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Denise Keehan-Smith
Chairwoman

Debra Markell Kleinert
District Manager

May 4, 2020

Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

THIS MEETING WAS HELD BY TELECONFERENCE USING WEBEX

Board Members Present

Sheila Lewandowski
Jake DeGroot
Jordan Levine
Kristen McGowan
Thomas Mituzas
Steven Raga
Mary Torres

Board Members Absent

Bessie Cassaro
Osman Chowdhury
Denise Keehan-Smith
Santiago Vargas

Community Board 2 Staff

Debra Markell Kleinert

Elected Officials/Representatives

Representative from Assembly Member Brian Barnwell's Office
Aileen Sheil, Representing Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer's Office
Philip Borsomian, Representing Assembly Member Catherine Nolan

Sheila Lewandowski welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced the meeting was being teleconferenced by WebEX.

Ms. Lewandowski 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.

John O'Neill, Department of Transportation reported the DOT will not be conducting speed humps studies as they would not get accurate counts or accurate information.

Mr. O'Neill announced the DOT is working on the following:

Pothole repairs, paving and lighting repairs and signal repairs. The DOT is not doing full scale milling and road resurfacing. The DOT is not doing lighting studies or signal studies

Mr. O'Neill announced that City Hall or the community will be identifying locations where they could potentially close streets off to allow for more open space so people can social distance.

Provide an update and timeline on the bulkhead restoration at the end of Vernon Blvd

A discussion about the Bulkhead restoration at the end of Vernon Boulevard took place.

Ms. Lewandowski announced that CB 2 had received some emails from the Newtown Creek Alliance. She reported that CB 2 Board Member, Dorothy Morehead, brought this to our attention, that the Newtown Creek Alliance has been working on proposals and recommendations for the entire waterfront and both sides of the water. Ms. Lewandowski reported that the Newtown Creek Alliance were not happy because nothing they worked on had been included in the proposal to restore the bulkhead.

Ms. Lewandowski reported that there was a follow up meeting with herself, Denise Keehan-Smith, Dorothy Morehead, Debra Markell Kleinert, EDC and DOT. Ms. Lewandowski stated that CB 2 had expressed our frustration and concern and that they should have been in contact with the Newtown Creek Alliance. The Newtown Creek Alliance had asked for many years that they have put into the proposal for long term ideas to green both sides of the waters.

It was reported that the DOT and the EDC stated this was about restoring and making emergency repairs.

Ms. Lewandowski stated that they asked if there was any way they could work to consider some of the long-term ideas of access to the waterfront into the emergency repairs as they do not offer any access.

Ms. Lewandowski reported that we are waiting for information to come back from the DOT on where the funding is coming from for the restoration. She also asked them to reach out to the Newtown Creek Alliance.

Mr. O'Neill reported the DOT will work on a letter with EDC and Skanska and will prepare a response on the matter.

Blissville

Blissville Flagpole

Tom Mituzas reported they held a meeting with DOT and that they are awaiting a meeting with DOT and Parks and are asking for information concerning the agreement that exists between DOT and Parks regarding parks assumption of the triangle.

Mr. Mituzas reported that Parks took full responsibility for that triangle. Mr. Mituzas suggested that Parks looks at the triangle under the Community Park Initiative by Parks Commissioner Silver.

Mr. O'Neill stated that the next step will be a meeting between the Civic, Parks and CB 2. Mr. O'Neill reported that he visited the site and discussed the foundation of the pole site. He reported that DOT is trying to get a specs and a drawing from Parks. The diameter of the Pole is 3" pole.

Previously approved Conversion of 37th Street to a one-way between Review Avenue and Bradley Avenue/Greenpoint Avenue. Please provide status of installation? Schools are now closed; can this work be done sooner?

In response to a question by Tom Mituzas, John O'Neill discussed the one-way conversion and stated that they have already secured the approval and that this is a matter of the implentation schedule for Operations and at this time it does not have a case number.

37th Street and Review – John O'Neill reported that no work has begun yet. He checked the four corners of the location during a site visit and reported that signals are continuing to install but are doing so on a skeleton crew at the present time and that it will happen.

Mr. O'Neill discussed a couple of signal timing studies on Greenpoint Avenue, LIE and there is not an ability to alter the timing further.

Sunnyside

Mr. O'Neill provided the following update:

Lighting outages in the Sunnyside Gardens area: 44th Street and 39th Avenue and 39th Avenue and 47th Street and 48th Avenue. DOT is continuing to conduct emergency repairs. Lighting outages in Sunnyside Gardens area 44th Street and 39th Avenue and 39th Avenue and 47th Street and 48th Avenue. Please advise when will be repaired?

44th Street and 47th Avenue – DOT completed the work, and this should be operational again.

39th Avenue and Woodside Avenue (53-17 39th Avenue). Foundation repair. The DOT checked with their lighting unit after the meeting and they gave a new update on this work order. Remains active with DOT Lighting. The contractor will come back and install the shaft with the luminaire. (Case number assigned to this is 4021617) Please provide an update.

Barnett Avenue and 43rd Street. Foundation Repair. Remains active with DOT Lighting (Case number assigned to this is 4101158)

44th Street and Barnett Avenue. Foundation and pole were replaced by the contractor. This is now with Con Edison. (Case number 4645443)

Woodside

Mr. O'Neill provided the following information:

39th Avenue and Woodside Avenue - This was a foundation repair and has been completed and is working again.

43-15 58th Street - Foundation Repair and pole portion has been completed. (Case number 4021652) please provide an update. This is with Con Ed and DOT will provide an update on this.

Request for signal at Woodside Avenue and 62nd Street (intersection near LIRR entrance) DOT-438539-K3C0. According to DOT this signal investigation is due May 2020. The DOT announced the study is on hold at this time.

Discussion of Woodside Drag Racing - Discussion of traffic calming measures, speed cushions etc.

Ms. Lewandowski reported there is drag racing going in other communities such as Hunter's Point and it is happening everywhere. We have asked the 108th to get a list of problem areas. Mr. O'Neill stated that speeding remains a significant issue and it is exacerbated by the fact that the streets are relatively empty.

Mr. O'Neill discussed the issue of a speed hump request on 43rd Street north of Skillman Avenue and Northern Boulevard and this is a difficult situation because of the driveways in this area.

A board member discussed that she received an approval letter for a speed hump on Barnett Avenue. The letter will be forwarded to CB 2 and Mr. O'Neill will follow up.

Ms. Lewandowski discussed drag racing and staging. Ms. Torres reported that this is also going on 2nd Street/Southern End and as far as Center Boulevard and Anable Basin and speed cushions could be installed there. There is also homeless sleeping in the vestibules and things are getting bad.

Ms. Lewandowski reported that there has been enforcement on 2nd Street at Hunters Point South.

Mr. O'Neill reported that the DOT does not put speed humps on blocks where there are two lanes of traffic going in the same direction. There will have to be a partnership and there must be more enforcement.

Mr. O'Neill reported the DOT can take a look at Borden Avenue as it may be something worth looking at.

Woodside Speed Reducer

Speed Cushion request on 58th Street from 39th Ave to Woodside Ave. (DOT-433629-RSM3) – Please provide update.

Mr. O'Neil stated there is no update at this time, and it is still active at this time.

Long Island City

46th Road and Jackson Avenue – no left turn request (DOT 434607-G9J4) – Study due at the end of January. DOT rejected this original request. CB 2 is requesting a new study. Mr. O'Neill did not have an update on this issue.

Ms. Lewandowski asked if DOT has been replacing signs. Mr. O'Neill stated there is a skeleton crew with the Borough Engineers office. If there is a sign that is knocked down, the DOT will go out there and replace it.

Provide an update on 2019 carry over conventional bike lane – Kosciuszko Bridge Connections.
Provide an update on what installations of the bike lanes in 2020.

Mr. O'Neill discussed the pedestrian bike lane and DOT created connectors that lead bikes to the entrance of the bridge on the Brooklyn and Queens side. On the Queens side, they did a presentation to CB2 and did a follow up walk through of a regular lane to be installed on 47th Street between Greenpoint Avenue and 47th Street makes a bend on the street on that southern end. 48th Street from Review to Queens Boulevard and a regular bike lane on 43rd Street between the entrance of the Kosciuszko Bridge up to 50th Avenue. The lanes finally got implemented. There is one remaining portion that for this project that has yet to be completed and should be done in a week or two which is 48th Street between Review Avenue and LIE.

Mr. O'Neill reported that regular bike lanes will be installed and that no parking will be lost on 43rd Street and 42nd Street between Skillman Avenue and 50th Avenue and then there will be an extension of the regular lanes on 47th Street and 48th Street from Greenpoint Avenue area on North up to Skillman Avenue creating a comprehensive grid of bike lanes running through Sunnyside.

48th Street will require concrete changes and signal changes. There will be implemented this year and the DOT is here to answer questions and that a walk through can be conducted.

Please provide an update on the Open Streets Plan to allow for room for Social Distancing

Mr. O'Neil reported that there is an open street proposal and the DOT is aiming to do about forty miles worth of open streets in May and they are looking to do about a hundred miles of streets in total. They are collecting proposals and requests from Community Boards and PD and FDNY. It will not be a truck or bus route and they are prioritizing the open streets. It will be adjacent to parks space and they will be requests from CB's and other local partners. The DOT is reaching out to BID's and civic groups. They are looking at sidewalk widening.

Mr. O'Neill reported that last week, the DOT sent information on the details and what the roll-out is. There is one in Community Board 2, which is at Court Square West. As a component of the request, they put out to community boards to identify blocks and block association's and community partners who would be willing to help us keep those streets. This is so that people will be able to safely social distance and they will be better repurposed in the short term for pedestrian use.

Mr. O'Neill stated he will forward this information to the Community Board 2 Office.

Ms. Lewandowski discussed the possibility for an Open Street on Center Boulevard which is adjacent to a park. There are still truck deliveries and there are businesses down there.

Mary Torres requested a map be distributed. Mr. O'Neill stated they will highlight and send them to the community partners, but he doubts they will print something on a large scale as there is not a duration at this time. Mr. O'Neill stated it is a temporary program to alleviate the social distancing concerns in the city at this time.

Provide an update on Lyft virtual town halls.

Mr. O'Neill reported that what Lyft is doing to support city essential workers where feasible. He reported that the bike expansion is going to be focusing its expansion efforts at this time. The first phase of the City Bike Expansion Program is going to focus on upper Manhattan and the South Bronx. They dropped a couple in to allow people to adopt bikes and they donated 30 bikes to employees over at Elmhurst hospital.

The Town Hall itself was just to explain what the program is and where its slated to go next in the first phase of expansion. It doesn't have anything to do with CB 2 until further down the line.

The next Transportation Committee Meeting is scheduled for June 1, 2020.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

MA Gurrado

05042020TCMM