

(Pending Committee Approval)
Minutes of the Traffic & Transportation Committee Meeting
Bronx Community Board 8
Thursday, February 17, 2022, 7pm via Zoom

Attendees:

Committee: Debra Travis (Chair), Kelli Buford, Christopher Calhoun, David Gellman, Mary Ellen Gibbs (CCM), Edward Green, Osvaly Jimenez, Georgia Santiago

Other Community Board 8: Bob Bender, Dan Padernacht, Sylvia Alexander, Laura Spalter, Camelia Tepelus, Karen Argenti (CCM), Rosemary Ginty, Robert Fanuzzi

Guests: Karen Argenti (Bronx Council of Environmental Quality), Amanda Wilson (Councilmember Eric Dinowitz's office)

The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm

Agenda

Approval of Minutes of Meeting of January 20, 2022

A quorum being present, the minutes of the January 20, 2022 committee meeting were approved as amended unanimously

Chair's Report

New law requiring complete stop - NYPD officers will enforce a new rule that requires all drivers and cyclists to come to a complete stop at a crosswalk where there is no traffic light or stop sign.

The new rule went into effect January 19th and will bring a \$50 ticket to drivers, including bicyclists, who are found in violation. Drivers will be arrested if they injure a pedestrian in a crosswalk. This is in response to the death of 268 people in New York City in 2021 including 121 pedestrians. DOT will have a public information campaign called "Stop, Let the Cross". The exact amendment to the rule is:

"Title 34 of the Rules of the City of New York, Paragraph (1) of Subdivision (b) of Section to require operators of vehicles and operators of bicycles to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks when traffic controls are not in place or not in operation, rather than yield, in order to enhance pedestrian safety. This rule amendment further clarifies that this provision applies to vehicles and operators of bicycles in any lane of travel, and that such vehicles and bicycles must stop and remain stopped for a pedestrian in a crosswalk until such pedestrian crosses a roadway."

OMNY Pilots Weekly "Passes" – MTA will launch March 1st, a new pilot which will cap the amount riders spend through OMNY to \$33 in a single week (from midnight Monday to Sunday at 11:59pm) effectively creating a weekly unlimited pass for that time period. Riders will pay the normal rates for the first 12 trips and trips after that will be free until Sunday night.

Orloff Avenue and Cannon Place Safety Improvement - DOT has rejected our request for safety improvements for pedestrians crossing at the southern intersection of Cannon and Orloff.

The agency “has reviewed this location and determined that the location does not fall under any of our priority goals for locations and user types. Additionally, improvements to these intersections present technical challenges that would consume considerable resources that we do not have at this time. Therefore, we will not be working at these locations in the near future.” The chair will reach out to the agency to get more details.

Stevenson Place Signage Upgrade - Stevenson Place “No Parking Anytime” signage has been approved by DOT to be upgraded to “No Standing Anytime” on the south side of Stevenson Place. A sign order has been issued and the installation is expected to be completed prior to April 30th, 2022

Johnson Avenue and Kappock Traffic Signal

A traffic signal has been approved for the intersection of Johnson Avenue and Kappock street. At the last meeting, we were asked when it will be installed. We have reached out to DOT and have not heard back.

2022 NYC Open Street Program - NYCDOT is accepting applications for 2022 NYC Open Street Program. Through this program community based organizations, schools and groups of businesses can partner with DOT to support outdoor dining, programming and outdoor recreation for schools. DOT makes sure that loading, deliveries and emergency access is coordinated. This includes Play Streets and Outdoor Learning Programs. Interested groups can apply directly at DOT’s webpage and find additional details on line at nyc.gov/openstreets.

MTA Launches Online Application for Reduced Fare Metrocards. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) announced that seniors and people with qualifying disabilities can apply online for reduced subway and bus fares. Previously, riders interested in a Reduced-Fare MetroCard would have to apply in person by visiting the Customer Service Center in Lower Manhattan, Mobile Sales or by mail. The reduced fare is half the base fare. The base fare for subways and local buses is \$2.75, so the reduced fare is \$1.35. Reduced fares can be used on the subway and on local buses at any time. On express buses and commuter railroads, reduced fares are eligible any time excluding rush hour. To learn more about reduced fares, visit <https://new.mta.info/fares/reduced-fare>. To apply, visit reducedfare.mta.info.

Mayor Adams Fully Funds Fair Fares Program – Mayor Adams announced on February 14th that the city would allocate \$75million to fund the Fair Fares program which offers 50% reduced MetroCards to New Yorkers who make less than the federal poverty line of \$13,950 for one person or \$27,750 for a family of four. For more information and to apply visit nyc.gov/farefair

New York State Bike Census - New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) has launched a statewide bike survey to collect detailed information on bicycle transportation patterns throughout New York State, with a focus on multimodal transportation. Google New York State Bike Census or contact the board office if you are interested in the link for the survey.

K Dale Livery Base License Application

Kamran Elhi, the new owner of K Dale Dispatch presented on his company's application for a new location for a livery base license and for a change of ownership. K Dale, originally known as Kingsdale Dispatch, is where Elhi worked with the former owner for over 30 years. The new base station will be located at 3265 Johnson Avenue, Suite 103. The committee had been asked in January for a letter of no objection as part of the application process. The board office was informed by Fabian Cancel, the Director of Base & Business Services for the Taxi and Limousine Commission that there is no longer a full process for renewal applications with the TLC and so letters of no objection are no longer required. Applicants can simply submit their request and pay online. As part of the process, business' seeking a renewal are asked to request a letter of no objection, however, they will still be approved irrespective of whether they received one. In the case of an objection, the approval can be reversed. The renewal application for K Dale was approved on February 7th.

The previous owner, Gary Kossin, sent a letter of strong support to the board office. The office also spoke to KRVC and the 50th Pct who stated that they had never received complaints regarding Kingsdale. Committee member Mary Ellen Gibbs also spoke very highly of Kingsdale Dispatch, particularly for seniors. Community Board 8 Chair, Laura Spalter, stated that the board office has never received any complaints regarding this business and Ed Green, the Chair of the Public Safety Committee stated that the Public Safety Committee has also never received any complaints regarding this business. Overall, K Dale promises to be an affordable and safe livery service for our community, particularly for seniors, servicing the whole community board, 7 days a week, from 6am to 9pm. They have 5 cars and 1 wheelchair accessible van. Elhi stated that to book a ride, contact them at 718-796-2222. They are cash only.

Presentation by Bronx Council of Environmental Quality on Green Streets

Karen Argenti from the Bronx Council of Environmental Quality presented on the impacts of flooding on the roadways particularly in Kingsbridge along the Broadway and Major Deegan corridors and in Marble Hill and Van Cortlandt Park. There is substantial water that runs through our community board attempting to mirror the path of the historic flow of old rivers, like Tibbetts Brook. As rain falls, it gathers along certain streets and properties as it runs to the lowest points in our CB. However, all rain water that lands on the roadway is directed into the NYC sanitary sewer where it combines with the raw sewage and the water that has overflowed Hestor & Piero's Mill Pond (previously known as Van Cortlandt Lake). This combination of raw sewage and fresh water goes to Wards Island Wastewater Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) where it is treated and then released into the Harlem River. Our sewer system is designed as a Combined Sewer Overflow system, so when it rains the water from the roadway drains into catch basins and then into the sanitary sewer. In order to protect the treatment facility if the rain fall is heavy, a switch can be flipped and the waste and water combination is directed to flow to the Harlem River at points called "outfalls". Our community board has several nearby outfalls including under the Henry Hudson Bridge near Spuyten Duyvil Shorefront Park, near the Metro North Station and near the Target. NYC is currently under a 2005 federal consent decree to reduce CSO overflows in order to improve the water quality of our rivers including the Hudson and Harlem Rivers. Through green infrastructure we are able to address two concerns caused by this system: 1. Our existing sanitary sewer system, even with this overflow option, cannot handle the volume of the heavy rain we have been experiencing due to climate change which leads to flooding in all low lying areas. 2. By directing rainwater from our roadways into green infrastructure like tree pits or rain gardens we are able to drastically reduce flooding and the volume of water that goes into our sanitary sewer, eliminating the overflow of waste into the river altogether. Making streets more impervious would

also assist with flooding. A design and development of a water budget is needed in order to implement green infrastructure so that it has the correct capacity for the site. The committee discussed with Argenti possible budget priorities that might help with reducing the flooding and thanked her for her very informative presentation. If anyone is interested in becoming a community green infrastructure advocate please contact Karen Argenti at karen@bceq.org.

It is also important that everyone reports flooding to 311 so that DOT and DEP can track issues exist in the community board. DEP is now focusing on us (Open Waters) and Jamaica Bay as part of the Long Term Control Plan. DEP has already placed retention basins below the Wendy's and McDonalds on Broadway. BCEQ is doing a pilot near Amalgamated near Mosholu with green infrastructure that is more wide than the traditional depth and suitable to our landscape.

Public Discussion of Safety Improvements at the Intersections of Van Cortlandt Avenue South, West 238th Street and 234th and Bailey Avenue

The committee discussed with the community members the safety at this intersection which has experienced several crashes and was raised during the November committee as an intersection of concern. It is a busy intersection with several large apartment buildings, several stores and is served by three bus lines. Community members highlighted the following issues at this intersection that cause it to be dangerous at certain times of the day for pedestrians to cross:

- Turning cars failing to yield and cutting the turn
- Speeding cars
- Double parked cars particularly on Bailey Avenue and on West 238th Street east of the intersection
- Pedestrians jay-walking to run to the bus
- Traffic from the rooftop parking lot on West 238th Street

A community member suggested that leading pedestrian indicators might be helpful in addition to making the intersection easier for people with disabilities to navigate. The committee will contact DOT to request they attend a future meeting.

Review of Budget Items for FY24

The committee reviewed a proposed list of budget items (see below). Next the committee will begin to assign an order. At the next meeting, the committee will review the order and discuss the response from the agencies regarding the FY23 Budget Priorities.

New Business

Several paving requests were made to be included in budget priorities. Paving can be requested as part of regular maintenance. The chair noted the requests for paving at the intersection of West 231st and Broadway, Edsall Avenue, Kingsbridge Terrace at King and Independence Avenue between Kappock Street and Bradley Terrace. If anyone knows of other blocks that need to be re-paved, the chair urges you to submit a 311 report and contact the office with the exact block and we will request it with DOT. The tree beds on Broadway are also very compacted and ineffective at absorbing rainwater and the surface crowning is inadequate and missing in most spots. The Chair will follow up with the board office.

Old Business

Mary Ellen Gibbs raised the issue of double-parking in front of Saint Gabriel's School during student dropoff/pickup. Ed Green, Public Safety Chair, said he would follow up with the Board office as this is an enforcement issue. More broadly, if anyone witnesses safety concerns related to the double-parking they should contact the Community Board office and we will follow up with the 50th Pct.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:18pm

Prepared & Submitted by: Debra Travis, Chair, Traffic & Transportation Committee