



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**CHRISTINE BERTHET**  
Chair

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

May 14, 2014

Polly Trottenberg  
Transportation Commissioner  
NYC Department of Transportation  
59 Maiden Lane, 37th Floor  
New York, NY 10038

**Re: DOT Proposed Ninth Avenue Pedestrian Safety Improvements**

Dear Commissioner Trottenberg:

Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) is delighted with DOT's plans to implement pedestrian safety improvements on Ninth Avenue in 2014; however, we would like to express our concern for the time it has taken the DOT to develop these proposals for much needed traffic safety improvements. We applaud the signal changes being proposed for the intersections of West 41<sup>st</sup> Street and Ninth Avenue and West 43<sup>rd</sup> Street and Ninth Avenue as well as the improvement in Lincoln tunnel signage on 39<sup>th</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup> Streets and Ninth Avenue. We feel this is an appropriate and well-conceived response to the many collisions and pedestrian injuries that have occurred at these intersections and to requests we made as part of the Hell's Kitchen Traffic Study. The implementation of these proposals is especially important after the collision in February 2013 that caused a fatality at West 41<sup>st</sup> Street and Ninth Avenue.

CB4 requests the following changes be integrated in the plan to further improve them

**West 43<sup>rd</sup> Street and Ninth Avenue**

The implementation of a split phase signal at this intersection is much needed DOT will install a split phase signal on West 43rd Street to allow pedestrians to cross the south leg of Ninth Avenue without car conflict for 15 seconds and then allow cars to turn southbound during a blinking yellow phase (used in other municipalities to instruct motorists to proceed with caution). The M34A MTA Bus layover will be moved further east to accommodate the through traffic lane, the bike lane on West 43rd near the intersection with Ninth Avenue will be converted to a mixing zone, and the loading zone will be relocated from the southeast corner to the northeast corner of West 43<sup>rd</sup> Street at Ninth Avenue.

1. Extend the timing of the red phase for vehicles turning on to Ninth avenue from 15 seconds to 25 seconds and reduce the southbound blinking yellow turning phase be reduced from 30 to 20 seconds.

- Manhattan Plaza, a NORC is located at that intersection and the majority of pedestrian crossing here are seniors who need 23 seconds to cross the Avenue.
  - West 43rd Street is a residential street with a playground, illegally used by buses and jitneys as an alternate to West 41st and 42<sup>nd</sup> Streets to reach Lincoln tunnel, a practice that should be discouraged. To this effect, the turning phase should be shorter than the one at 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, which is the official truck route.
  - Other suggestions for this signal include a flashing green arrow or a complete split phase signal.
2. Since the use of a blinking yellow light is a new traffic signal we request that a sign be included which indicates to drivers that they can proceed with caution.
  3. We are opposed to relocating of the pedestrian island located on the southeast corner of Ninth Avenue. We believe this pedestrian island is important to slow down turning cars, and for the safety of pedestrians crossing Ninth Avenue.

### **West 41<sup>st</sup> Street and Ninth Avenue**

The proposed configuration will provide a split phase signal on Ninth Avenue at West 41<sup>st</sup> Street, with a red turn arrow stopping westbound turning vehicles to allow pedestrians to cross W. 41<sup>st</sup> Street on the west side of Ninth Avenue for 23 seconds and subsequently, a green turn arrow to allow vehicles to turn. In addition bulb outs will be installed at the south sidewalk to accommodate more pedestrians and prevent vehicles from using the dedicated turn lanes as a through lane. The proposal also includes turning the western lane of Ninth Avenue between West 43<sup>rd</sup> Street and West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street into a bus lane during the peak traffic hours of 4 PM to 7PM.

CB4 is very pleased with this proposal that seems to address the concerns we have expressed and will bring much needed space and safety to the pedestrians at this difficult intersection. We offer the following recommendations to improve this proposal:

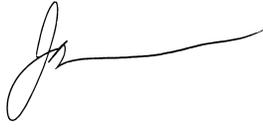
1. A review of the traffic light dedicated to buses exiting the Port Authority Bus Terminal to determine if the timing of the light can be changed to improve to flow of traffic at this intersection. Currently, it appears this light is often stopping through traffic even when no bus is exiting the terminal.
2. We request that DOT investigate the apparent use of West 41<sup>st</sup> Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues as construction storage by the Port Authority. The removal of these construction items will improve the traffic flow on West 41<sup>st</sup> Street and impact the traffic of surrounding streets.
3. As one of the few westbound streets that is nonresidential we request that DOT consider ways of making West 41<sup>st</sup> Street more accessible by cars, and consider ways to direct more westbound traffic to this street.
4. We would also like DOT to review the possibility of making the dedicated bus lane north of West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street permanent instead of only during peak traffic times.
5. In addition, the placement of an Intelligent Traffic Sign at West 43rd and Ninth may be problematic. We request that DOT consult again with the Community well in advance of proceeding with this long-term plan.

Manhattan Community Board 4 is delighted that DOT has proposed these improvements to safety on Ninth Avenue and we look forward to their implementation with the recommendations made above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Christine Berthet", set against a light gray rectangular background.

Christine Berthet  
Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Marcus", consisting of a stylized initial followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Jay Marcus  
Co-Chair, Transportation  
Planning Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ernest Modarelli", featuring a large, sweeping initial "E" followed by the name.

Ernest Modarelli  
Co-Chair, Transportation  
Planning Committee