

BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 6
TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
April 21, 2016

ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT:

J. ARMER	S. AVERY	P. BLAKE
B. CHANCEY	D. DECOSTANZO	D. GORDON
K. GURL	E. MCCLURE	M. MURPHY
M. SILVERMAN	J. SMITH	J. THOMPSON

EXCUSED:

T. MISKEL	R. RIGOLLI	R. SLOANE
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ABSENT:

D. SCHNEIDER	U. ZIMMERMAN
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GUESTS:

J. BROOKS – FIRE DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK
E. STOLTZ – REP. FROM SOUTH BROOKLYN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORP.
J. KIDDER – DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (BRIDGES)
R. SHAH – DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (BRIDGES)
J. O’CONNELL

*****MINUTES*****

CANCELLED: Update and presentation on the Department of Transportation's plans to roll-out CitiBike, the City's bike share program, to the district.

DOT assures the committee that the CitiBike rollout schedule will not be affected despite the presentation being postponed until next month.

Presentation and discussion of a proposal by the Fire Department to install an Ambulance Charger near the southwest corner of Union Street/4th Avenue.

Representing the Fire Department of New York (FDNY), Jeremy Brooks presented plans to install an ambulance charging station at Union Street and Fourth Avenue.

- An ambulance charger will be installed near the southwest corner of Union Street and Fourth Avenue, three parking spots west from the corner on Union.
- The FDNY has received a state grant to install 39 of these chargers throughout the city, at a cost of \$10,000 per unit.
- Ambulances must always run their communications and medical equipment. Normally, they must idle the engine to power this equipment. When plugged into this charger, FDNY ambulances will be able to turn off the engine while parked, reducing carbon emissions.
 - Ambulances currently emit 45 tons of carbon emissions per year.
- This charger will serve the ambulance usually parked in the gas station across the street.
- It will be installed curbside, on the sidewalk with underground electric lines.

- Similar in size to a Department of Transportation (DOT) municipal parking meter.
- Features include: Tamper-proof key security, automatically retracting cord, radio communication.
- The adjacent parking space will be reserved for FDNY ambulance parking.
- The unit will work exclusively for FDNY ambulances, not private companies.
- The unit will tap into the power from the streetlight.

Jerry Armer made a motion, seconded by Pauline Blake, to approve the ambulance charger as presented by the FDNY.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Presentation and discussion of a proposed Capital project by the Department of Transportation (DOT) to replace the Union Street Bridge over the Gowanus Canal.

Representing the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT), Joannene Kidder, Bridge Division Chief Staff Manager, and Rahul Shah, Director of Movable Bridges, presented a proposed capital project to replace the Union Street Bridge.

- DOT seeks to replace the bridge at Union Street after it became structurally and mechanically damaged by Hurricane Sandy.
 - Any mechanical equipment in the new bridge will be housed above the floodplain.
- The city is still in very early stages of conceptual design. DOT came to the community to assess favorability between constructing a new movable or fixed bridge. They required no official motion or vote.
- Movable Bridge
 - Does not need a new permit from US Coast Guard.
 - Considering a “heel trunion bascule bridge” where a large counter-weight lowers to lift the movable span.
 - Requires the addition of a ~30-foot tower over the roadway to house mechanicals.
 - 2-3 times more expensive to construct than fixed option.
 - Higher yearly maintenance and operation costs.
 - 30-39 months to construct.
- Fixed Bridge
 - Permanent height restriction of 7.5 feet for marine navigation.
 - Height restriction requires a new permit from the US Coast Guard.
 - NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) must compensate all property owners north of the bridge for loss of canal access.
 - Includes jersey barriers to separate sidewalk from roadway.
 - 24-30 months to construct.
- The current two-story bridge mechanical house will be removed to widen the bridge.
- There is not currently any commercial nautical traffic in the portion of the Gowanus Canal north of the Union Street Bridge.
- Either option would be designed with a minimum operable life of 75 years.
- CB6: Will the Federal EPA require a movable bridge to dredge the canal? Can the canal be dredged before the bridge is replaced?
 - DOT: There is not yet a set plan to dredge the canal. DOT cannot wait for the plan to materialize because the bridge is in bad shape, running on a temporary system.

- CB6: Will the construction of the combined sewage overflow (CSO) tanks planned for the northern end of the canal be affected?
 - DOT: If DOT changes access to the CSO tanks prior to construction, they must bear the cost of trucking in construction materials that would otherwise have been shipped at cost to the federal EPA.
- CB6: Can DOT explore the option of moving the jersey barrier to protect the bicycle lanes in addition to the sidewalk?
 - DOT: The bicycle path would not be wide enough to plow for snow. A “Gator” would have to be trucked in to do snow removal.
 - Q: Can the pedestrian and bike paths be combined?
- CB6: Did DOT consider a vertical lift bridge?
 - DOT: Much harder & more expensive to maintain these, and requires higher towers, i.e.: Ninth Street.
- CB6: What’s the next step in the process?
 - DOT: Agency will file for Coast Guard permit to see if it can be obtained.
- CB6: What happens to vehicular traffic during construction?
 - DOT: All traffic will be rerouted to a detour.
- CB6: The Gowanus Canal Community Advisory Group would likely be interested in hearing about the bridge reconstruction.
 - DOT: We’d be happy to meet with them.
- CB6: The committee strongly prefers physical bike lane protection.
 - DOT: Jersey barriers are too heavy for the movable span of the bridge. Flexible bollards would be a possibility. This will be taken into consideration.
- CB6: If the movable option is selected, please consider aesthetics.
- CB6: What are the maintenance costs for movable bridges?
 - DOT: Directed to Bridge and Tunnels Annual Condition Report: http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/dot_bridgereport14.pdf
- CB6: Please use grates with a smoother road surface for small tires on the new bridge.
- DOT informally polled the room and found more support for the fixed option.
 - Several committee members said there is not yet enough information to come to a decision.

Minutes of the March meeting were approved unanimously.

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

The minutes were submitted by Bahij Chancey.