

November 8, 2004

Commissioner Iris Weinshall
NYC Department of Transportation
40 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013

Re: Detectable Warning Strips

Dear Commissioner Weinshall,

Full-height curbing or curb ramps with detectable warning strips are important to the safety of visually impaired pedestrians. It is a primary way of detecting when they have made the transition between sidewalk and street. Therefore, curb ramps (which are essential for persons traveling in wheelchairs) must be marked with detectable warning strips.

Since July, 2002 The U.S. Department of Justice has required detectable warning strips on all new curb ramps and on any curb ramps where street repair has been done, as we discussed with DOT's former liaison to Manhattan Community Board No. 4, Andrew Hallerman, a few months ago.

Recently, new curb ramps have been installed within the Board's boundaries at the north-east corner of 9th Avenue and 44th Street and the south-east corner of 9th Avenue and 45th Street. However, these lack the required warning strips. It would seem more cost effective to install the strips when installing the curb ramps (and the cost is 85% reimbursable by the Federal government).

While we are pleased to have our intersections made more accessible to those who use wheelchairs, we are also concerned about the safety of our visually impaired pedestrians. We would appreciate a response from your department regarding plans to install detectable warning strips on all of New York City's curb ramps.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4

Jay Marcus
Chair
Transportation Planning Committee

Cc: K. Stewart
Elected Officials