



The City of New York

Queens Community Board 11

Serving the Communities of Auburndale, Bayside, Douglaston, Hollis Hills
Little Neck and Oakland Gardens

Paul DiBenedetto Chairperson / **Joseph Marziliano** District Manager

To: All Board Members

From: Victor Dadras, Committee Chair

Date: March 21, 2024

Re: MTA Queens Bus Redesign Proposal and
Various Traffic Safety Issues and Requests

On Wednesday, March 20, 2024, the CB11 Transportation Committee met to discuss the MTA's Queens Bus Redesign Proposal and several traffic issues and requests.

Committee Members

Victor Dadras, 1st Vice Chair and Committee Chair

Henry Euler, 2nd Vice Chair*

Fleur Martino*

Eileen Miller

Benjamin Turner*

Christina Scherer*

Rob Liatto*

George Hadjiconstantinou*

CB11 Staff

Joseph Marziliano, District Manager

Jane Bentivenga, Community Coordinator*

Guests

Noah Sheroff, Executive Director, Bayside Village BID

Jess Mueller, AM Braunstein's office

Susannah Go, AM Rozic's office

Daphne Halkias, CM Paladino's office

Mr. Dadras called the meeting to order. He stated that full the Board will be voting on the MTA's Bus Redesign Proposal at the April 1, 2024 Board meeting. Ms. Halkias announced that CM Paladino will be holding an information session via Zoom on March 25, 2024 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. regarding bus routes that go through Council District 19. Mr. Marziliano said this information will be in CB11's digest this week.

Mr. Dadras said some improvements have been made to the proposal but there are still some concerns. Mr. Sheroff spoke about the BID's concerns with the proposal to reroute the Q31 from

Bell Blvd. to Utopia Parkway including the effect it will have on the many businesses on Bell Blvd. and the people who utilize the bus to get to their jobs, restaurants and shops on this commercial strip. The BID does not want the Q31 rerouted. MTA feels that people wanting to go to Bell Blvd. can take the bus and get off at Northern Blvd. and Bell Blvd. or take the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) to the Bayside Station. Mr. Turner expressed that he feels Utopia Parkway would be a better, direct route to St. Johns and the Jamaica LIRR station. Ms. Mueller said the MTA advised that the Q13 will service the majority of Bell Blvd. although they did not say how frequently it will run. At this point, Mr. Marziliano read Board Chair, Paul DiBenedetto's and Committee Member and Northwest Bayside Civic Association President, Jena Lanzetta's written comments into the record as neither of them could attend this meeting. Both expressed concerns with the changes to the Q13 and Q31 buses. Mr. Marziliano and Mr. Dadras said most of the comments CB11 has received relate to the changes proposed to these two routes.

The change in stop spacing was also discussed. Mr. Turner said there should only be a short walk between stops implemented in consideration of the disabled or the elderly. But stop spacing is needed to speed up service. Mr. Hadjiconstantinou echoed Mr. Turner's point. He also commented that stop spacing could be an argument to increase funding for Access-A-Ride. Mr. Hadjiconstantinou also said that no bus stops should be removed from in front of locations where there are facilities for seniors. Ms. Martino agreed with other services being needed and added that not all seniors are eligible for Access-A-Ride nor is the general public. Ms. Scherer remarked about how narrow Utopia Parkway is between 39 Avenue and 33 Avenue.

Mr. Marziliano asked if anyone had comments about rush route service which seems to be a positive change. There were no comments. Mr. Turner stated that the Q31 will pass by Bayside High School on 32 Avenue. Mr. Euler stated that he is glad the Q13 will remain, as it is an important route to Northern Blvd. and Fort Totten. Mr. Marziliano commented the proposal does eliminate the QM3. Customers would take the Q12 and rush route 36 to the subway or the LIRR using the CityTicket program.

There were no further comments. Mr. Dadras stated the committee report will be distributed to all and this issue will be voted on at April Board meeting.

The next topic discussed was a request by Mrs. Miller to add Christine Haider's name to the existing co-named street for Howard C. Haider at Northern Blvd. and 207 Street in Bayside. Mrs. Miller read her letter of request and made a motion to do so. Mr. Euler seconded the motion. Mr. Dadras thinks it is a good idea to add her name to the existing co-naming sign. There was discussion regarding needing support by a local civic association. Several people contended that her membership on CB11 was her civic duty. In any case, Mr. Euler will submit a letter of support from the Auburndale Improvement Association. In the event a dual sign is not possible, 189 Street and 56 Avenue will be the alternate location requested for Mrs. Haider. A roll call vote was taken. All were in favor. The motion passed. The issue will be calendared for a public hearing and vote at the May Board meeting. Mr. Marziliano stated he will check with DOT about adding a name to the existing co-named street sign.

Several requests from Mr. Euler were discussed next. The first was regarding the configuration of the bike lane at the staggered intersections of Northern Blvd. at Corporal Kennedy Street and Oceania Street. There is no protected bike lane at these locations and the bike

lanes are painted on sidewalk. Mr. Euler said, in his opinion, this is very dangerous. He proposed using three of the parking spaces in front of Volvo as a protected bike lane. This configuration needs to be much safer. Mr. Euler will submit further information to the CB11 office. Mr. Marziliano said he will make an inquiry to DOT to see if this is a temporary condition before CB11 writes a letter.

Next, the issue of tractor trailers heading westbound on Northern Blvd. and turning north onto 207 Street to enter the northbound Clearview Expressway was discussed. The trucks have a very hard time navigating this turn causing sidewalk damage. The fire alarm box has been knocked down several times as well. Mr. Euler made a motion to remove parking from the west side of 207 Street between Northern Blvd. and 43 Avenue in addition to the removal of a few parking spots north of Northern Blvd. on the east side of 207 Street. The motion was seconded by Ms. Scherer. A voice vote was taken. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

The third issue Mr. Euler discussed was the faded line markings on westbound Northern Blvd. at the southbound Clearview Expressway service road. Mr. Marziliano stated a request will be made to DOT for the thermoplastic markings to be refurbished. The refurbishing of the markings at the Long Island Expressway service road between Marathon and Little Neck Parkways was also requested by a resident at a previous Board meeting. These requests will be made through 311.

Mrs. Miller also mentioned that the street name sign for 212 Street at Horace Harding is so faded it is illegible.

Next, Mr. Euler inquired about the status of the requested traffic study for one-way conversions for the area bounded by Northern Blvd. to Station Road between Utopia Parkway and Francis Lewis Blvd. Mr. Marziliano will inquire with DOT.

Lastly, Mr. Euler discussed the parking that was removed on 53 Avenue from Oceania Street to 188 Street. He stated that many homeowners lost the parking in front of their homes and have signs on their property stating, "No Bike Lane". Also, the same thing happened on Rocky Hill Road from 207 Street to Oceania Street. He inquired if a letter was ever written requesting that some parking be restored. Mr. Marziliano said that DOT is moving forward with the plan they proposed. Ms. Scherer commented that bike lanes should only be on one side of the street. Mr. Turner said, in general, having bikes traveling one way on a bike lane is safer. He suggested narrowing the driving lanes by 1' to 1 1/2' could preserve a parking lane.

Mr. Liatto commented that truck traffic exiting the Clearview Expressway and using 73 Avenue is getting out of control. Mr. Marziliano stated that GPS often directs the traffic that way. Mrs. Miller inquired about the hotline regarding truck traffic that the Mayor's Community Assistance Unit spoke to CB11 about. Mr. Marziliano said they are trying to implement this as an initiative of special enforcement; no decision has been made yet.

Mr. Marziliano spoke about Congresswoman Meng's help with the funding for the Vanderbilt Motor Parkway overpass; now Rep. Meng has helped increase funding for additional sound barriers that will be installed in conjunction with the ongoing project on the Long Island Expressway and Springfield Blvd.

Mr. Dadras said the following issues will be discussed at a future Transportation Committee meeting: the “daylighting” issue that is being advocated for with the New York State Senate, the proposed Sammy’s Law that would lower the speed limit in certain areas around New York City to under 25 mph and the continuing school safety issues (such as double parking) and open streets initiatives.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted March 22, 2024