

(Pending Committee Approval)

Minutes of the Traffic & Transportation Committee Meeting

November 18, 2021 -- 7pm via Zoom

**ATTENDEES:**

*Committee:* Debra Travis (Chair), Kelli Buford, Christopher Calhoun, David Gellman, Edward Green, Georgia Santiago, Mary Ellen Gibbs (Community Committee Member)

*Absent:* Margaret Donato, Osvaly Jimenez,

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*Other CB 8 members:* Laura Spalter, Rosemary Ginty, Sylvia Alexander, Camelia Tepelus

*Guests:* Frederic Klein (Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz's office), Lorenzo Manzano (Council Member Eric Dinowitz's office)

**AGENDA:**

Debra Travis called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

*Approval of Minutes*

A quorum being present, the minutes of the October 5, 2021 committee meeting were approved by unanimous consent

*Chair's Report*

Bronx Borough DOT Commissioner Nivardo Lopez has left his position to become the New York State Deputy Secretary for Transportation. Deputy Borough Commissioner Keith Kalb will be acting Bronx Borough DOT Commissioner in his absence

Update on Major Deegan Storm Water Reduction Efforts - Mayor's Office of Climate Resiliency presented their new report "The New Normal: Combatting Storm-Related Extreme Weather in New York City" at the Environment & Sanitation Committee meeting on November 17<sup>th</sup>. In this document, which can be found online, they provide a framework of the city's effort to address storm-water runoff. In collaboration with the Environment & Sanitation Committee, we will continue to advocate for improvements to protect the Major Deegan Corridor. We strongly urge everyone to submit 311 reports whenever you experience flooding or sewer backflow issues. DEP uses these 311 reports to track issues and allocate capital dollars.

Paving Update - The milling and paving has happened for Dickenson Avenue, Van Cortlandt Avenue South and Henry Hudson Parkway East Service Road.

We had an inquiry about paving repairs on Independence Avenue between West 246<sup>th</sup> and Dodgewood. The office is working with DOT to determine responsibility for the street maintenance for this stretch of Independence Avenue since portions of it are privately owned.

We also had an inquiry about poor street conditions on Edsall Avenue due to a compromised sewer line. We are working with DOT and DEP to sort that out.

And finally, regarding resurfacing West 255<sup>th</sup> from Palisade to Railroad Terrace, DOT confirmed this is not a mapped street. It is a sewer easement owned by the NYCTA. The office is following up with the MTA to have the pavement resurfaced.

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#### *DOT Kappock Street and Palisade Avenue Intersection Revision*

NYCDOT sent a plan to the community board office for a revision to this intersection. DOT was unable to attend to present the plan. The plan, which was also emailed to stakeholders, was briefly discussed. Resident stakeholders of 2727 Palisade Avenue stated that the plan did not adequately address their storm-water concerns and urged DOT to meet with them to discuss other measures. The committee has extended an invitation to DOT to present their plan and discuss the community's concerns at the December meeting.

#### *Repealing the April 2021 Community Board 8 Resolution Requesting Flexible Delineators on Independence Avenue*

Discussion of the available DOT treatments for intersections that experience donuts and the likelihood that the April 2021 board resolution requesting flexible delineators on Independence Avenue to address donuts may have unintended consequences. Drag racing has been reduced on Independence Avenue after the speed bumps were re-installed although there is still some fast, reckless driving on Independence Avenue between West 239<sup>th</sup> Street and West 246<sup>th</sup> Street. The board will continue to monitor and urges the community to notify the board office of any reckless driving.

#### **Resolution to Repeal the Independence Avenue Flexible Delineator Board Resolution**

**WHEREAS**, in the fall of 2020 and early winter of 2021, the Traffic and Transportation Committee of Community Board 8 held several public discussions on ways to reduce drag racing on Independence Avenue;

**WHEREAS**, the majority of the community expressed strong opposition to general, common traffic calming measures on Independence Avenue such as lane narrowing, pedestrian extensions, bike lanes, additional traffic lights and the completion of sidewalks;

**WHEREAS**, during the March 2020 Traffic and Transportation Committee meeting committee members and the general public discussed the placement of flexible delineators and channelization at each

impacted intersection to identify locations that would best reduce the intersection size while also addressing concerns with parking, pedestrian crossings, bus stops and garbage pickup;

**WHEREAS**, in April of 2021 Community Board 8 passed a resolution to recommend NYC DOT install flexible delineators and rubber speed bumps on Independence Avenue at the intersections of West 235<sup>th</sup> Street, West 236<sup>th</sup> Street, West 237<sup>th</sup> Street, West 239<sup>th</sup> Street and West 240<sup>th</sup> Street to reduce reckless “donuts” by vehicles;

**WHEREAS**, the Bronx DOT office has informed the Traffic and Transportation Committee that specific treatments cannot be requested and that the agency does not have a policy of reducing intersection radius to restrict illegal vehicular activity like “donuts”;

**WHEREAS**, the April 2021 resolution is not actionable by the New York City Department of Transportation as it is currently written;

**WHEREAS**, the board and committee will continue to monitor for complaints regarding drag racing;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the Traffic and Transportation Committee of Bronx Community Board 8 requests that Community Board 8 rescind the resolution of April 2021 requesting flexible delineators and channelization on Independence Avenue.

Approve: D Travis, C Calhoun, E Green, M Gibbs, G Santiago, K Buford, D Gellman

Oppose:

#### *Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety on Bailey Avenue from Van Cortlandt Park to 225<sup>th</sup> Street*

Several members of the community spoke about the dangerous conditions for pedestrians on Bailey Avenue. Main concerns were speeding, double-parked cars, bikes and e-scooters on the sidewalk and turning cars at intersections. The intersections of Van Cortlandt Avenue South, West 238<sup>th</sup> Street, West 230<sup>th</sup> and West 225<sup>th</sup> were cited as the most dangerous. The committee will discuss next steps at a future meeting.

#### *Old Business*

Resolution for Safety Improvements at Intersection of Van Cortlandt Avenue West and Sedgwick Avenue and Safety Improvements on Sedgwick Avenue Between Van Cortlandt Avenue West and Giles Place - The committee was unable to vote on these two resolutions due to lack of quorum

Stephenson Avenue Parking Resolution - This resolution was passed at the June Committee meeting however it was brought back to finalize the language. The final version is below:

## **Stephenson Place No Standing Zone**

**WHEREAS**, Stephenson Place is a narrow, residential, one-way street that runs in a u-shape from Sedgwick Avenue to Sedgwick Avenue;

**WHEREAS**, Stephenson Place is bounded for most of its length on the south by the historic retaining wall of Fort Independence Park;

**WHEREAS**, the south side of Stephenson Place along the retaining wall currently has a “No Parking Anytime” zone along the length of the street adjacent to the Fort Independence Park retaining wall;

**WHEREAS**, there is an ongoing issue of vehicles with placards parking in this zone which narrows access to the roadway;

**WHEREAS**, the committee heard testimony that the roadway access must be kept clear for emergency vehicles and for residents to travel to their homes;

**WHEREAS**, there is a senior center and Jewish center on this block;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the Traffic and Transportation Committee of Bronx Community Board 8 requests that the NYC Department of Transportation change the parking regulation for the south side of Stephenson Place along the retaining wall for Fort Independence Park to a “No Standing Zone” to eliminate the parking of any vehicles.

Yes: Dan Padernacht, Sylvia Alexander, Mary Ellen Gibbs, David Gellman, Ed Green

No:

Abstain:

### *New Business*

Complaint that the Henry Hudson Parkway East was just resurfaced and is substandard. We asked the resident to send pictures and the exact location to the board office.

A resident raised safety concerns about the intersection of Heath Avenue and Fort Independence Street. A brief discussion was had on the best process if you have a safety concern:

1. Use the NYCDOT website to request your safety improvement
2. Contact the community board office, city council member’s office or assembly member’s office to advocate
3. Reach out to your neighbors with a survey, petition, video or social media campaign to advocate for changes and build consensus including your NYCDOT case number

We also recommend residents go to the Community Board 8 website and sign up for the committee email lists

For residents of Kingsbridge Heights, we recommend they join the advocacy group Fort Independence Park Neighborhood Association by emailing [margaretbx@gmail.com](mailto:margaretbx@gmail.com).

*Adjournment*

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm

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