

Minutes of the Traffic & Transportation Committee Meeting
Bronx Community Board 8
February 15, 2024, 7pm ET

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm

Committee Members Present: Kelli Buford, Christopher Calhoun, Ingrid

DeLeon, Mary Ellen Gibbs, Eliane Lobos,

Committee Members Absent: Sylvia Alexander, David Gellman, Theodore Morris, Joshua Land

Opening Remarks

Committee Chair Buford welcomed Committee Members and the Community and outlined the meeting process.

Approval Item: Minutes (January 18, 2024 Meeting)

Ms. Buford referred the Committee Members to the draft minutes of the January 18, 2024, Traffic and Transportation Committee Meeting for review and approval. Following discussion, the Committee approved the minutes as recorded.

In favor: Kelli Buford, Christopher Calhoun, Ingrid DeLeon, Mary Ellen Gibbs, Eliane, Lobos

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Information Item: Presentation from NYC-DOT Safety Improvements at Van Cortlandt Avenue South and Bailey Avenue

NYC DOT represented by Dan Wagner presented the proposed safety improvement plan at the intersection of Van Cortlandt Avenue South and Bailey Avenue, including the north bound I-87 (Major Deegan Expressway) Exit 11 off and on ramps. (See, [here](#).) Mr. Wagner advised that in 2016-2017, Assemblymember Jeffrey Dinowitz and citizens requested improvements to the intersection. He also advised that in 2023 Councilmember Pierina Sanchez requested the installation of a pedestrian island. Mr. Wagner informed that the proposed was not a capital project and that DOT planned to use concrete to complete the improvements. Proposed measures would include the closing of the north bound MDE exit emptying south (leading to Bailey Avenue) and southwest (leading to Van Cortlandt Park South toward Broadway) slip lanes and creating two separate controlled stop intersections and enhancing the existing sidewalk allowing pedestrians better access to Van Cortlandt Park. DOT would also shorten the current crosswalks at the intersection of Bailey Avenue

and Van Cortlandt Park South, including the closure of the slip lanes at the southwest and southeast corners of Van Cortlandt Park South and Bailey Avenue. In response to Committee inquiry, Mr. Wagner advised that DOT was still trying to determine the ability of emergency vehicles, buses and tractor trailers to navigate the revised intersection. DOT also indicated that it was still studying the impact of the closure of the southwest intersection slip lane to eastbound Van Cortlandt Park South traffic (Broadway to Bailey Avenue). Mr. Wagner also informed that the bus stops for the BxM3 express bus may be shifted. The Committee reminded DOT that the Bailey corridor is a major thoroughfare for tractor trailers and that the vehicles did not have enough clearance to navigate under the Broadway train tracks. Accordingly, determination of impact to the modifications at the intersection were critical prior to implementation, which was scheduled to start in April 2024 and completed by November 2024.

Information Item: NYS-DOT Update on Henry Hudson Parkway Project Concerns

NYS DOT represented by Susan McClellan presented an update on the Henry Hudson Parkway Project, including the intersection of Independence Avenue and West 232nd Street. Ms. McClellan discussed measures to improve bus stops and pedestrian access along Independence Avenue due to the rerouting of the local and express buses from Henry Hudson Parkway. Ms. McClellan advised that DOT authorized the contractor to install a solar powered light to one of the light poles to provide additional lighting at the bus stops and indicated that following the installation of the lights, MTA was asked to create temporary paved bus stops to better protect pedestrians. The improvements were slated to occur within the next two weeks. Ms. McClellan also advised that the HHP Project was on target for completion by September 2024.

The Committee reminded Ms. McClellan that at the September 2022 presentation of the project, NYS DOT was informed that the HHP is part of a designated state scenic parkway and also a National Historic Highway and that the stone cladding on the side retaining walls adjacent to the overpass should be restored to match the rest of the stone cladding along the scenic parkway. It was noted that this distinction was repeatedly pointed out to DOT at the January and June 2023 meetings. Ms. McClellan advised that she would review the matter and report back to the Committee at the March 2024 meeting.

A community member expressed concern about the installation of bus stops as the noted locations are adjacent to parkland and recommended that someone look to determine if that the installation provides ample space for the bus to stop to let people off on the asphalt path that is already built as a roadway into the park for park vehicle.

The community also expressed concerns about the closure of the southbound HHP West sidewalk at 232nd Street to pedestrians. Residents indicated that the closure served no

purpose other than to allow DOT to store materials and requested that DOT use alternate locations to store materials as the current closure presents a danger to pedestrians as people are crossing the street in the roadway, a problem that was exacerbated by the recent snowstorm.

Responding to the Committee Member inquiry, Ms. McClellan confirmed that the project was slated for completion by September 2024. She also noted that the request to install a bus stop at Independence Avenue and West 232nd Street was a request from MTA buses based on DOT observation of disembarkation. MTA requested the installation of temporary asphalt at certain locations. Ms. McClellan explained that temporary asphalt was commonly used and was exactly that, temporary and can be removed very easily versus having passengers disembark in dirt areas that aren't necessarily parkland as it is adjacent to the curb. Ms. McClellan also indicated that she would have the team assess the need to store equipment at 232nd Street and HHPW overpass. However, Ms. McClellan noted that construction within New York City is very difficult due to limited space and tight spots to put heavy equipment, which is being stored at the location. She also noted that in the coming weeks, concrete trucks will be in the area to start pouring for the wall and it's practical to be closer to the site. Ms. McClellan indicated that she understood the concern and would follow up with the project team to see if anything could be done.

Old Business

Intersection of West 235th Street and Oxford Avenue

Chair Buford asked Commissioner Perez if the study mentioned during the December 2023 meeting regarding the intersection of West 235th Street and Oxford Avenue. She indicated that an individual was struck and killed approximately 18 months ago at the intersection and that DC Cruz advised it would be available by the end of December 2023 and that the Committee has not received additional information nor was advised of proposed traffic calming measures at that intersection. Commissioner Perez indicated that the agency would provide a response within a week.

3616 Henry Hudson Parkway

Chair Buford advised that there were parking concerns around parking near West 236th Street and Netherland Avenue, the area near the exit to the parking garage for 3616 Henry Hudson Parkway. Members Calhoun and Gibbs advised that several years ago, the installation of "No Parking" signs were discussed with the Committee and that the community was seeking to have the "No Parking" signs installed. Photos of the location would be shared with DOT.

Discussion Item: FY 2026 Capital and Expense Priorities

Proposed projects include the Henry Hudson Parkway 235th Street overpass. Members Calhoun and Gibbs advised that they performed a walk through and the deterioration has gotten worse and should be a priority.

Additional suggestions include (i) the intersection of Riverdale Avenue and West 238th Street near the HHP overpass; (ii) the Broadway corridor, particularly coming off the Deegan; and (iii) various step streets. It was noted that step streets are unique to the Bronx and are major pedestrian thoroughfares in the district.

New Business

Chair Buford informed that NYC Taxi & Limousine Commission recently hosted an event in Inwood, "Van Hailin", TLC's Mobile Outreach Unit" in collaboration with Councilmember Carmen De La Rosa's office and indicated that the district has three car service companies and it may be a great program to offer within the district. She noted that she would ask the office to reach out to Councilmember Dinowitz' office to discuss bringing the event to the district.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee the meeting adjourned at 8:34pm.

Prepared by: De Leon

Reviewed by: Buford