



Committee Members Present –Edgar Roman (Interim Chair), Mary Anderson, James Berlin, Robin Cruz, Gerard Dengel, Bianca Guerrero, Bruce Robinson, Danielle Jettoo, Omar Tejada

CB12 Members: Richard Lewis (Chair), Richard Allman

Public: Howard Levine, Michael Hano

Opening Remarks - Edgar Roman, Interim Chair

Call to Order

- Meeting called at 7:05 pm by Edgar Roman
- Introductions
- Edgar is interim chair for this month. A new chair and assistant chair will be announced in the next meeting by CB12 Chair.

Old Business

- **Paul:** Bx7 & M3 southbound buses are stopping in front of 163rd Starbucks on the west side, north side of Broadway— need to go two stops up or two blocks down
 - a) **Jim:** It is needed for construction
 - b) **Mary:** Is it really needed for the construction site? Right now it looks like it's just used for construction workers parking. Her concern is access to the hospital for the disabled community.
- Bus stop on south side, going south bound in front of the old baby's hospital is terrible because of double parking
- **Howard Levine, MTA representative:** Contractors parking in that space, they have directed them that that is not acceptable. If it happens, Ebenezer should reach out to Howard. The reason the space is needed is part of DOT-approved plans of traffic flow.
 - a) **Mary:** Could the bus stop be moved back towards Coogan's
 - b) **Howard:** MTA does not like getting rid of bus stops. He will bring it back to DOT to see if there is something they can do.
- **Michael:** The west side of Broadway north of 168th from Coogan's down to the corner (currently blocked off with cones).
 - a) **Howard, MTA:** Not going to be a staging area — Howard will let us know if it will be in the future. If there are modifications, he will let us know. There are no plans for another staging area.

Amsterdam Plaza Proposal/Yeshiva University- John Greenfield, Director of Gov't Relations & Randy Applebaum, Head of Facilities

- 34K pedestrian plaza along eastern sidewalk of Amsterdam Avenue
- There's a former lane of traffic that has been closed to traffic since the 1980s (potentially longer) and the adjacent sidewalk
- They are not taking parking spaces or any traffic spaces
- Mirror the 186th street plaza
- Identified 2 project sections:
 - Orange space is the existing street closure (17K sq. ft.)

- Con Ed. is doing substantial underground work
- Blue section: current closure
- Estimated cost: \$4.47
- Amenities: what they have in place at 185th St.
 - Plant beds, benches, furniture (built in and loose), lamppost, umbrellas, trash cans, decorative concrete paving
- Purpose/rationale:
 - Provide a public communal space
 - Other plaza has a good track record
 - Well-maintained (185th has maintenance agreement required by DOT) - Randy has full maintenance team
 - Compliments planned improvements to nearby park space (Highbridge, Quisqueya) and would like to be part of that process
 - Underutilized space
- Security staff is on site at all times
- Benefit of having public space is that can you can come together in times of good and bad (ex after Pittsburgh attack)
- Spoke to Parks & Cultural Affairs committee, would like to take this to the full board presentation
- **They would like a resolution in support.**
- **Jim:** This committee alone will produce the resolution
- **Bruce:** How to finance this?
 - Talking to CM Rodriguez and Borough President Gale about City capital allocations
 - Benefit of being a public space — have university money and alumni donations. They are “good for it”
 - 185th plaza was CM Ydanis capital funds and City project (DOT Plaza Project). DOT would be last dollar in for these projects.
- **Danielle:** Does it include signage that shows is public and not Yeshiva-specific area? She wants to make sure residents feel comfortable using the space.
 - Yeshiva can look into sign options. Need to confirm.
 - Anecdotal, the other plaza is used by as local community members and student members.
 - Benches: Robin used to go study there.
 - In grassy areas, public would use that as well even though its Yeshiva property.
- **Gerard:** How does this occur between the city & the university?
 - If it is mapped streets space and pedestrian right of way, DOT still owns it. Yeshiva agrees to maintain it
- **Jim:** This Board doesn't think much of de-mapping (?). He echoes Danielle's notes about public space
- **Richard A.:** This is a positive proposal. Has 185th Street and new plaza been open to community-sponsored, community-initiative space? Are you looking toward any active programming in the space?

- They hosted P&C Committee meeting at the plaza
- There are classrooms on either side of the plaza — having loud events/programming during the day (in evening or summer) will depend on timing. CM Rodriguez has proposed
- **Edith Prentice:** Problem with 185th and other plaza — only really good access is from the end streets. They need more ped ramps. If you're on the side walk and want to go to the street, you have to go to the end of the street (to the cross walk, where there is a ped ramp). There are not enough cross walks across Amsterdam.
 - Blue & orange would be a contiguous space, same plane.
 - There is curb on the east side. There are block cement and jersey barriers. Whatever form this takes, there will have to be anti-car and anti-collision infrastructure. There are breaches that is about 3-4 feet at grade.
- **Michael:** Have they done public outreach or public information workshops. DOT plaza program requires a community board. If it becomes a plaza we should adhere to DOT promulgates rules.
 - In the immediate vicinity is a lot of campus buildings. Most of the outreach is through the Community Board. He did call the Superintendent Manny Rivera.
- **Next steps:**

Rapidly Responding to Extreme Traffic Congestions at Known potential Hot Spots - Jim Berlin

- Wanted to take M4 down to 116th Street since 168th St. station is out.
- Some examples:
 - Took the M4 25 mins to get from 170 to 165th St. Intersections were gridlocked. Would not have been easy for the ambulance to get through to the hospital.
 - When the parents bring their kids to the Success Academy on northern Ft. Washington Avenue.
- Any time there's a problem w the west-bound, upper-level of GWB, all the traffic of our neighborhood gets blocked because 179th freezes up.
- There should be structure (managed by NYPD or DOT) they get to the gridlock very quickly and they will make the traffic move. It will not disperse by itself.
- If the hospital creates the gridlock from time to time, maybe hospital personnel should be deputized to keep it moving.
- Draconian rendition: the congestion by the hospital is due to cars going north trying to cross the southbound tracking. Only allow entering or exiting from the southbound lane.
- **Jim would like the Board to write a resolution or propose to the City that there should be an emergency gridlock force to manage traffic congestion.**
- It would be very difficult for ambulances to get above 179th because of all of the traffic. NYPD cops do not come out when the bridge is crazy because of poor relationships with NYC and the Port Authority
- **Bianca:** To take it further, we should consider pedestrianizing our streets and focusing on people, public transportation, and bicycles— transportation that is climate-friendly, accessible, and affordable.
- **Gerard:** Partition for the double yellow line

- **Omar:** Agree with Jim's proposal about deploying someone — a person is deployed very quickly at Chambers Street & Broadway, for example.
- **Richard A.:** With our role as a community board, we could do a bit more to strengthen it:
 - Take a month or so to take a list of hot spots.
 - There's additional info to be gathered from MTA (on issues with bus and other transit movement) and NYPD.
- **Michael:** 3-4 PM— kids are dropped off at the Armory & it gets very jammed up. He doesn't think it's because people turning into Milstein— it's the. There's a turning lane and there's a space for the cars to pull to the left. They eliminated the parking so cars should be able to move through. One thing may be contributing is the Vision Zero — if you make a right turn on to 165 and there's a pedestrian coming, the driver immediately gets a summons. People are obeying right of way.
- **Ousman:** A lot of these issues are interconnected - what the issues we can work on together right away.
 - Edward: We can present
- **Edith:** What role do the precincts have in these issues? (Lyle: DOT doesn't assign agents, that's NYPD.) She doesn't see drivers giving pedestrians right of way.
- **Jim:** We're a "city agency" — everything we do is advisory.
- **Ousman:** Does this community board deal with the 160s?
 - The CB covers all of Manhattan over the W. 155.

New Business

- **Bianca:** Can DOT present on congestion pricing? There were disagreements about how it works at the last general board meeting.
- **Lyle:** Can check if DOT has materials or a presentation on congestion pricing.
- **Robin:** Schools needs a speed bump?
 - Edward: Speed bumps are under the jurisdiction of DOT.
 - Lyle: Up near car wash, DOT rejected a proposal
- **Danielle:** CM Rodriguez and CM to see is if residential parking is a possibility for our city.
 - **Omar:** CM Rodriguez is working on a proposal. Maybe his office can give us information?
 - **Jim:** Let CMs do their work, Danielle should keep bugging them.
 - **Edgar:** Evelyn, Chief of Staff to CM Rodriguez gave Edward a name of who Danielle should follow up with.
- **Natalie:** On behalf of BP Brewer, thanks to all that have reapplied. It's due this Friday.
- **Edith:** A number of car washes, mechanics, garages, gas stations, etc. who on a regular basis obstruct sidewalks. This is an enforcement issue. The street asphalt, sidewalk, and ped ramps are being destroyed, which poses a problem for anyone using an e-chair or a stroller.

Adjournment called at 8:23 pm