

Brooklyn Community Board 9
890 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11225

Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes
April 9, 2025

Chair: Ethan Norville; Vice Chair: Felice Robertson; Secretary: Paco Abraham

Attendance (Board Members): Ethan Norville; Felice Robertson

Attendance (Community Resident Members): Paco Abraham; Andrew Magnus; Calista DeJesus; Valerie Fleming

Absent (Board Members): Yaakov Pearson

Guests: Rod Herbert, Theresa Westerdahl, LaShaun Ellis, Lynn Quarles, Isaiah Pecar, Anthony Drummond, Diana Soriano, Chris Hornes, Tyler Peter, Whitney Weldon, Gabriel Mizrachi

CB9 Staff: Khalid J. Jemmott, Community Associate

- I. Welcome/Greetings
 - a. Meeting is called to order at 7:13 pm, April 9th, 2025
 - b. Order of items was changed from agenda to allow for DOT presentation to be done first
- II. DOT Presentation — Eastern Parkway changes to Bus Service on the B14 & B17 routes
 - a. Tyler Peter, Senior Transportation Planner from the NYC DOT's transit development unit, introduced the project and passed it on to Whitney Weldon, who provided a background and a summary of the proposed changes. Eastern Parkway is historic, with designs dating back to Olmsted in 1866. It was named a scenic landmark in 1978 and has had bus service since 1925. Over 3,000 individuals use the B14 & B17 stops at Utica Avenue every day. DOT has been active in the area for years, working on service road signalization and safety improvements for our pedestrians over the last decade.
 - b. Gabriel Mizrachi, Transportation Planner with the MTA's bus stop accessibility program, then spoke. He outlined a plan that would
 - i. legitimize what had become a routine, but unofficial route, in which buses use the main road of Eastern Parkway as that first stop to pick up passengers, even though the bus stop destination sign is still on the service. Buses already have their layover on the main road, and so passengers are accustomed to this location. Additionally, buses tend to use it to avoid traffic jams caused by double-parked cars on the service road.
 - ii. Add missing accessibility ramps and missing crosswalks along the northern mall.

- iii. remove the Rochester Avenue stop (currently it averages 150-180 per day, just 2 people per trip) and repurpose that space for community use, like a designated loading zone, DOT Carshare, or metered parking
 - 1. In the last iteration of the BK bus redesign, MTA suggested keeping this Rochester Ave stop and removing the next one at Buffalo Ave, but discussions about this with MTA are now calling the question and lead to the belief they'd remove the Rochester stop and keep Buffalo instead.
 - iv. Transplant one tree to a new location so fresh ADA pavers could be put down for a more accessible bus stop.
 - c. Committee asked questions about whether this project included any signal changes, and they said no, but they could look into some queue jump possibilities for buses. The committee also reiterated how uneven the sidewalk becomes because of tree roots, and the presenters noted new standards they have for creating firm bases under pavers to avoid shifting. Theresa Westerdahl noted how much she's heard of the former B71 bus line that went from Carroll Gardens to Crown Heights and noted support for restoring that defunct route.
 - d. Group consensus was that these changes made sense and would improve service in this area.
- III. Acceptance of the Minutes of March 12, 2025.
 - a. Committee members reviewed printed minutes & requested a slight change.
 - i. Request to clarify a sentence in the minutes that described the revenue of an automatic public toilet as \$1.2B over its lifetime, when instead that dollar amount was meant to summarize the entirety of the JCDecaux citywide contracts for all of its APT facilities and more.
 - ii. Chairman Norville makes a motion to approve the minutes, with the above-noted clarification added.
 - iii. Paco Abraham seconds the motion.
 - iv. Motion is approved by common consent.**
- IV. Dining Out Application
 - a. Hasen Stuble – 1184 Nostrand Avenue (between Fenimore & Hawthorne Streets)
 - i. Committee reviewed the application as presented and noted these repeat conditions that the restaurant has successfully had in place for more than 5 years already.
 - ii. Calista DeJesus makes a motion to approve the application as presented.
 - iii. Theresa Westerdahl asks that neighbors can weigh in, and Chairman Norville reminds that this is the opportunity now, and this will be an annual application, so any new concerns that arise will have a future avenue to address concerns.
 - iv. Paco Abraham seconds the motion.
 - v. Motion is approved by common consent.**
- V. Inviting schools to discuss plan requests, support, or opinions
 - a. Committee said that we will again invite local schools to show up and join us at future meetings to discuss street safety needs

VI. Community Fair Planning

- a. Committee noted there was still some time to plan, but that we'd likely copy last year's format with a large-scale printed map and offer some giveaways.
 - i. Valerie Flemming suggested we ask DOT to do a bike helmet giveaway.

VII. New Business

- a. Letter of Support for Proposed Open Street
 - i. Committee discussed an Open Street application for an Open Street on Montgomery from Bedford to Stoddard Place, managed by FEAST with the support of Street Lab, which came as a vague letter of support template.
 - ii. Group concern about the lack of details offered, both of what the open street would entail, when it would happen, and who was even asking for it. Residents were not informed and only learned of it because it was on the agenda. It does not seem to follow typical protocol for block party permits or any sort of neighborhood outreach.
 - iii. Theresa Westerdahl et al expressed concern that the item even made it to the agenda because simple letters of support can sometimes go from committee to exec board and not be presented to the full CB. Others agreed that it raises questions and suspicions for items to be added to the agenda without any local residents of the block even knowing about it.
 - iv. Paco Abraham makes a motion to reject support for the Open Streets letter as presented and asks that the committee not consider any incomplete proposals like this, which lack basic details.
 - v. Calista Dejesus seconds the motion.
 - vi. **Motion is approved by common consent.**

VIII. Rogers Ave Pedestrian Island needs

- a. Paco Abraham raises the concern that there is no pedestrian refuge island on the eastern crosswalk on Empire Boulevard at its intersection with Rogers Avenue. He points out that there is ample room for one with there already being a marked non-travel lane area. Adding a pedestrian refuge island would allow the crossing to match all others along Empire Boulevard between Nostrand and Schenectady Avenue.
 - i. Group discussion and visual assessment of the current street. As there is no turn bay there, all agreed that something may fit with ease that could include space for tree planting as well.
 - ii. Discussion of the proximity to Assemblymember Cunningham's office at this corner and how staff from his office reached out to describe a fatality they had witnessed during a vehicle crash last year. There was also a recent crash injuring 7 people at this intersection. Felice Robertson asked the 71st precinct for more details, and they said the district office would need to send a formal letter asking for details.
 - iii. Group also speculated if there were legitimate reasons why such a pedestrian safety design element was left out of the 2009 plan that brought the other pedestrian refuge islands to the district. (see page 11 of this presentation).
- b. Paco Abraham makes a motion to request DOT install a pedestrian refuge island on the east side of the Empire & Rogers Avenue intersection as well as explain if there are reasons it had been omitted from the previous Empire Blvd plan in 2009. If

anything prevents such an addition now, DOT ought to explore other street safety additions that can be made to this intersection.

c. Andrew Magnus seconds the motion.

d. Motion is approved by common consent.

IX. Car Share Concerns

a. Theresa Westerdahl outlines concerns about DOT's poor management of car share parking spots clustered by Sullivan Pl and Ludlam. Posted signage does not match the spatial allocations, and residents had to take it upon themselves to temporarily correct markings painted on the ground. She claimed most residents want the spaces moved away entirely from that corner, but if they remain, they should at least have correct signage and be properly maintained.

i. Ethan Norville makes a motion to send a letter requesting that DOT correct the mistaken signage placed at Sullivan and Ludlum, and correctly identify the spots with proper street markings and posted signage, and enforce the car share companies to maintain the spaces as is required by their contract with the city.

ii. Paco Abraham seconds the motion.

iii. Motion is approved by common consent.

X. Half Marathon Routes

a. Hector Robertson offered a detailed list of concerns regarding the disruptions to residents of Washington Avenue posed by multiple marathon routes.

b. Group chimed in with concerns about the 3 days of noise the event brings, the fencing they add, which makes it impossible to cross, health concerns because of the large string of portable restrooms, and general disturbance to the local residents.

i. Felice Robertson makes a motion for CB9 to send a letter to DOT, NYPD, elected officials, New York Road Runners & any other pertinent groups that would

1. Request information on why Washington Avenue has become the route for multiple marathons
2. Express the immense disruption the event poses for residents in the community
3. Demand that event planners come to the committee for input and discussion before setting any future courses
4. Ask for future marathon routes not to be set along Washington Avenue and instead revert to previously established adjacent street routes of Flatbush Avenue or Eastern Parkway.

ii. Paco Abraham seconds the motion.

iii. Motion is approved by common consent.

XI. Adjourn

a. Ethan Norville made a motion to adjourn at 9:13 pm. Felice Robertson seconded the motion. **The motion passed by unanimous consent**