



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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J. LEE COMPTON
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

June 11, 2007

Ms. Janet Sadik-Khan
New York City DOT Commissioner
40 Worth Street, 10th Floor, Room 1005
New York, NY 10013

Mr. Joel Ettinger, Executive Director
NYMTC
199 Water Street
New York, New York · 10038

Mr Anthony Shorris, Executive Director
PANYNJ
225 Park Avenue South, 15th floor
New York, NY, 10003

Re: 9th Avenue Renaissance Project

Community Board 4 is on record for many years in recognizing the negative impacts of excessive traffic on the community. Community board 4 supports the study of the 9th Avenue Renaissance project's proposals to improve pedestrian safety, reduce congestion, improve access to all users, improve quality of the air and provide more public space.

Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Pedestrian Safety Coalition (CHEKPEDS), a coalition of businesses, institutions, community members, and property owners sponsored a six-month community input process designed by Project for Public Spaces (PPS). Through town hall meetings, paper and online surveys, community design workshops, street audits, booths at street fairs, blogs, video, web sites, and countless one-on-one conversations, substantial input was received and included in the report.

73% of those surveyed cited safety from traffic as a severe problem – by far the most urgent problem. This compared, for example, to 5 % who considered crime as a severe problem. The report highlights that pedestrian safety is the number one issue with 804 pedestrians injured on the avenue (from 14th to 57th Street) during the last 8 years from pedestrian/auto conflicts. Just in the last three months, there were three car related pedestrian fatalities on Ninth Avenue and two critical injuries. Other issues ranking as most problematic are traffic congestion (gridlock), lawlessness of drivers, the lack of street access for most users (elderly , handicapped, children, bus transit) , air quality and EMS access and the lack of public places.

The report also noted that action in the near future is critical, given the changes that will occur because of the rezoning and resulting new construction in the Special Hudson Yards District between 30th Street and 42nd Street (major construction projects in the surrounding area include the Javits Center expansion, Moynihan Station, and Port Authority area construction will also cause likely negative consequences).

To address this crisis, the study suggested several street improvements and three possible avenue designs that allocate more of the public space on Ninth Avenue to pedestrian and public transit use. Today 71% of the public space is dedicated to the automobile while pedestrians can only use 29% of the street (or 15% if one takes into account the various sidewalk obstructions). The new designs would allocate at least 51% of the avenue to

pedestrians, bus and bike. Such allocation is appropriate for a neighborhood main street where 90% of the local population travels by foot.

In summary, the recommendations to address the key problems include:

- Improve pedestrian safety: by shortening crossing distances, reducing risks associated with turning cars(neck downs and dedicated crossing phases), keeping pedestrian crossings clear from traffic and installing traffic calming devices on residential streets(mid blocks and end of blocks neck downs).
- Reduce congestion by encouraging trucks and buses to use designated routes to access the tunnel, including the reopened 41st street, on mostly commercial streets, and by relocating the Lincoln tunnel queuing to the west of 9th Avenue on 11th avenue approaches and by reducing the number of tunnel entrances on 9th Avenue from seven to Six.
- Improve access to all users by dedicating a wide buffered lane to buses and bikes, by sharing parking areas on the avenue between fast turnover pickup and deliveries for businesses, bike parking and sanitation.
- Provide more public space, by expanding sidewalk by at least 20%. In addition, two locations have been identified as possible public parks or plazas.
- Experiment on short-term remedies, such as changes in Traffic signal timing, signage and plastic bollards, which do not require capital financing.

Community Board 4 supports studying the report's recommendations. The board urges NYMTC and the New York City DOT to address these concerns and study the feasibility of these recommendations as part of the federally funded "study of the Lincoln Tunnel accesses and their impact on pedestrian safety with a focus on 9th avenue". Community Board #4, through its involvement on the NYMTC funded study and through its continued work with DOT intends to actively pursue these recommendations

At its meeting on June 6, 2007 the full Board approved this application.

Sincerely,



J. Lee Compton
Chair
Manhattan Community Board
No. 4



Jay Marcus
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning
Committee



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee

CC: Scott Stringer
Tom Duane
Dick Gottfried
Christine Quinn
Gerry Nadler
Betsy Gotbaum
Gale Brewer
Carolyn Maloney
Terry Benczik (PANYNJ)
G. Bogacz (NYMTC) same as above
Margaret Forgione (DOT)