

BX CB8 Traffic and Transit Committee Meeting

November 21st, 2019

Riverdale YM-YWHA – 5625 Arlington Ave

Committee Members Present:

Sylvia Alexander, David Gellman, Edward Green (Vice Chair), Myra Joyce, Dan Padernacht (Chair), Georgia Santiago, I. William Stone.

Committee Members Absent:

Eric Bell (Vice Chair), Margaret Donato, Diomarys Escano, Daniella Fuchs, Tao Moran.

Guests:

Nivardo Lopez (NYC DOT), Miriam Gomez, Miriam Allen, Miguel Hummel, Paul Thaler, Carol Martin, Dane Meenagh, Karen Gallagher, Robert Harrington, Enrique Mustelier, Ellen Marie Helinka, Susan Hesse, Jack Marth, Daniel Hammerman, Davida Fried, Rosemary Ginty (BX CB8).

Chair Dan Padernacht called meeting to order at 7:15pm and introduced guests.

1. Jack Marth gave presentation regarding concerns of Ft. Independence area residents have about the intersection at Cannon Place and Orloff Ave. Residents are requesting:
 - Dividing line (so motorists can clearly see traffic lanes and not veer off into oncoming traffic lane)
 - Crosswalk at the intersection, making it safer for pedestrians to cross the street (He stated that one parking spot would be lost due to this crosswalk)
 - A stop sign (from the South approach)
 - A no standing zone at corner of Cannon Place and Orloff Avenue
2. Chair Padernacht gave update on the Henry Hudson Bridge Walkway

The pedestrian walkway on the lower level is open, ahead of schedule. Early morning Manhattan-bound roadway closures will continue through Saturday 11/23/19 and a new traffic pattern will take place. Two lanes will be open and one will be closed for ongoing work. Traffic will shift to the right and create a more straight-through flow to the Southbound Henry Hudson Parkway.

Shuttle service will be discontinued on Friday 11/22/19 at 9pm.

3. Discussion of issues regarding the installation of enhanced crosswalks by NYC DOT on Hudson Manor Terrace at West 236th St, West 237th St and West 239th St:

David Fried gave presentation on “Neighborhood Parking Crisis”. Resident observations: 14 parking spots have been removed; crosswalks are 30ft wide (as opposed to standard 12ft crosswalks); the AVA compliant pedestrian ramp is not aligned with the crosswalk; the area in question is not a busy pedestrian area; residents and their guests have nowhere to park and they are furious.

Daniel Hammerman, a resident of 3750 Hudson Manor Terrace, aided in the presentation. He stated the area in question is not a heavy traffic area, traffic travels slowly on Hudson Manor Terrace and the entire idea of enhanced crosswalks is ill advised and should be reconsidered by DOT.

Ms. Fried stated she has gathered 175 signatures from residents calling for the complete removal of the enhanced crosswalks. She asked if complete removal of the crosswalks was not possible could DOT possibly reduce the size of the 30ft crosswalks to 12ft standard size crosswalks so some parking spaces could be restored.

Chair Padernacht asked BX DOTC Nivardo Lopez if he was willing to address the concerns of the residents and asked why DOT believed the removal of so many parking spaces were necessary.

BX DOTC Nivardo Lopez stated the parking spots were removed to increase visibility and improve safety. He stated the area in question met the criteria of their agency guidelines. He also stated that DOT is aware the AVA pedestrian ramp is not aligned correctly and DOT plans to properly realign it. He stated he would also provide BX CB8 and neighborhood residents Intersection Study Crash Data that he claims will justify the changes made.

I William Stone stated he is a resident of the area and feels the DOT removed parking spaces unnecessarily.

Chair Rosemary Ginty stated she wanted BX DOT to provide BX CB8 with documents defining regulations on stop signs for Board review.

Guest (area resident) asked BX DOTC Nivardo Lopez if the DOT does parking impact studies; Lopez responded: they do not.

Chair Padernacht brought up the fact that BX DOT had stated in their initial presentation to BX CB8 that there would only be 7-8 parking spaces removed as a result of this project.

Committee Vice Chair Ed Green asked BX DOTC Nivardo Lopez how DOT's estimate of 7 removed parking spaces eventually resulted in the elimination of 14 parking spaces. Lopez stated that observations were made afterwards by DOT that were not recognized in the original planning.

T&T Committee Member Myra Joyce stated when additional changes to DOT proposals occur, BX CB8 should be notified of those changes, especially since they have such a dramatic impact on neighborhood residents.

Rosemary Ginty stated BX CB8 needs to receive all available information from BX DOT to determine exactly how many parking spots were lost.

Chair Padernacht proposed the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the NYC department of Transportation DOT installed enhanced crosswalks at the intersections on Hudson Manor Terrace at West 236th Street, West 237th Street and West 239th Street in or about September 2019;

WHEREAS, an enhanced crosswalk is where DOT stripes a crosswalk at a location that does not have a traffic signal or stop sign and adds signage to highlight the crosswalk and daylight the area just before the intersection;

WHEREAS, testimony has been presented that traffic poles have been installed at the northeast intersection of West 237th Street and Hudson Manor Terrace creating a dangerous situation during garbage pick-up at that location;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Traffic and Transportation Committee asks that DOT remove the traffic poles on the northwest corner of Hudson Manor Terrace at West 237th Street to allow sanitation trucks to park curbside and to create additional parking spots to the east of this intersection.

In Favor: Sylvia Alexander, David Gellman, Edward Green,
Myra Joyce, Dan Padernacht, Georgia Santiago,
I. William Stone.

Opposed:
Abstain:

Chair Padernacht made a motion to hold over remaining issues with this item until the January 2020 committee meeting:

In Favor: Sylvia Alexander, David Gellman, Edward Green,

Myra Joyce, Dan Padernacht, Georgia Santiago,
I. William Stone.

Opposed:

Abstain:

4. Discussion of issues regarding the installation of enhanced crosswalks by NYC DOT on Palisade Avenue at Kappock Street:

Robert Harrington of Coalition to Save the Community read a statement. Summary: Area residents reject the changes DOT has made; residents want sidewalks scaled back and streets enlarged; residents want less concrete and more green.

Guest Miriam Allen stated the turn is dangerous and the turning radius for trucks is the main cause of the problem. She stated: Delivery vehicles have no place to stop; active driveways have become extremely dangerous; residents were not properly notified of the proposed changes; there has been a reduction of parking spaces because of the changes; she has observed numerous “near misses” of pedestrians and vehicles in the area in question.

Guest Paul Thaler of 750 Kappock St stated that DOT imposed its will upon the residents of the neighborhood and their ideas are out-of-sync with the area. He stated that residents are now liable for the upkeep and maintenance (specifically with regards to ice and snow conditions) of a platform they never asked for or wanted. He stated the destruction of greenery is negatively changing the aesthetics of the neighborhood and suggested that the area has now become more dangerous because of DOT changes.

Rosemary Ginty suggested that no proposal by BX DOT given to the T&T Committee should get voted on until BX DOT provides a specific, comprehensive plan of action.

Guest (resident) stated the images presented in the initial proposal do not resemble the work that was completed. Guest provided BX CB8 with “before and after” photographs of the area she states was ruined by BX DOT.

Chair Padernacht read the initial proposal of the project, illustrating how drastically BX DOT’s completed project deviated from their initial proposal.

Guest Mary (resident) stated there was water running down Kappock Street and ponding on the sidewalk. A visual slideshow illustration of the

condition was presented. She stated the residents have informed Con Edison of the condition. She stated she wants DOT to work with the residents of the community instead of just routinely ignoring their pleas and advice.

Guest Mary (resident) read the e-mail sent to her by Lewis Wunderlich of 2727 Palisade Avenue stating his concerns about the intersection. The e-mail stated this problem might lead to a water condition that could potentially flood the transformer vault, resulting in a blackout or transformer fire. The e-mail also stated there was a “no standing” sign added that was not in the original “day-lighting” plan that has consequentially eliminated 3 to 4 parking spaces. The e-mail also stated the day-lighting of 1 parking space south of the southern driveway has not been implemented and the hazard of poor sight lines to oncoming traffic still exists.

Rosemary Ginty asked if DEP was brought in to evaluate the water drainage. The answer was no.

Guest (resident) asked BX DOTC Nivardo Lopez if DOT could reevaluate this project because of the potential drainage problems. Lopez stated it was outside of DOT’s guidelines.

BX DOTC Nivardo Lopez stated crash data or community request is the criteria used by DOT to “standardize” streets.

Chair Padernacht proposed a motion for a resolution:

WHEREAS, the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) presented a proposal to shorten the intersection at Kappock Street and Palisade Avenue, which would also create hard right turns at the location in or about May 2019;

WHEREAS, DOT proposed to extend the sidewalk at the northeast and southeast corners at this location by laying concrete on top of the bed of the roadway;

WHEREAS, the Traffic and Transportation Committee expressed concerns in a resolution to DOT about water run-off and the aesthetics of the extended sidewalk at this location;

WHEREAS, the Traffic and Transportation Committee asked DOT to install a “Greenstreet” at this location to address the safety and run-off concerns at this location by locating an agency or non-profit entity to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with DOT to handle the maintenance of the Greenstreet;

WHEREAS, DOT installed two large blocks of concrete on the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection of Kappock Street and Palisade Avenue in or about October 2019;

WHEREAS, testimony has been presented to the Committee that since the installation of these concrete blocks, water-run off has been diverted from the two sewers at each corner and diverted water to the sidewalk on the west side of the intersection, thereby creating ponding of water;

WHEREAS, ponding of water on city streets creates dangerous health and safety conditions;

WHEREAS, testimony has been presented that the safety goals of DOT could have been accomplished in an alternate manner;

WHEREAS, the residents of 750 Kappock Street have presented testimony that their Board and managing agent did not receive notice of the impending installation of the concrete block abutting their property even though their building is now liable for the maintenance thereof;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Traffic and Transportation Committee asks that the NYC Department of Transportation daylight the area 15 feet south of the driveway to 2727 Palisade Avenue;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Traffic and Transportation Committee asks that the NYC Department of Environmental Protection performs a study of the area to assess how the new concrete blocks installed at Kappock Street and Palisade Avenue have affected diversion of water from the intended sewers at the northeast and southeast corners of this intersection;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Traffic and Transportation Committee asks that the NYC Department of Health perform a study of the area to assess how the new concrete blocks installed at Kappock Street and Palisade Avenue have affected run-off such that ponding of water is now occurring on the city street at this location;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Traffic and Transportation Committee asks that the NYC Department of Transportation redesign the intersection at Kappock Street and Palisade Avenue to meet the needs of all stakeholders, including a possible greenstreet to address water run-off and aesthetic concerns, and which removes the large concrete blocks at this location and the imposition of a legal duty upon 750 Kappock Street without notice.

In Favor: Sylvia Alexander, Edward Green, Myra Joyce,
Dan Padernacht, Georgia Santiago, I. William Stone.

Opposed: David Gellman

Abstain:

Meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm.