

1 **Transportation Planning Committee**

Item #: 20

2
3 Margaret Forgione
4 Manhattan Borough Commissioner
5 New York City Department of Transportation
6 55 Water Street, 9th Floor
7 New York, New York 10041
8

9 **Re: 34th Street Select Bus service**

10
11 Dear Commissioner Forgione:

12
13 Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) continues to be supportive of 34th Street Select
14 Bus Service (SBS); formerly called Transitway. The changes implemented to date have
15 decreased bus travel time along West 34th Street and we anticipate its full implementation
16 will lead to further improvements.

17
18 However CB4 is dismayed that the SBS project is moving towards full implementation in
19 July 2012 while major issues for West Side residents have not yet been addressed.
20 Specifically, we request that the Department of Transportation (DOT) devise a solution to
21 the inadequate amount of loading space included in the current plan on the north side of
22 W. 34th Street between Dyer and Tenth Avenues. In addition to that request we ask that
23 DOT address two other issues –that the bus lane will cause increased peak hour back-up
24 to the already intolerable traffic conditions along W. 34th Street east of Dyer, and that the
25 Bolt Bus curbside station will conflict with the SBS on W. 34th Street between Eighth
26 and Ninth Avenues.

- 27
28
- 29 • The current proposal includes four-five loading/unloading spaces, plus an
30 additional four-five loading/unloading spaces during off-peak hours on the north
31 curb of W. 34th Street between Dyer and Tenth Avenues. This does not
32 adequately meet the needs of the nearly 1,000 residents and four-five businesses
33 on that block. We continue to strongly advocate for the Port Authority to
34 eliminate the northbound entry onto Dyer Avenue from W. 34th Street, thus
35 enabling the existing bus stop to be relocated from just west of Dyer Avenue to
36 just East of Dyer Avenue opening additional loading/unloading west of Dyer
37 Avenue;
 - 38 • While we will continue to advocate for the above, we reiterate our proposal from
39 last month that in the interim DOT consolidate two bus stops – the one west of
40 Dyer Avenue and one east of Ninth Avenue - into a single bus stop just west of
41 Ninth Avenue, while retaining a few loading spaces between the bus stop and the
42 right turn lane onto Dyer. We do not feel the justification provided by DOT for
43 not accepting this proposal is sufficient, particularly since reducing one bus stop
44 will improve bus performance time.
 - 45 • We further request that additional signage showing alternate route to the Lincoln
46

47 Tunnel be installed at the intersection of W. 34th Street and Ninth Avenue and
48 again at W. 34th Street and Dyer Avenue. Such signage would direct the traffic to
49 Eleventh Avenue and W. 40th Street.
50

- 51 • CB4 has already requested the relocation of the long distance Bolt Bus Sidewalk
52 Terminal currently adjacent to the Bus stop at the northwest corner of W. 34th
53 Street at Eighth Avenue because it is not consistent with the proposed bus lane.
54 This configuration is not viable from transportation or a loading standpoint. We
55 have not received a commitment that the Bolt Bus stop will be relocated by July
56 and where it will be moving.
57

58 CB4 recommends that some capital funding – either as alteration/addition or as new 2014
59 funding be put aside to adjust the configuration at W. 34th Street and Dyer Avenue and
60 possibly relocate the bus stop bulb outs based on the first few months of operations. This
61 intersection is complex and unique and based on our experience on the ground, will likely
62 need adjustments.
63

64 We also want to confirm that all pedestrian crossings along the corridor will be brought
65 in compliance with ADA guidelines, including the installation of pedestrian ramps where
66 they are missing (an example is the south side of W. 34th Street at the west crossing of
67 Dyer Avenue), and that all ramps will be equipped with truncated domes. In addition, we
68 note that the buses along the SBS route will have the ability to alter traffic light signals.
69 Since such changes in timing can be confusing to those who are visually impaired who
70 are used to set crossing times, we request that all intersections along the SBS route have
71 audible time signals.
72

73 DOT indicated that the real time arrival panels on bus stops – which had been provided
74 under a pilot program - are being discontinued by MTA and replaced with a smartphone
75 application. CB4 requests that the bus stops continue to have real time arrival panels, as
76 many of residents do not own smart phones.
77

78 We understand that designing the 34th Street Select Bus Service offers many technical
79 complexities. We also appreciate the several changes DOT has already made to the SBS
80 during the last several months at the request of the community and CB4. However
81 providing a reasonable amount of curb access for residents and maintaining the viability
82 of local businesses for this Community Board is equally important to its success.
83

84 Sincerely.
85 CJ/CB/JM
86