

**CB12Traffic and Transportation Committee Meeting
February 3, 2020 at 7:00 PM**

Committee Members Present –Chair, Debby Nabavian; Assistant Chair, Omar Tejada; Mary Anderson, James Berlin, Robin Cruz, Gerard Dengel, Danielle Jettoo, Edith Prentiss.

Community Board Members: Richard Allman, Ayishe Oglivie

Public – Howie Levine MTA NYCT; Natalie Espino, MBP; Lyle Blackwood DoT; Felix Arias, Marcel Dejean, Paul Hintersteiner, Michael Hano, Ryan Desso

1) Meeting called to order 7:02 pm.

2) Welcome by Chair, Debby Nabavian.

- Howie Levine, MTA, update on first AM commute of 191st elevator closure: had staff members on site guiding the public with the changes. Morning went OK, with some usage of wildcat buses. Premature to say how the PM commute has gone.
- DN / encourages public to provide feedback.

3) Port Authority NY&NJ Update - Restoring the George Washington Bridge. Verónica Smith:

- 10 year capital construction project for 11 different projects; info in multiple languages as well at: www.panynj.gov/RestoringTheGeorge; projects include 2018-2025 rehabilitation of 178th/179th ramp construction and pedestrian / cycling paths
- 2022 expected opening of the north side to pedestrians and cyclists.
- Trans Manhattan Expressway (TME) median barrier rehabilitation project will include structural repairs to numerous bridges which cross over the TME between 178th and 179th (Amsterdam, Audubon, St Nicholas etc.). Project will take about five years. PA will be coming back frequently to keep CB12 and public informed.
- Cashless tolling coming to GWB in mid to late 2021, has rolled out at PIP toll plaza.
- Questions
 - i) EP: dangerous situation at W. 178th street facing the Blink building. PA: partnering with DOT to have this issue addressed. They are also trying to address the ped ramps.
 - ii) DN: Each TME overpass will be done sequentially? PA / two at a time but not adjacent ones. Q / How long will the closure be for each one? PA hasn't finalized.
 - iii) DN / On the PIP helix, was a lane really eliminated? PA / Yes. Bc moving merge further back so cars already mostly merged by that point.
 - iv) DJ / Question on a suicide a few months ago. PA / Can't control people getting to where they shouldn't be, but endeavor to slow people down to give law enforcement time to help. Reviewing how this occurred to prevent similar access in future.
 - v) RA - asked about suspender rope projects. PA / when it opens there will be the new fence which thus far has been successful in preventing jumps from the bridge.
 - vi) AO / How roll out of toll less is presented to the public. PA said they do extensive outreach and provide numerous visual cues on the road to inform you. Those without EZPass get a couple of 30-day alerts to pay toll.
 - vii) FA / why is lane setup for the toll configured this way with fewer toll lanes. PA said they wanted to keep three lanes to reduce the number of mergers.
 - viii) RD / it's an unfinished design and could construct parking garage on Haven isn't being thought of. Port said they don't own that.
 - ix) MH / cashless tolling speed will be greater. The large bottleneck is the tolls. The amount of flow should increase correct. PA / traffic should increase; plazas will be increased to mitigate any impacts to safety. Tolls not removed until 2021-2022.

4) MTA presentation on Sewer Project (at 207th Street Subway Yard), Howard Levine:

- During hurricane Sandy, a storm surge led to sewer system under subway yard overflow and water entered subway tunnel where trains enter on south end of year. MTA is trying to address this problem. MTA is building a flood wall to protect the train yard which will require them to move the DEP sewer regulators out of the train yard as well as shift the interceptor sewer out to 10th Avenue. MTA plans to utilize “micro tunneling” which requires digging every 300 feet, which is less disruptive to the neighborhood.
- Maintenance and construction schedule: Duration 50 months on 10th Avenue and certain side streets between W. 211th and W. 215th. One lane must be open on 10th Ave, plus open to pedestrian traffic always, preserve ADA accessibility. Phase A: 8 months. Phase B: 12 months, Phase C: 5 months. This is when the regulator work shifting from the yard to outside the yard, and micro tunneling begins, so it is the more challenging aspect of project. Will impact parking as parking lanes will be used. W. 212th & W. 215th work from phase B continues as well. Phase D: 13 months. Phase E: 3 months, micro tunneling is completed. Work on 215th street will continue through all phases. MTA will have sensors during micro tunneling to ensure vibrations and noise measured.
- Questions
 - i) JB / ponder making the sewers larger due to increased possible rain. MTA said they are planning due to possible future developments.
 - ii) DN / how noisy will it get since vibration was spoken about. MTA said contractor has to comply with city law during construction. 7 am - 10 pm per city DOT. Inside the yard can be 24 hours but expecting to wrap up by 8pm.
 - iii) BR / asked about drilling into rock? MTA most drilling is sand based so noise shouldn't be as loud. The generator will be the loudest aspect of the drilling. No anticipated use during night hours.
 - iv) OT / asked MTA to bring back the parking impacts to the neighborhood so we can study visually what will happen. Especially throughout the phases which overlap as this area is already heavily trafficked. MTA agreed to bring back the impact study on parking.
 - v) Marcel asked why was this projected needed and the impact to the parking garage there? MTA mentioned it would improve the sewer drainage of the area and protect the subway during storms. The garage will not be impacted.

5) CUMC Update on Haven Plaza, Sandra Harris:

- Plaza coordinator is now open once again.
- Traffic monitoring in partnership with DOT update will be provided.
- Committee has five members so far. Should be about 8 -- 12. First meeting was expected to occur in January and continue to be monthly. A call for board members was sent. A rep from the Armory, PAL, two parent coordinators from nearby schools. Awaiting more members.
- Columbia is monitoring traffic and all of their deliveries to help mitigate traffic issues. Especially with ongoing DDC work. DOT wants to wait on the DDC work to be completed before doing a traffic review. DDC anticipates May 2020 completion.
- All 17 free parking spaces are being used. 100 reduced rate spots, but no one has completed the process (of 12 inquiries). The barrier has been the 7AM time to exit the spot. Trying to work with cab drivers. SH mentioned that they are providing flyers. They will ask the board for help.
- Committee
 - i) Daniel questioned the amount of parking applicants and asked if they advertised on the link NYC and other public messaging avenues. Has Mailman been leveraged as well? A / SH: they have leveraged the University in conjunction with the running of the plaza and they have tried public outreach for the parking applications. Important to hear public feedback on the parking.
 - ii) GD / has Columbia considered reaching out to the city for traffic agents to write tickets for violations? Sandra said they have started conversations with NYPD to attain traffic agents. The challenge has been getting the towing of vehicles.
 - iii) EP / dividing columns in the plaza are being used by pedestrians to sit on and causing them to be blocked. The walk signs seem to be off on in the plaza.

- iv) Jim said any calls he took were legal and he also had conversations with MH.
- Other board members
 - i) AO / spoke on this committee's history with this project and the impact to the community. The truck traffic continues to keep a problem for the neighborhood. This wasn't on January agenda. 700 people list against the plaza have not been contacted. SH / the resolution requested the committee be created and she visited the committee in September, October and November. SH / agreed to collect names from Chair who asked AO to forward them. Sandra also noted that she was not aware of being on the January meeting.
 - ii) CB12 Chair Eli Bueno reminded people that this is not the space to call people words but to continue to have a decent conversation with everyone involved.
- Public comments
 - i) MH / SH has not sent him info on the committee and he has expressed interest in this since inception. Enforcement is not the issue here. This plaza was not supposed to be built until the DDC project was completed per the resolution. Continued by noting public comments were limited at prior meetings, and is bothered the committee members changed their votes, and that traffic study was not shared. Asked if anyone on the committee had been lobbied.
 - ii) Ryan said the link NYC towers are spotty and we are the last neighborhood to get these towers, should be installed in the plaza.

6) Request for School Employee Zone On Amsterdam

- Félix Arias from DWDC early childhood center -A moved bus stop on 175th street to 176th street created an extra-long bus stop, and removed even more parking in front of school. DOE advised FA that he would need to go to CB12M. DOT Lyle said this is a DOT no longer does DoE employee parking zones, and only schools with grandfathered spots still has, so not sure why DOE advised this. DoT said that they should talk directly to see what can be done.

7) Old Business

- Resolution Regarding DOT Street Improvements on St Nicholas Ave ,165th - 170th St. – based on presentation in October 2019. DoT needs reso to schedule work.
 - i) Committee voted 9-0-0, Other members 2-0-0, Public 1-0-0
- EP / Buses park in M4 bus stop in front of Armory, which blocks access to bus boarding / disembarkation. This is urgent situation during winter track season.
 - i) JB / we used to meet with the Armory, CUMC and the NYPD to coordinate this with offsite bus parking.
 - ii) DN to follow up with Ebenezer on next steps.
- DJ / wants update from DOT on her lighting request on Harlem River Drive.
 - i) JB / reinforced GD comment that there are electrical issues. We need to ask DoT about this.

8) New Business

- Citi bike expansion: Lyle DOT mentioned the board was given ample notice about Jan 30, 2020 public meeting with multiple communications. 15 people were in attendance. No other public meetings scheduled. However further scope meetings for where the docks will be located will occur.
 - i) OT / Disappointing to hear that the DOT Citi bike public meeting was never communicated via CB12 because another event had been sent out for the same day. We shouldn't discount multiple public meetings occurring on the same day as they each have different audiences. This is a problem that should be fixed.
 - ii) AO / mentioned that she has tried to work on equity in communications. Also, should not be over ticketing the community and we should not believe that toll-less system will help all as not all have credit cards.

9) Meeting adjourned at 9:35PM.