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COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE
NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

www.cb2manhattan.org

P: 212-979-2272 F: 212-254-5102 E: info@cb2manhattan.org

Greenwich Village ∨ Little Italy ∨ SoHo ∨ NoHo ∨ Hudson Square ∨ Chinatown ∨ Gansevoort Market

June 20, 2014

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 19, 2014, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in support of installation of a traffic light or Stop signs on Washington Street at Morton Street and of daylighting the northwest corner of Washington Street at that intersection.

Whereas the intersection at Morton and Washington Sts. is one of the few that lacks traffic lights on the stretch of Washington St. from W. 12th to Leroy Sts., posing considerable danger to pedestrians, cyclists and motorists at this very busy intersection where drivers coming down Washington and turning in from Barrow St. surge at full speed past Morton heading to catch the next green light; and

Whereas there is parking on both sides of Washington St., with parking on the northwest side blocking the view of oncoming vehicular traffic for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike heading east on Morton. This forces both pedestrians and cyclists to venture far into Washington St. to determine if it's safe to cross, while motorists similarly must ease partly into the intersection to see if it's safe to continue driving, a situation that puts all of them at serious risk and one that neighbors report has resulted in several vehicular crashes; and

Whereas there are many older people crossing this area as well as children who frequent the schools there, and the student population will increase heavily with the new school opening at 75 Morton St. just a little more than a block away, all whose safe passage is threatened by current conditions; and

Whereas Morton St. has Belgian block cobblestones, preventing a crosswalk on the west side where it's needed (although there's a Stop sign there), but a pavement strip goes across the end of Morton on that side as it approaches Washington St.;

Therefore be it resolved that Community Board 2, Manhattan (CB2) supports the installation of a traffic light at the Washington/Morton Sts. intersection, and if that is not feasible, asks that Stop signs be installed on Washington at Morton; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 requests that the northwest corner of Washington St. at Morton St. be daylighted to increase visibility, and that this daylight zone be reserved for motorcycles and scooters, both to prevent trucks and other motor vehicles from parking there and obscuring the necessary sightlines and to provide much needed parking for these non-obstructing motorized two wheeled vehicles; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 asks for crosswalks on Washington St. at that intersection; and

Be it finally resolved that CB2 asks that a stop bar be painted on the pavement strip going across Morton St. on the west side to slow down motorists as they approach the intersection and protect crossing pedestrians.

Vote: Unanimous, with 38 Board Members in favor

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

Sincerely,



David Gruber, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



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

DG/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
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59 Maiden Lane, 35th Floor
New York, NY 10038

Carmen Bianco, President
MTA NYC Transit Authority
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Dear Manhattan Borough Commissioner Forgione:

At its Full Board meeting June 19, 2014, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution urging restoration of the M3 bus route service on University Place

Whereas in 1966, when 5th Ave. became one-way southbound, the M3 bus was shifted from its long-time northbound route on 5th Ave. to University Pl. where it went north from 9th St. to 14th St. turning east and then north on Park Ave. S. and Madison Ave. to head uptown, a move of only one block which maintained convenient access to the bus for all those in the mid-Greenwich Village area who used it to reach midtown and uptown toward the east; and

Whereas somewhat later, at the request of MTA NYC Transit (MTA NYCT), Community Board 2, Manhattan (CB2) voted to make University Pl. one-way northbound (up to then, it was 2-way), in order to facilitate the buses making the turn from 9th St. into University Pl., demonstrating that the M3's northerly route on that street was working as a conveniently accessible one that the community needed and was able to use (and used), because it was well-situated within reach for all users. The vote also demonstrated the community's faith in the preservation of that route and in MTA NYCT as a sympathetic partner; and

Whereas in 2010, the M3 bus route heading north on University Pl. was moved to 4th Ave. where the bus now begins its trip uptown at 4th Ave. and 9th St., an action that has caused great deprivation for all those who formerly caught the bus at University Pl., adding two very long extra blocks east to reach the M3 by foot and two equally long blocks west to reach 6th Ave. (the only other northbound alternative route for buses in that vicinity), a difficult if not impossible trudge for the many senior citizens, along with the disabled, who live in the area and a long, unnecessarily tiring way to go for everyone (especially in bad weather), including the many mothers and children who have depended upon the convenience of the University Pl.-based M3 route, as well as working people and tourists; and

Whereas not long after this much-opposed move of the M3 from University Pl., the bus shelter between 9th and 10th Sts. on University Pl. was also removed, taking away a much needed respite for those who have trouble standing during waits for the bus and frustrating their hopes for the M3's quick return and relief from their walking distances problems; and

Whereas recent census data indicates there is an increase in senior citizens living in the immediate vicinity of University Pl., the very people who depend on convenient bus service as their only reasonable option to get to needed destinations (e.g., to the Union Sq. area and the upper east side, where many hospitals and other medical facilities are located), because they're unable to navigate subway stairs and find it discomforting, even painful, to walk long distances (many can't do it at all). Robbed of the M3's accessibility, they're now often forced to take cabs, which they can ill afford; and

Whereas the M3's current starting place at 4th Ave. and 9th St. and route up 4th Ave. to 14th St. (that replaces the much needed route on University Pl. from 9th St. to 14th St.) unnecessarily duplicates the starting place and route to 14th St. of the M1 and M2 buses, causing a totally uncalled-for redundancy of service on that stretch; and

Whereas at the CB2 hearing on this topic, there was an exceptionally large turnout of people of all ages, especially many senior and disabled citizens, all who expressed their ardent desire and vital need for the M3's return to its route along University Pl., many voicing how disillusioned they've become with MTA NYCT's disregard for and neglect of their needs and how deserted they feel by what they regard as that agency's lack of concern for seniors and the infirm; several letters were received conveying the same needs and sentiments; and

Whereas a petition with over 200 signatures was received in support of reinstating the M3 route on University Pl. to meet the same crucial needs that are cited above;

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 strongly urges MTA NYCT to restore the M3 bus to its northbound route along University Pl. from 9th St. to 14th St.; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 calls for the bus shelter to be returned to its original spot on University Pl. between 9th and 10th Sts.

Vote: Unanimous, with 38 Board Members in favor

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

Sincerely,



David Gruber, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



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

DG/EM

c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
Hon. Deborah Glick, State Assembly Member
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NYC Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 35th Floor
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Carmen Bianco, President
MTA NYC Transit Authority
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Dear Manhattan Borough Commissioner Forgione:

At its Full Board meeting June 19, 2014, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution urging restoration of the M6 bus route, of part of the M1 bus route from 14th Street to South Street, and of the former M5 bus route to turn west at Houston Street

Whereas for more than 40 years, the M1 bus ran north on Centre/Lafayette Sts./Park/Madison Aves. and south on 5th/Park Aves. to 14th St./continuing south on Broadway; the M6 bus ran up 6th Ave. to Central Park and south down Broadway; and the M5 bus ran north up 6th Ave. over to Broadway to the George Washington Bridge (178th St.) and south on Riverside Dr. and Broadway to Central Park S. and down 5th Ave. over to Broadway going south, turning west on Houston St. where it ended and then headed north again on 6th Ave., a set of convenient, easily accessible routes that served the multiple needs of those in mid-Greenwich Village and SoHo, as well as parts of Little Italy and Chinatown; and

Whereas in 2010, the M1 bus route was changed to run north from 4th Ave. and 9th St. and to terminate, after coming south on 5th Ave. and crossing 8th St., at 4th Ave.; the M6 bus was discontinued; and the M5 bus was rerouted all the way down to South Ferry, still going north to 178th St., i.e., partially replacing the M6 route but for a much longer haul and without the M6's straight Broadway run downtown, all of which have deprived a significant part of the District 2 community of accessible bus routes that serve their needs, and in fact have created serious hardship for those many, many people who rely on buses to transport them to where they need to go; and

Whereas these route changes have resulted in an extensive area in District 2 where bus transportation is unavailable, blocks and blocks both between uptown buses and between downtown buses (what some of our constituents have called a "public transportation dead zone"), making it difficult and, in many physically limiting cases impossible, to reach necessary bus transit, considerably hindering our community's mobility, and creating the following problems:

- The removal of the M1 route north from Lafayette and Centre Sts. has deprived those in SoHo and the Village's Houston St. area of direct access to major transit, shopping and healthcare hubs such as Union Sq. and to the upper east side, where almost all New York hospitals and many ambulatory care facilities are located (particularly important to the many elderly, disabled and ill in the area for whom the Bowery, where an easterly uptown bus is available, is too far away).
- With the M6 gone and the M1 shifted to 5th Ave. south, there is no longer a bus going south on Broadway from 14th to 8th St. This deprives those from SoHo who shop on 14th St. for its less expensive prices (especially for food) of a means to get home with their heavy packages (using cabs would wipe out the savings they seek and need).
- With the M5 now filling in for the defunct M6, the M5's route is the longest in Manhattan, with buses backing up and bunching delays, resulting in up to 45 minute waits by the time they get downtown. Compounding this, the M5 usually runs as an Express, making it difficult to access stops for those who have problems walking.
- The elimination of the M5 turning west on Houston St. (and back up 6th Ave.), as well as of its bus shelter, has not only taken away a compact, more efficient route, but also has caused problems for those who cannot walk long distances, which includes a sizable segment of the population in that vicinity, many of whom are elderly and infirm. In addition, it has removed a comfortable, convenient means to get uptown for those further north suffering disabilities who formerly took the M5 down to Houston, waited under the shelter and then re-boarded when the bus began its uptown route via 6th Ave.
- The current limitation in bus service from the Mid-Greenwich Village/SoHo area to the downtown civic area deprives people of their access to the seat of government and courthouses, in essence disenfranchising them from performing their civic duties, e.g. the lack of adequate bus service forces seniors and the mobility-impaired to use already overloaded and often unreliable Access-A-Ride for jury duty, meaning they often are unable to do this, and most cannot afford metered or livery cabs.
- The working population also has suffered this lack of adequate bus service. For example, previously the M1 and M6 traveled down to and up from the Financial District (FiDi). Although there has been a considerable increase in population living in District 2 that works in FiDi, there is now only one bus to transport them (the M5), which suffers a great deal of crowding.; and

Whereas at the CB2 hearing on this topic, there was a large turnout of people of all ages, especially many of advanced years and/or suffering physical challenges (a population that totally depends on bus service), all who expressed their fervent need for the return of the M1, M5 and M6 buses to their former routes to restore the accessibility they currently lack, many referring to the long walking distances that are difficult and often painful for them with the current routes, many voicing their feelings that they have been abandoned by MTA NYC Transit who they call "unfriendly to seniors"; many letters were received also expressing the same needs and sentiments; and

Whereas census data between 2000 and 2010 shows that the residential population of Lower Manhattan increased more than 77%, a growth that merits more extensive and conveniently accessible bus service;

Therefore be it resolved that Community Board 2, Manhattan (CB2) strongly urges MTA NYC Transit to restore the M6 bus route, restore part of the M1 bus route from 14th St to South St., and also restore the former M5 route to turn west at Houston St. and end there, starting its uptown trek at Houston St. and 6th Ave.; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 urges that the bus shelter be returned to its original spot on Houston St.; and

Be it finally resolved that CB2 calls for the elimination of M5 Express service below 14th St., replaced by local stops at intervals closely located to each other (i.e., restoration of every local stop).

Vote: Unanimous, with 38 Board Members in favor.

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

Sincerely,



David Gruber, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



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

DG/EM

c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
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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 19, 2014, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in support of conducting a feasibility study of 5th and 6th Avenues in District 2 (5th Ave.: 14th St. to Washington Sq. N.; 6th Ave.: 14th St. to Canal St.) and north along these corridors from 14th to 59th Streets as they connect with District 2, to determine whether they can be re-designed as “Complete Streets.”

Whereas 5th Ave. in District 2 is often fraught with speeding and disorganized vehicular traffic threatening pedestrians who also are endangered crossing the wide street and jeopardizing bicyclists who also contend with vehicular infringement in the vaguely marked bicycle lane, while 6th Ave. is burdened by both cars and heavy truck and bus traffic, excessive double parking, speeding alternating with congestion, another vaguely marked bicycle lane, wide, dangerous crossings, irregular intersections and a generally chaotic street environment which not only is hazardous for all the street’s users, but also hinders business activity on this intensely commercial thoroughfare; and

Whereas District 2’s residential, business and tourist populations and all those using these avenues have increased significantly, including many children and senior citizens, all who need a safely accessible and welcoming streetscape, while at the same time 5th and 6th Aves. have become less safe, less inviting and less community friendly; and

Whereas Manhattan Community Boards 4 (CB4) and 5 (CB5) have requested a study to examine potential redesigns for 5th and 6th Aves. from 14th St. to 59th St. in order to improve their safety as well as enhance their ambiance, and Community Board 2 Manhattan (CB2) sees the need for such a study and the utmost need to extend it to include 5th and 6th Aves. in District 2, i.e., from 14th St. to Washington Sq. N. on 5th Ave. and from 14th St. to Canal St. on 6th Ave., to create a continuously safe and pleasantly ordered corridor; and

Whereas Complete Streets type redesigns, such as the kind that would be addressed in the requested study, including such improvements as pedestrian safety islands with landscaping, protected bicycle lanes, dedicated bus lanes, and traffic lights with leading pedestrian intervals or split phase timing have resulted in notable decreases in crashes and injuries on other NYC streets, such as Columbus, 1st, 2nd, 8th and 9th Aves. (e.g., 35% decrease in injuries to all street users on 8th Ave. and 58 % decrease on 9th Ave.: “Measuring the Street,” NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT), 2012), while also reducing travel times, lowering speeding, lessening double parking, bettering sightlines, increasing foot traffic, pulling communities together, and improving retail sales; and

Whereas many community members came to voice their support for a Complete Street feasibility study, including representatives from the W. 13th St.-100 Block Association, the 105 W. 13th St. (5th Ave.) co-op, P.S. 41 and local bicyclists, and 48 letters of support were received from local businesses; and

Whereas both CB4 and CB5 have noted the importance of DOT consulting with them and a wide variety of stakeholders as the requested study progresses to ensure substantial community input, and CB2 would expect this same kind of close consultation with its District 2 contingent;

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 fully supports CB4’s and CB5’s requests to conduct a study to examine potential redesigns for 5th and 6th Aves. from 14th St. to 59th St. in order to improve their safety as well as enhance their ambiance, and further urges that the boundaries of this study be extended to include CB2’s section of 5th and 6th Aves, i.e., from 14th St. to Washington Sq. N. on 5th Ave. and from 14th St. to Canal St. on 6th Ave.; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 asks that this study consider a wide variety of options for a truly Complete Street, including but not limited to pedestrian safety islands, landscaping, adequately sized and visibly striped crosswalks, protected bike lanes, traffic lights with leading pedestrian intervals or split phase timing, dedicated bus lanes or accommodations for other suitable transit services, bus bulbs or other design features to assure curb pull-up and level low-floor bus boarding access, seating and signs at every bus stop, parking for bicycles in the street as well as for motorcycles and scooters, medians, and widened sidewalks; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 asks DOT for close consultation with CB2 and its stakeholders as the requested study progresses and for DOT to coordinate study findings in all three boards to assess and treat potential neighboring impacts that might result; and

Be it finally resolved that CB2 would appreciate inclusion of an option in the study to consider locating the 5th Ave. bike lane on the west side, at least from 9th St. down, to avoid the hazardous left turns by motorists into 8th St. on the east side.

Vote: Unanimous, with 38 Board Members in favor

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

Sincerely,



David Gruber, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Shirley Secunda, Chair
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