

Tobi Bergman, *Chair*
Terri Cude, *First Vice Chair*
Susan Kent, *Second Vice Chair*
Bob Gormley, *District Manager*



Antony Wong, *Treasurer*
Keen Berger, *Secretary*
Susan Wittenberg, *Assistant Secretary*

COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE

NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

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June 23, 2015

Margaret Forgione
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 35th Floor
New York, NY 10038

Dear Manhattan Borough Commissioner Forgione:

At its Full Board meeting June 18, 2015, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution requesting traffic safety improvements at the intersection of Waverly Pl., Christopher and Grove Sts.

Whereas the area was posted, community groups notified and there were several community members present regarding this request. Presentations on the request were made by Matthew Selsky, James McDuffee and Maury Schott; and

Whereas Mr. Selsky made several suggestions to improve visibility at the intersection of the southeast leg of Waverly Pl. where it intersects Christopher St., with the primary issue being illegal parking in the existing No Standing Zone on the south side of Christopher. Mr. McDuffee, a nearby resident and also a partner in Joseph Leonard and Jeffrey's Grocery, restaurants both immediately adjacent to these intersections, described several recent incidents at the intersections that resulted in injuries to pedestrians or cyclists. He said the primary reasons appear to be confusion of some drivers, lack of visibility because of vehicles using the No Standing Zones on either side of the east leg of Waverly Pl., especially problematic on the south side of Grove St., drivers going the wrong way on Waverly Pl. north of Christopher St., and pedestrians crossing Christopher and/or Grove St. in multiple paths; and

Whereas Mr. Schott showed a video of just 2 minutes of the complicated intersection and the equally complicated 'dance' of how drivers and pedestrians use (and abuse) it, all contributing to a dangerous street environment; and

Whereas based on his studying the flow of traffic, Mr. Schott observed that many suggested solutions were not advisable/achievable, e.g., the direction of traffic on Christopher cannot be switched as the street is a major east to west thoroughfare as well as a route for the M8 bus; the NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) cannot install crosswalks across Christopher or Grove without stop controls; DOT previously had determined that traffic here does not justify a traffic signal; and DOT cannot install speed humps along a bus route; and

Whereas rather than try to overly control the pedestrian flow, Mr. Schott suggested ‘soft’ design changes meant to better guarantee visibility for drivers entering Christopher or Grove from both legs of Waverly Pl. and to narrow crossing distances in and around the “Y” split of Christopher and Grove Sts; and

Whereas while Colleen Chattergoon from DOT stated that violation of the No Standing Zones was an enforcement issue, and Community Board 2, Manhattan (CB2) will make an effort with the 6th Precinct to improve that, traffic agents cannot police this one area at all times. Self-enforcing measures like the narrowed street width will not only preclude such standing/parking but, more importantly, will narrow the traffic lane which tends to slow drivers while reducing the time pedestrians are in harm’s way; and

Whereas Mr. McDuffee and Gabe Stulman, McDuffee’s partner in the two restaurants, indicated their willingness to commit the businesses to being the maintenance partners for any neckdowns, extended sidewalks and/or planters used in any daylighting and/or narrowing improvements to the intersection; and

Whereas given that the most northern block of Waverly Pl. bet. 7th Ave. S. and Charles St. is to be closed to traffic, it seems advisable to change the direction of traffic on Waverly north of Christopher St. (currently southbound) to northbound to match the direction of Waverly Pl. on the south side of Christopher St., thereby ‘normalizing’ traffic direction on the street while removing one of the entrances to this complex intersection and eliminating potential conflicts from motor vehicles that erroneously head north on the currently southbound Waverly stretch;

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 recommends the following improvements to the complex intersection of Waverly Pl. with Christopher and Grove Sts.:

- Install motorcycle/scooter parking only or a painted neckdown with flexible bollards and planters to daylight the southeast corner of the eastern leg of Waverly Pl.
- Convert the existing No Standing Anytime zone on the south side of Grove/Christopher between the two legs of Waverly Pl. to a painted sidewalk extension with epoxied gravel, delineated with bollards and planters.
- Replace one parking space on the southwest corner of the western leg of Waverly Pl. with a painted neckdown delineated with bollards and planters.
- Consider changing the direction of travel on the remaining two blocks of Waverly Pl. north of Christopher St. from southbound to northbound to remove one ‘entrance’ into this complex intersection.
- Add Stop sign and high-visibility crosswalks to Christopher St. at the intersection of the east leg of Waverly Pl.
- Improve the directional signage at the split of Waverly Pl. south of this intersection.

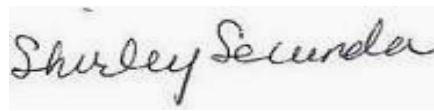
VOTE: Unanimous, with 40 Board Members in favor

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Tobi Bergman, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Shirley Secunda, Chair
Traffic & Transportation Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

TB/EM

c:

- Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
- Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
- Hon. Deborah Glick, State Assembly Member
- Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
- Hon. Corey Johnson, Council Member

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June 23, 2015

William J. Bratton
NYC Police Commissioner
NYC Police Department
1 Police Plaza
New York, NY 10007

Mr. Thomas M. Chan
Chief, Transportation Bureau
NYC Police Department
1 Police Plaza
New York NY 10007

Mr. Michael Pilecki
Commanding Officer
Traffic Enforcement District
NYC Police Department
136 West 36th St.
New York, NY 10018

Polly Trottenberg
Commissioner, NYC Dept. of Transportation
NYC Department of Transportation
55 Water St., 9th Floor
New York, NY 10041

Dear NYPD and Transportation Representatives:

At its Full Board meeting June 18, 2015, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in support of using Police scooters and motorcycles to enforce distracted driving laws.

Whereas distracted driving is a serious safety risk: According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 3,154 people were killed and 424,000 were injured nationwide in crashes involving a distracted driver in 2013. Additionally, ten percent of all fatal accidents involved a driver who was identified as distracted at the time of the crash. According to the CDC, in 2011, nearly one in five crashes (17%) in which someone was injured involved distracted driving; and

Whereas in New York City, driver distraction, including inattention from increased cell phone calling, texting and use of other electronic devices while driving, has become one of the major causes of auto collisions, injuries & fatalities (Transportation Alternatives, *Deadly Driving Unlimited*, 2012; *Streetsblog NYC*, 01/31/2014); and

Whereas there is ample evidence that distracted driving is as dangerous as drunk/impaired driving, and possibly more common (David L. Strayer, Frank A. Drews, and Dennis J. Crouch, "A Comparison of the Cell Phone Driver and the Drunk Driver," *Human Factors*, Summer 2006); and

Whereas despite current New York City Police Department (NYPD) tactics using stepped up enforcement and increased penalties, distracted driving continues to be a rampant problem in New York City:

- In 2014, within the 6th Precinct the Manhattan Traffic Task Force issued 120 summonses for phone & text use while driving. In this same area so far in 2015, 59 summonses have been issued.
- *This rate is unchanged from the previous year*, suggesting that distracted drivers have been undeterred by the efforts of lawmakers and law enforcement, thus far; and

Whereas a trial program started in 2013 by the Western Australian Police has had significant success catching distracted drivers. As reported in a letter from *Sergeant Simon Baxter* (Supervisor Motorcycle Patrol 3, Traffic Enforcement Group 2, State Traffic Operations, Western Australia Police), these successes have included the following:

- Incidence of mobile phone use is dropping dramatically.
- In an eight hour shift each motorcycle will stop 20 drivers for mobile phone use or visual display use.
- The program also catches seatbelt offenses, anti-social driving behavior, stop sign and red light offenses.
- \$250,000 (AUD) were generated in six weeks from infringements; and

Whereas the Western Australian Police program employs the following specific tactics:

- 50 motorcycles including six unmarked (undercover) motorcycle units.
- Motorcycle police equipped with small digital cameras, mounted on officers' helmets.
- Video evidence is used in court to back up officer's testimony
- Motorcycle is able to move easily through congested traffic, as demonstrated by video of numerous police stops which was published in December 2014.
- Because of the relatively high seating position of motorcycles, it is easy for the officer to see and film drivers using their phones while driving; and

Whereas the success of the tactics used by the Western Australian Police has been so great that in *three days* as many summonses are issued with only *one* motorcycle as have been issued by the entire Manhattan Traffic Task Force within the 6th Precinct in *six months*; and

Whereas Sergeant Baxter also reports that "*motorists have become more aware of motorcycle riders on the road,*" as a result of this program, and the NYC Department of Transportation has identified motorcyclists among the most vulnerable road users, along with bicyclists and pedestrians;

Therefore be it resolved that Community Board 2, Manhattan supports the use of police scooters and motorcycles to enforce distracted driving laws and requests that the NYPD review the Western Australia Police program and conduct a trial of using marked and unmarked police motorcycles as a platform for enforcing distracted driving and other traffic laws.

VOTE: Unanimous, with 40 Board Members in favor.

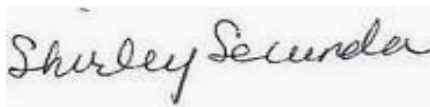
Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Tobi Bergman, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan

TB/EM



Shirley Secunda, Chair
Traffic & Transportation Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

c: Hon. Nydia Velasquez, Congresswoman

Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Carolyn Maloney, Congresswoman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
Hon. Daniel Squadron, NY State Senator
Hon. Deborah Glick, State Assembly Member
Hon. Sheldon Silver, Assembly Member
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member
Hon. Rosie Mendez, Council Member
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