

**BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 6
TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 17, 2015**

ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT:

J. ARMER	S. AVERY	P. BLAKE
W. BLUM	D. DECOSTANZO	D. GORDON
K. GURL	E. MCCLURE	T. MISKEL
M. MURPHY	M. SILVERMAN	J. OLTMAN SMITH

ABSENT:

B. CHANCEY	R. RIGOLLI	D. SCHNEIDER
R. SLOANE	E. SPICER	J. THOMPSON
U. ZIMMERMAN		

GUESTS:

B. PATEL – REP. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

L. BRANCH – REP. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

M. ROSENBLUTH	C. ROSENTHAL	E. ARCHER
J. HESSNEY	D. LEVIT	L. STUURMAN
M. NEUMAN	B. NELSON	C. IMPERIALE
S. OCASIO	J. CALHOUN	G. SIBIRSKY
K. ALZAMORA	V. DECOSTA	E. ALZAMORA
D. MORALES	C. SANCHEZ JR.	A. CHAN FAIRCHILD
M. FAIRCHILD	J. ROMERO	C. SANCHEZ SR.
D. CEPEDA	M. VARGAS	M. RUTTO
A. DEVENNEY		

*****MINUTES*****

Presentation and review of a proposal to co-name Degraw Street between 4th and 5th Avenues as “Robert “PH” Diaz Way.

Pumpkinhead Street naming:

- A great guy, everyone’s friend, mentor to young artists, setting a good role model for local youths.
- Degraw Street mentioned in many of his songs, pride in Park Slope, champion of the neighborhood.
- Didn’t subscribe to gangster rap.
- Three friends testify to his local celebrity status and his habit of giving back to Park Slope.
- His wife says Degraw Street between 4th and 5th Avenues was in his DNA.
- He organized the PH (Punkinhead) Platform charity event to benefit various non-profits.

Q &A:

Joanna Smith: Is there a time requirement between death and naming?

Craig Hammerman: No

Jerry Armer: Why him when Brooklyn is full of good people who die and we’d run out of places for all those who deserve resignation. The city should establish criteria.

Bill Blum: Not eager to rename streets but Pumpkinhead's fame might lead to additional tourism – positive attention for the neighborhood.

Douglas Gordon: Supports CB6 establishing guidelines in future for renaming. He made a motion to rename Degraw Street between 4th/5th Avenues for Robert “PH” Diaz. SJ Avery seconded the motion. Notes importance to honor Park Slope history not just development pressures.

VOTE: 11.....YEAS 0.....NAYS 1.....ABSTENTION
MOTION PASSED

Street naming for Jose “Toughie” Sanchez at Union and Columbia Street corner.

- Columbia Street community advocate
- Ran Puerto Rican waterfront in Carroll Gardens
- '76 Miami delegate for Jimmy Carter
- Worked at Health Center and Carroll Gardens Association
- Part of Lyndon Johnson's war on poverty – ran integral organization (PRW)
- Organized against destruction of Columbia waterfront neighborhood for container port
- Founder of Independent Neighborhood Democrats.

Former Assembly Member, Joan Millman and Judge Michael Pesce support this naming. Judge Pesce made a suggestion that there should be a web page explaining significance of individuals with street corners named for them.

Committee members, Madelaine Murphy and Jerry Armer attested to Mr. Sanchez's long history of good works.

Jerry Armer made a motion to rename Union Street and Columbia Street as Jose “Toughie” Sanchez corner. Madelaine Murphy and Douglas Gordon seconded the motion. Jerry Armer reiterates Judge Pesce's website suggestion.

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

Presentation and discussion with representative for the Department of Transportation on a proposal to convert Commerce Street from Van Brunt Street to Imlay Street to a one-way operation from two-way operation, and a proposal to reverse the direction of Verona Street from Imlay Street to Van Brunt Street.

Bobby Patel, NYC DOT presenting Southeast Brooklyn Development request to convert Commerce Street to one-way.

Mixed industrial/residential area. New residential developments motivated DOT to study larger area of street network. East/West alternating is standard street direction/flow but is not the case around here.

Commerce Street:

- 30 feet wide, 16 feet for parking and 14 feet of moving lane.
- Heavy truck activity with no room to pass each other
- Heavy damage to parked cars

Imlay Street: Problem with wrong way driving – bad mix with pedestrians

Verona Street: Currently underutilized

New scenario: Commerce Street – one-way eastbound from Imlay to Van Brunt and convert Verona Street to one-way westbound from Van Brunt to Imlay Streets.

Q and A:

Eric McClure: Did DOT consider removing parking?

DOT: Yes but industrial workers need the parking.

Jerry Armer: What is the width of Verona Street?

DOT: 30 feet with nighttime parking regulations.

Jerry Armer: Make sure the proper notice is given.

DOT: Commerce Street businesses are aware.

Joanna Smith: One-way streets see increase in speed of vehicles – any local safety concerns?

DOT: None anticipated.

Bill Blum: Impact of bike lane on Imlay?

DOT: Volumes currently low.

Jerry Armer made a motion to approve DOT proposal as presented. Bill Blum seconded the motion.

Craig Hammerman: When Imlay Street building opens and resident requests day cleaning – how will it affect?

DOT: New parking studies need to be initiated.

Jerry Armer notes new building will probably be soundproof.

MOTION APPROVED: UNANIMOUSLY

Madelaine Murphy notes wrong direction driving issue and asks for fixes.

DOT: suggests Leroy Branch (DOT) will look at signage and it might need more enforcement.

Presentation and discussion with representatives for New York City Transit on a proposal for station access changes at the 7th Avenue F/G subway station in Park Slope.

Andy Inglesby and David Hasse of New York City Transit made the presentation. There will be a public hearing in November. There is no timetable but they are hoping for 2016 construction start.

- Token booth currently in the center of the block – only 1% of customers use the turnstiles there.
- 2/3 of ridership is at the 7th Avenue entrance with only 1/3 at 8th Avenue.
- Propose to move token booth to 7th Avenue.
- 8th Avenue underground access to booth to be removed.
- There will be help points and cameras throughout.
- Improved, low-turnstiles at both ends of the station.
- Emergency egress remains the same.

Q&A:

Eric McClure: How many interactions/transactions at the booth?

David Hasse: Would need to look at data.

Bill Blum: Turnstile jumping at 8th Avenue with lower turnstiles and no staffing?

David: Studied fare evasion and no worse at these areas.

Bill Blum: Why close down passageway?

David Hasse: Worried about safety issues.

Bill Blum notes the passageway is useful in inclement weather.

Jerry Armer: What will Methodist signage be? Need to be clear on platform.

Andy Inglesby: Station signs will address.

Jerry Armer: Handicap accessibility plans?

Andy: No current plans. Goal is 100 ADA stations by 2020 – list was developed in the 1980's. After 2020, new stations can be added to project list. Start to advocate now.

Eric McClure: Is 1980's list ever reviewed?

Andy: They added #99 and #100 recently.

Doug Gordon: What is data on traffic along passage? Extra stairs are not good for the sick, disabled or strollers.

David: Repeats low center turnstile numbers – personally, never observed many exiting center.

Andy: Repeats safety concerns regarding crime.

Joanna Smith: What is design for boxing out unused area? Maintenance issues.....

David: Will shoot for solid, clean walls with no visibility into non-used (dirty) areas.

Matt Silverman: Suggests technology to allow 7th Avenue clerk to control 8th Avenue gate.

Craig Hammerman: What is budget? And what is budget for ADA?

Andy: 400k for this project – 5 million for each elevator but need 3 – 15 million for ADA.

Craig: Arts for transit?

Andy: Doesn't qualify.

Public Attendee: 68 steps at 8th Avenue is a huge obstacle – worried about decrease of access under this plan.

This is a step backward that doesn't take into account neighborhood demographics and hospital needs.

David Hasse: Free zone passageway – how does it help you?

Public Attendee: Huge use in inclement weather and when people exit I the wrong place.

Roger, PPW and 10th Street resident: Many people oppose. Urges committee to wait to approve. 12k a day use to enter and 12k exit. That's 8k a day from 8th Avenue – that's not light use. Notes: that many people "lost" downstairs and passageway helps. What about Celebrate Brooklyn and other park events? 8th Avenue flexibility essential.

Eve, resident: One thousand people oppose this right now. Goal is to reduce driving to hospital. Need to do ADA planning right now to know whether this plan makes sense. Methodist has 4,000 employees already and is doubling.

Andy Inglesby: Not wed to ADA future.

Eve: Failure of planning. The committee should not approve.

Public: Schools and surface street safety not taken into account. No transportation plan for Methodist expansion. Isn't there a way to get facility to chip in for ADA.

Eric McClure: No mechanism for that funding currently.

Public: Statistics are moot because of hospital expansion. Urgent care center to be on 8th Avenue and 6th Street.
Public: Brad Lander's PB Transportation Committee has been working on it. Didn't win in election. Most station users find it hard to navigate. One morning study backs up MTA stats. Shows congestion at 7th Avenue turnstiles during morning rush. This project will benefit ADA issue because it pushes elevators to ends.

Andy Inglesby: Will make a big difference to people who use station.

David Hasse: Need turnstile capacity increase, this project would include.

Pauline Blake: Rationale? Safety or improving service for the community?

Andy Inglesby: Hundreds voted for it in PB. Need to fix the long waits.

Eve: Doesn't agree there are waits.

Bill Blum: Can you just do turnstiles and not move the booth?

Andy Inglesby: Don't have budget for that.

PB Representative Public: PB proposal didn't include passageway closure. PB recommended better station signage and nobody uses token booth.

Matt Silverman: Seems like it improves movement for users but ignores longstanding ADA needs. Wants to oppose to send message.

Andy Inglesby: Need 15 million from the community.

SJ Avery: Can extra gates be added without closing free zone?

David Hasse: Yes, can do that.

Bahij Chancey: Which is cheaper – moving booth or better signs?

David Hasse: Signs. No signs to the booth currently.

Bahij Chancey: Current crime stats?

Andy Inglesby: N/A

Joanna Smith: No visibility from clerk position, so how does it deter crime?

George Fiala/Red Hook Star: Any examples of mezzanine closure being used for community?

Andy Inglesby: No examples.

Joanna Smith: Any room for crowd-funded art project with local arts organizations?

Andy Inglesby: A few precedents exist.

Matt Silverman: Motion to conditionally disapprove at this time. Need more information.

1. Changes in usage on 8th Avenue due to the Methodist expansion.
2. Further details on ADA plan.

Jerry Armer: Methodist traffic study data is in public realm already.

Matt Silverman: Wants to know what change in user access will be if motion withdrawn?

Andy Inglesby: ADA info won't be available in time frame and the list is in stone.

Bill Blum: Motion to disapprove on basis of inflexibility of this plan.

Craig Hammerman: Warns this won't give us anything to comment on in November. We won't have a position.

Bill Blum: Withdraws motion.

Eric McClure: ADA off table. Customer benefit from turnstile capacity increase?

Jerry Armer: Motion to approve with condition that MTA provide more detailed scope on how to make this more ADA compliant. Madelaine Murphy seconded the motion.

SJ Avery: Friendly amendment noting continued neighborhood concern over passage closure which was not part of PB project proposal.

Bill Blum: Does six month ADA plan not provided make this a disapproval?

Pauline Blake: Recommends conditional acceptance. Not enough reason given to close the passageway.

Doug Schneider: Can our decision wait until public hearing?

Jerry Armer: Then we're not on the record.

Andy Inglesby: Public comment only open until midnight of public hearing date.

Bill Blum: Proposes conditional approval

1. MTA accessibility plan – 6 months.

Matt Silverman seconded.

2. Leaving mezzanine open.

Tom Miskel seconded.

VOTE: 10.....YEAS 0.....NAYS 2.....ABSTENTIONS
MOTION APPROVED

Motion approved with condition that mezzanine stay open. (as per SJ Avery's comments)

MOTION APPROVED: ALL IN FAVOR

Bill Blum: Motion for MTA ADA plan for all CB6 stations.

Craig Hammerman: Active request for 7th Avenue, Smith & 9th Streets and Grand Army Plaza all exist for a decade.

Bill Blum: Amends to these 3 stations and 4th Avenue & 9th Street station.

Madelaine Murphy: Seconded

SJ Avery: Recommends all District 6 stations be requested for study.

MOTION APPROVED: ALL IN FAVOR

Jerry Armer made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on August 20, 2015. Madelaine Murphy seconded.

MOTION APPROVED: UNANIMOUSLY

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned.

The minutes were submitted by Joanna Oltman Smith