

RESOLUTION

Date: June 7, 2011

Committees of Origin: Parks & Environment and Transportation

Re: Vehicle Free Central Park

Full Board Vote: 32 In favor 1 Against 1 Abstention 0 Present

The following facts and concerns were taken into account in arriving at our conclusions:

Central Park was created as a refuge from the city. Its loop road was originally designed as a carriage drive, an element integrated with the surrounding landscape and with the pastoral, recreational park experience.

Private motor vehicles using Central Park as a route to and from other destinations pollute the park, crowd the loop road, make management of recreational uses and of non-motorized vehicles on the loop road much more difficult and encourage unnecessary use of private motor vehicles rather than other forms of transportation.

As Central Park has become safer and ever more crowded in recent decades, and as recreational patterns have changed to include far more cyclists, runners, etc., private motor vehicles on the loop road have increasingly interfered with genuine park uses. Gradually cutting back the hours when private motor vehicles have been allowed on the loop road has been a good start toward eliminating such vehicles in the park, and has been done without noticeable negative impact on traffic patterns on the surrounding streets.

More than 100,000 people have signed petitions asking for a car-free Central Park.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan believes that a trial period encompassing a substantial part of the summer of 2011, up to and including the date of the New York City Marathon in early November, when the loop drive is largely closed to vehicles anyway, would maximize recreational opportunities and enjoyment of the park for New York City residents and visitors during that period; would permit park managers to study and begin to implement methods of managing the very heavy recreational, pedicab and horse-drawn carriage traffic on the loop road unencumbered by motor vehicular traffic; and would permit sufficient time to obtain meaningful data on traffic patterns in the surrounding neighborhood with such vehicular traffic banned in Central Park; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/ Manhattan **urges** the New York City Department of Transportation, in conjunction with the Department of Parks and Recreation, to ban private motor vehicles (including taxis, but excepting those vehicles permitted in the Park incident to existing concessions) in Central Park from July 4 weekend, 2011, through the first weekend in November, coincident with the date of the New York City Marathon; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **urges** the Department of Transportation during such period to measure and study the impact on surrounding streets of eliminating such vehicular traffic in Central Park; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/ Manhattan **urges** the Central Park Conservancy and the Department of Parks and Recreation to use the period of the traffic ban to study measures to enhance safety for other competing users of the loop road, such as cyclists, runners and other pedestrians.

Joint Committees: 11-0-0-0. Board Members: 3-0-0-0.