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Lisa Deller
Chairperson

Debra Markell Kleinert
District Manager

January 5, 2021

Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

THIS MEETING WAS TELECONFERENCED USING ZOOM

Transportation Committee Members Present

Thomas Mituzas, Co-Chair
Bessie Cassaro
Osman Chowdhury
Jake DeGroot
Jordan Levine
Kristen McGowan
Steven Raga
Mary Torres

Transportation Committee Members Absent

Sheila Lewandowski, Chair
John Vaichunas

Community Board 2 Staff

Debra Markell Kleinert
MaryAnn Gurrado

NYC Department of Transportation

Gretha Suarez

Elected Officials/Representatives

Aileen Sheil, Representing Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer

"Serving the Communities of Long Island City, Sunnyside, Woodside and Maspeth"

Mr. Mituzas welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced the meeting was teleconferenced using Zoom.

TRANSPORTATION

Department of Transportation provided the following update. It has been reported that the majority of the DOT projects are on hold and will be revisited once the City and the State reopen due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES – Follow up on DOT Issues.

Blissville

Blissville Flagpole Continue discussion – next steps

- A meeting took place on 12/14/2020 with representatives from CB 2, NYC Parks, DOT, Blissville Civic Association (BCA) and Council Member Van Bramer and although the Agencies continue to disavow the responsibility to repair this century old flagpole that rests on NYC property, CB 2 and the BCA will continue to pursue its resurrection with the support of Councilman Van Bramer and hold NYC responsible for the repair.

Ms. Suarez reported:

- DOT received the letter that was drafted by Councilman Van Bramer.
- It is now being reviewed by the acting DOT Commissioner.
- Updates will be provided as they are received.

Court Square

- Ramps Project (DOT Property) – DOT is awaiting an update.

Ms. Suarez reported that DOT is still awaiting an update.

Mr. Mituzas requested clarification on the exact property location of the project. Ms. Suarez reported that the project is on Dutch Kills Street.

There was a discussion regarding the 2 new massive residential buildings that are being built on dead end Pearson Street in this area.

Sunnyside

- 44th Street and Barnett Avenue. Foundation Repair. Remains active with DOT Lighting (Case number 4645443). Please provide an update and Con Edison should be repairing light. Please provide status.

Streetlight on Barnett Avenue South East corner of 44th Street. Work order is #4906326 Open Case requires new foundation. Please provide an update and replacement of the signage.

Ms. Suarez reported that the foundation work has been completed by the DOT contractor. There is presently a stop tag, #106800, on this project with Con Ed to rewire the streetlight.

Sunnyside Speed Reducers

- Request for Speed Reducer at 43rd Street between 37th Avenue and Barnett Avenue (DOT-469476-D3L8). Please provide an installation date. (10/9 DOT informed CB 2 this is prioritized)

Ms. Suarez reported that this has been resolved. Ms. Suarez stated that she believes that the Speed Reducer has been installed. She will follow up and advise CB 2 regarding the markings.

Mr. Mituzas reported:

- The drag racers spin around and block end the streets.
- However there has been more police presence and regular enforcement, as well.
- The issue exists particularly on Friday and Saturday evenings and on holidays.
- While the drag racing has been lessened, a new behavior is emerging with the spinning around and blocking the streets.

DOT will look into this issue.

Woodside

- One-way conversion of 59th Street from Roosevelt Avenue to 41st Avenue as part of the pedestrian safety improvements the area of Woodside Avenue and Roosevelt Avenue. CB 2 submitted letter. Please provide an additional update.

Ms. Suarez reported that while this conversion request still appears on the agenda, the conversion should be completed in the next construction season.

- Request for signal at Woodside Avenue and 62nd Street (intersection near LIRR entrance). DOT-438359-K3C0. According to DOT the signal investigation is on hold. Please provide an additional update? Traffic signals still on hold.

Ms. Suarez reported that this signal study request was submitted last year, and there will be some delay in moving forward with the conducting of the study. This is still being reviewed.

- Request to DOT for a One-Way Street conversion on 51st Avenue between 65th Place and 61st Street. Provide an update. (DOT-464313-T7R8). Open and being evaluated. Please provide an update?

Ms. Suarez reported that this One-Way street conversion request was submitted last year, and there will be some delay in moving forward with the conducting of the study.

- Request for feasibility study for a one-way conversion on 50th Avenue between 69th Street and 65th Place. (DOY-483019-P9P2).

Ms. Suarez reported that the request for a feasibility study for this one-way conversion was submitted last year and there will be some delay in moving forward with the conducting of the study.

- Request for traffic control study at 67th Street and Garfield Avenue.

Ms. Suarez reported that regarding this request a study was performed at the beginning of 2020 and it was determined that the request did not meet the criteria or conditions for approval for an all way stop or a stop signal. Ms. Suarez will follow up on a new request with Ms. Markel Kleinert for a new study to be generated.

- **** All traffic studies are currently on hold.

Woodside Speed Reducers

- Speed Cushion request on 58 Street from 39th Ave. to Woodside Avenue (DOT – 433629-RSM3). Please provide update DOT states this is still an active body.

Ms. Suarez reported that this is still an active study.

- Speed Cushion request on 58th Place between Laurel Hill Blvd. and 52nd Avenue (DOT – 297802-W3Y6). This is approved. (10/9 DOT informed CB 2 this is prioritized). Please provide installation date.

Ms. Suarez reported that this Speed Cushion request has been approved. No date has been set for installation, as yet. Ms. Suarez will follow up.

- Speed Reducer request on 50th Avenue between 46th and 47th Streets (DOT-427192-D0P9) (DOT-430484-Z2V9). Approved (10/9 DOT informed CB 2 this is prioritized). Please provide installation date.

Ms. Suarez reported that this Speed Reducer request has been approved. No date has been set for installation, as yet. Ms. Suarez will follow up.

Long Island City

- Request for the return of parking spots on the south side of 48th Avenue between Vernon Blvd. and 11th Street. – DOT442293J7J6. There is one “No Standing” sign up. Is this an error?

Ms. Suarez reported that she followed up regarding this issue and DOT is requesting as procedure that CB 2 send a current letter to request the removal of the existing “No Parking”/“No Standing” sign at this location to make this official.

- 46th Road and Jackson Avenue – no left turn request (DOT 434607-G9J4) 0 Study due at the end of January. DOT rejected this original request. CB 2 is requesting a new study.

Ms. Suarez reported that DOT is requesting a current letter from CB 2 for a traffic study regarding this issue as well.

Mr. Mituzas inquired regarding the following issue not listed on the agenda:

- Borden Avenue – Signaling issue in front of the exit coming out of the Midtown Tunnel making that right turn and the left turn on to Borden Avenue.

- Continue to follow up requests to review regulation changes for all 12/14-hour meters to 4 hours within CB 2. (DOT-481113-J7B9).

Ms. Suarez stated that this has been an ongoing request.

- 1) The Unit is reviewing the current request for the regulation changes to have all 12/14 hour-meters to 4 hours within CB 2.
 - 2) No other new update provided.
- Continue to provide an update on the Open Streets.

Ms. Suarez reported:

- 1) DOT is currently working with the 39th Avenue Coalition on this issue.
- 2) The 39th Avenue Coalition has received new barriers from the 108th Police Precinct.
- 3) DOT is requesting the cooperation of Council Member Van Bramer's office regarding this issue.
- 4) Areas that were damaged from the storm have been removed by the Police Dept.
- 5) Request was made by DOT to keep the area simple and not use any triangular configurations at the present time.

DOT will follow up.

Ms. Markell Kleinert reported that the barriers were a great improvement and the placement of the barriers was a great improvement. There were signs of barriers being strewn around reported on Monday and Tuesday. Ms. Kleinert requested that DOT follow up to have things put back on track again.

Ms. Suarez announced a new program that was put into effect during the holiday season to provide the opening up of more space for stores. This program has been extended until September 30, 2021.

- 1) The program is similar to the Open Restaurant sidewalk set up.
 - 2) They need to maintain a path for pedestrians.
 - 3) Retailers cannot use the space adjacent to the businesses. It does allow some storefronts to expand on to the sidewalk.
- Continue to provide an update on Open Restaurants.

Ms. Suarez reported that since the winter, guidelines for Open Restaurants have not changed.

New Business

- **The Blissville Greenway** from K bridge to G bridge along Review Avenue connecting Laurel Hill and Blissville and the Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, Councilman Van Bramer has written a letter of support for this community inspired project that is also contained in the CB 2's Top 10 budget priorities.

Ms. Suarez reported:

- 1) With respect to The Blissville Greenway, a letter of support has been written by Councilman Van Bramer in December 2020.
- 2) This project has now been assigned to the Unit for review.
- 3) The reference number for future reference is DOT- 484255-K7Q6.

Mr. Mituzas stated that the Blissville Greenway area is an example of a naturally occurring thoroughfare. Mr. Mituzas provided a short synopsis of the area as it evolved into this state.

- Continue discussions on Dutch Kills loop.

Mr. Mituzas requested information regarding the following issues:

- 1) The Vernon Blvd. Bulkhead located close to 54th Avenue and Vernon Blvd. The project has been owned by State DOT. Mr. Mituzas reported that a petition has been circulated in Long Island City regarding the creating of public access for the Vernon Blvd. shoreline. It seems that this has been going on 20 years. The public access has seen support from the Council Member's office, from different environmental groups, yet it appears that DOT has decided to put up a wall with a fence as opposed to including public access as has been done on the Greenpoint side.

Ms. Suarez responded stating that this issue referred to as the Vernon Blvd. Bulkhead located closer to 51st Avenue and Vernon Blvd. had collapsed in 2016. Following the collapse, an emergency repair of the Bulkhead was done under an emergency repair contract. There is also an issue here of illegal boat parking on the Bulkhead which has applied extra weight and pressure on the Bulkhead. The design that was created is a DOT project, but it is managed by the EDC. It is an emergency repair contract again to bring the Bulkhead into compliance. The hope is adding pedestrian access and making it more of a public space. There have also been conversations with the Newtown Creek Alliance. It is in the process of being placed on construction. Updates will be provided when available.

A discussion took place regarding this issue and how plans were so different on the Greenpoint side as opposed to the plans for the Long Island City side.

With regard to the Kosciusko Bridge, Mr. Mituzas inquired about a representative from State DOT as the project that he is questioning is the park on the Queens side of the Kosciusko Bridge which is owned by State DOT. The Brooklyn side has been completed and nothing has been done on the Queens side. The area is frequented by young adults and children who come to the area with their skateboards and are using the streets in the area as a park right now. Mr. Mituzas requested that CB 2 follow up regarding the parks to be created. The area was supposed to be designed as a park for the children on the Queens side of the bridge. Ms. Markell Kleinert will reach out and follow up regarding the parks to be created by State DOT on the Queens side of the Kosciusko Bridge.

- 2) Request for information regarding how does Blissville get an Open Street?

Mr. Mituzas stated that he forwarded photos of children playing in the area on 37th Street, but the request applies to any open block in Blissville. Mr. Mituzas stated that since this area is void of any park or green areas, a closed play street could benefit the children rather than playing in open traffic.

Ms. Suarez will follow up with the appropriate Unit to get more information since it is her understanding that currently, Citywide, they are not opening any new Open Streets but rather focusing on the Open Streets that already exist. Some of the existing ones, for example, like the ones on 5th Street and on Center Blvd. have been taken down because there has not been any interest in utilizing them. In the meantime, Ms. Suarez suggested to try to garner interest of members or volunteers who want to maintain the Open Streets.

Ms. Markell Kleinert stated that CB 2 will follow up with a request regarding this issue. Ms. Suarez will follow up as well.

- 5th Street and 49th Avenue to restore parking – (DOT 434606X8F0) DOT rejected. Please provide an update.

Ms. Suarez reported that she and Ms. Lewandowski did an onsite visit at this location. There is a red “No Standing” anytime sign on the southwest corner when making that right turn from 49th Avenue going to 5th Street. Ms. Lewandowski was requesting restoring the parking here. This request was rejected by DOT because this sign was needed for trucks to be able to make that turn. DOT is requesting to confirm that based upon an onsite visit to this location no further action will be taken at this time. Ms. Suarez stated please advise that this is the case or if not indicate any changes that are requested to be made. If this is the case, this issue can be removed from the agenda.

- Center Blvd. north of 49th Avenue transfer of property from State to City. Please continue to provide update.

No new updates were provided at this meeting.

- Install signalization at the corner of Jackson Avenue and 46th Road. Provide an update on the study requested in December.

Ms. Suarez reported no new updates provided as this study was just submitted at the end of 2020. Ms. Torres stated that Bullet 2 and Bullet 5 can be merged in this Long Island City section.

Long Island City Speed Reducers

- CB 2 sent a letter of request for a feasibility study for a slow zone sign and a speed reducer on 38th Street between 38th Avenue and Greenpoint Avenue (10/14/2020). Neighborhood slow zone (DOT-478719-Q9P4). Speed Reducer (DOT-478711-P8D2). Please provide an update.

Ms. Suarez reported no new updates provided as this study was just submitted in November 2020.

Old Business

- CB 2 sent letter of support for the Queensboro bridge pedestrian cyclist lane. Please provide and update. Conversations on going.

Ms. Suarez reported that this is still an ongoing conversation that will be continuing into the spring of 2021.

Mr. Mituzas asked why there could not be a sign stating bicycles ride on one side and pedestrians walk on the other.

Ms. Suarez provided information regarding the complicated restoration of the Queensboro bridge. There are contract issues, issues with fencing needed on the south outer roadway of the bridge and other safety concerns, and also funding issues. For these reasons DOT could not just have signs with one side stating bicycles and the other side stating pedestrians. DOT will continue working on this and continue to work through the issues.

Mr. Mituzas reported that there is a new business on Starr Avenue and 37th Street. It works with the children. The Blissville Civic Association is willing, and Mr. Mituzas is requesting support from Council Member Van Bramer's office, since the area has no parks.

Ms. Suarez stated DOT:

- 1) Will follow up with the 108th Precinct to request any necessary barriers.
- 2) Will provide Mr. Mituzas with the guidelines for Open Streets.
- 3) Will continue to address any problems and/or issues that arise and continue to educate people on the use of the Open Streets.

Mr. Mituzas requested an update regarding the non-availability of barriers for Open Streets and whose responsibility that is so that CB 2 can follow up.

Mr. Mituzas thanked everyone for attending the Transportation Committee Meeting.

Ms. Markell Kleinert announced that the next Transportation Committee Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 2, 2021.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by:

Joan Bergman/Debra Markell Kleinert

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