No Parking.

Bob Bender stated that there are No Parking restrictions on Broadway northbound at the end of the Parade Ground by West 252th Street which were restricted for construction that has ended. Chair will ask DOT for removal of the restrictions.

A question was raised about traffic concerns on Broadway from West 242nd Street to West 254th Street. The Chair stated that there have been fatalities on that corridor and that the committee has previously submitted requests for traffic calming measures.

To committee member M. Donato's request for a traffic study of the new mall on West 238th Street causing traffic delays currently on Kingsbridge Avenue, committee member B. Bender answered that if a study is done now the community would have to wait for 18 months to have another study done once the new mall opens. Ms. Donato then said that the committee should be assertive in this area to work with the community and developer. The chair said that a scheduled joint meeting with the Economic Development committee was canceled, but the T&T committee went on with a scheduled meeting with the community and developer in June 2013 and that the matter is still an open item in the committee.

The June 18th minutes were approved as written.

Questions about the North Riverdale Slow Zone proposal by Councilman Koppell were answered by Andrew Sandler of Councilman Koppell's office. He said that the area is 5 blocks by 5 blocks and starts at Palisades on the south and Riverdale Avenue on the north. He added that the slow zone cannot go across Riverdale Avenue due to Riverdale Avenue being a major commercial traffic route, thus PS 81 a sponsor of this slow zone would not be included in it. The committee members were polled to see if this would change their votes on the proposed Koppell North Riverdale Slow Zone. Committee member K. Pesce abstained and all other members said that this would not have changed their vote.

Committee member A. Fella suggested that a slow zone be proposed for the other side of Riverdale Avenue since PS 81 was not included in the Koppell Slow Zone.

The July 23rd minutes were approved with 11 in favor S. Alexander, B. Bender, A. Creaney, M. Donato, A. Fella, M. Khury, D. Padernacht, R. Press, J. Rather, G. Santiago, and H. Young – 0 against – 1 abstention K. Pesce.

The meeting adjourned at 9:49 PM.

Minutes taken by Robert Press
Vice-Chair, Traffic & Transportation Committee