

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON OCTOBER 21, 2014, AT
MANHATTAN COLLEGE, 3825 CORLEAR AVENUE**

PRESENT	AFFILIATION
Michael Heller	Committee Chair
Sylvia Alexander	CB8
Bob Bender	CB8
Anthony Creaney	CB8
Joseph O'Brien	CB8
Daniel Padernacht	Chair CB8
Robert Press	CB8
James Rather	CB8
Julie Reyes	CB8
Georgia Santiago	CB8
Herbert Young	CB8
Jeffrey Dinowitz	Assemblyman
Justin Demko	rep. Assemblyman Dinowitz
Eric Soto	Con Edison
Evelyn Oliver	Con Edison
Nicholas Heller	Con Edison
Kevin Nolan	Con Edison
Jeff Rutowski	Con Edison
Steve Budihas	Association of Riverdale Co-ops
Connie Moran	Commissioner, Department of Transportation
Keith Kalb	Department of Transportation
Annie Jennings	
Myra Joyce	
Robin Stevenson	
Barbara Velez	
Starr Butler	
Toni Butler	
Jim Buckley	
Wendy Levinson	
Bob Kaplan	
Abe Schneider	
Paul Waylonis	
Howard E. Kamiel	
Jean Boda	

The meeting was held in Fishbach room of Manhattan College 3840 Corlear Avenue. The meeting was called to order at 7:36 PM by Chairman Michael Heller, with a quorum present.

The minutes of the September meeting were amended to remove on page 2 the words 'Did he say this' (which were not said at the meeting), and the amended minutes were approved unanimously.

The chair announced that Assemblyman Dinowitz and Senator Klein sent a letter to NYS DOT requesting repaving the Henry Hudson Parkway as was done to the Bronx River Parkway. DOT has said that it will be done in 2015.

SAPO application for December 21st Menorah lighting at the West 239th Street monument was approved unanimously.

Con Ed Presentation: Evelyn Oliver, Eric Soto, and Jeff Rutoack of Con Edison spoke about the continued work on the 'Oil to Gas Conversion' project. The chair mentioned that his building had successfully converted last year, but also spoke about the patchwork resurfacing being done by Con Edison's contractors for the street construction. 235th Street and the HHP have been ripped up by contractors, and are causing problems. Jeff Rutoack who is responsible for gas and construction in the Bronx said that the street construction must occur whenever a building requests to go from oil to gas – there is no hard-stop. He said that Con Ed has to get permits for the construction from NYCDOT and has inspectors checking on the contractors work.

Trench work involves saw cutting the roadway, digging the trench, laying the new gas pipe, back filling over the pipes, and then putting asphalt on top. When enough work is gone the trench is permanently filled and resurfaced; their contractors must meet DOT specifications. In answering questions on the amount of paving, Con Ed does not pave every 25 feet, but paves block by block and they have found 5 locations (not mentioned) that needed to be restored further.

Three months afterwards Con Ed will come back and does a quality control check. The chair spoke of temporary vs. final work, saying that some final work is not being sealed leaving gaps for water to get in and undermine -- to which the answer was that Con Ed would repair them as needed. He then mentioned that a street can be resurfaced by the DOT, and then a utility will do work on the street immediately thereafter to much chagrin. Con Ed said that they get a paving schedule from DOT to attempt to coordinate work. The chair said to call 311, or the community board office if there is a problem with the Con Ed work, and Con Ed at 914-925-6303 for any gas leaks. Bronx DOT Commissioner Moran advised using 311 so it goes to DOT for attention and logging.

When asked for a completion date Con Ed said that CB 8 had the highest rate of conversion, the deadline for area credits is over, but buildings can still convert at any time. By 2030 all buildings must use the cleaner #2 oil or gas. By the end of 2016 Con Ed expects almost all CB 8 building conversions to be done.

Andrew Sandler of Councilman Cohen's office said that his office gets complaints and better coordination is needed. S. Budihas, President of the Association of Riverdale Coops complained of the hazards being left by the contractors such as open holes, trash, piping, damage, multiple steel plates higher than the street level, and the length it takes to be finished. Con Ed said that no debris should be left after work is done, the steel road plates are needed to cover the open street construction work. CB 8 board chair Dan Padernacht questioned the restricted parking on streets by the contractors, and was told that work is started on alternate parking days, and it is not a regular practice to take away a full block of parking. Vice-chair Press said that last Thanksgiving a contractor took away a full block of parking on West 239th Street a week before, during, and over two weeks after the Thanksgiving holiday last year. He added that last winter one of the metal plates on West 239th Street shifted after being hit by a snow plow leaving a large gap. He also said that some

of the work that the first contractor hired by Con Ed had to be redone naming Johnson Avenue as an example where there are two trenches dug by different contractors next to each other.

DOT Commissioner Moran said that there is a lag time of up to 14 days for corrective action by Con Ed, and it is immediate if the situation is dangerous. The chair stated that the temporary metal plates and trench work areas are a major concern.

NYC DOT Presentation: Street resurfacing, lane miles, and how streets to be repaved are chosen.

DOT Bronx Commissioner Connie Moran said that streets are not resurfaced just by community board request but through multiple sources of input. Streets are rated 1 – 10 by DOT inspectors, and those rated 7 or below are eligible. Other factors include Con Ed work, DEP work, and MTA requests under elevated subway lines. There is a grid to keep the work as close as possible to maximize time efficiency, and that private streets are not eligible to be repaved. Mr. Heller mentioned this as a major problem as so many of our streets are ineligible for resurfacing. There is an 'Opinion of Dedication' on a street by street basis starting from the CB, to the BP's office, and then to DOT. Dan Donovan of BP Diaz's office can help, but the process takes a year or so.

After selection streets are milled and then repaved. Parking has to be taken away to mill the street and then when it is repaved.

The Oil to Gas conversion is problematic for DOT as it cannot be done on streets that have been recently repaved. DOT starts in January to see where Con Ed will be working so Con Ed can finish before a street is repaved. The weight of busses causes 'hummocks' by bus asphalt bus stops, and DOT wants to install more concrete bus pads but the work is vetoed by OMB. Capital projects such as those done by DDC; Safe Routes to Transit, Cannon Place retaining wall, and Dept. of Buildings are not known to DOT. Elected officials also send in repaving requests.

Speed humps - 259th Street and Liebig Avenue had a pedestrian accident, and resident are requesting a speed hump. The CB will send a letter to DOT who will come out and do a survey. It was said that the Bronx has the most speed humps than any other borough. November 7th there will be a new 25 mile per hour speed limit in New York City. No new slow zones 20 MPH will be issued until the new lower 25 MPH speed limit begins.

Board member questions: R. Press asked if cutting the street such as Con Ed is doing undermines the street foundation Commissioner Moran said that it does not if correct back fill, and repairs are done. A. Creaney thanked DOT for the speed humps on Irwin Avenue, but the signs warning of them can get covered by branches in the summer. J. O'Brien asked about a mapped street vs. a titled street. A street is mapped when homes are built, and the street title is turned over to the city. Assemblyman Dinowitz mentioned an old non-drivable street in need of repair between 601 and 620 Kappock Streets, which both do not claim ownership, and the city says is not a mapped street however is on the map of the area. DOT is doing a title search, and the owner will have to fix the street. B. Bender thanked DOT for the West 254th Street no parking by Sycamore/Independence Avenues and repainting the roadway. He also asked about the reconstruction project of a bridge on the Mosholu Parkway extension. DOT will come to the CB when plans are finalized. G. Santiago thanked DOT for installing signs by the Carolina Church on Broadway to allow for church parking.

Audience member T. Butler spoke of the major congestion for Van Cortlandt Park events on Broadway by the parade grounds in the park. Buses and cars double or even triple park on either side of Broadway for the events. 2 – 7 PM on weekdays, and the weekends are worse. In her view the Parks Department issues too many permits. The chair said that the CB wants to work with the organizers to have buses park somewhere else such as the golf lot. An unidentified woman said that the golf lot is full, and the neighbors are fighting for a traffic light in the area because children are running across Broadway. It was also said that a few of the triple parkers sit on their car roofs to see the events in the park. The chair said that he will talk to the 50 Pct. There was mention of the events at the 161st Street Armory and how the parking is handled there, and why can it not be done at VCP.

The chair spoke of the city policy allowing filmmakers to have carte blanche on the filming in VCP, and on some local streets.

There was a question of hissing sounds coming from a new gas conversion unit. Call 800-75Coned.

There was no Old Business.

The next meeting in November will feature the NYCT to address transit operational issues and potential changes to service.

A. Sandler of Councilman Cohen's office reminded of the councilman's meeting at the Riverdale Y Monday Oct 27th.

J. Rather suggested that the 50 Pct. be asked to attend and answer why traffic laws are not being enforced.

The chair thanked Commissioner Moran and Con Ed for coming.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 PM.

Minutes submitted by Vice-Chair R. Press, approved by Michael Heller