

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**Minutes of the Traffic & Transportation / Aging Committee Meeting
Held on March 18, 2014
Manhattanville Nursing Care Center**

PRESENT

Daniel Padernacht
Robert Press

Sylvia Alexander
Bob Bender
Margaret Donato
Mike Heller
Maria Khury
James Rather
I.W. Stone
Herb Young
Georgia Santiago
Tony Creaney
Karen Pesce
Lisa Daub
Beverly Fettman
Marvin Goodman
Manfred Segal
Myra Joyce
Robert Fanuzzi
Justin Demko
Andrew Sandler
Deidre Parker
Ken Stuart
E. Bejarano
Gina Anad
Chris Creshey
Alvin Shatkin
Nicole Altma
Keith Kalb
J. Klein
Jody Klein
Marcia Allina
Constance Segal
Nancy D'Auria
Lourdes Santacruz
Katherine Valyi
News 12 Bronx
Judy Fettman
Katherine Broihier

AFFILIATION

CB8 T&T Committee Chair
CB8 T&T Committee Vice Chair & Aging committee member
CB8 T&T committee member
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CB8 T&T committee member
CB8 T&T and Aging committee member
CB8 T&T and Aging committee member
CB8 Aging committee Chair
CB8 Aging committee member
CB8 Aging committee member
CB8 Aging committee member
Aging Community Committee member

CB8 Chair
rep. Assemblyman Dinowitz
rep. Councilman Cohen
NYC Transit
NYC Transit (Access-A-Ride)
DDC
DDC

Riverdale Senior Services
NYC DOT
Bronx DOT
RCC

Elder Serve
Five Star Premier Residence of Yonkers
Riverdale Historic District

Kingsbridge BID

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

Ms. Deidre Parker of MTA Transit introduced Mr. Ken Stuart of the Para-Transit division. Mr. Stuart spoke about the Access-A-Ride program which is public transportation for the disabled or elderly and provides services within all five boroughs of New York City and up to ¾ of a mile into Westchester and Nassau Counties. It is estimated that 25,000 – 30,000 trips are made each day, averaging 7 – 8 million trips per year. There are about 170,000 people signed up for this

service in which over 100,000 people may use at any time during the year. Service is provided by both vans and sedans which have GPS radar in them. A person must apply to become an Access-A-Ride participant and a meeting is established to determine a person's eligibility.

There was a question about the elimination of the taxi voucher system. The representatives answered that fraud was detected in this program as certain participants would receive receipts for trips not taken.

There was a question about how to get home from a doctor in Manhattan. The answer was that a retrieval and emergency rescue system are in place.

There was a question of driver lateness issues of 1 hour or more. Further, that certain participants were reprimanded for not appearing for AAR vehicles after extensive wait times. The representatives answered that GPS tracking enables AAR to monitor and track their vehicles and that a "Manage My Trips" application is being introduced so clients can use their cell phones to find out their vehicle location. It was also said that if the wait is to be more than 45 minutes an alternate means of transportation will be made. Further, if there is a driver wait issue, the client should contact Access-A-Ride.

The representatives stated that new ID cards are being issued that have four free trips per day for the bus and subway which is aimed to cut down on expensive van usage.

Mr. Stuart took further individual questions at the back of the room. The phone number for all general questions about Access-A-Ride is (877)337-2017.

The Aging Committee approved their February minutes 6 – 0 – 0 – by members S. Alexander, L. Daub, B. Fettman, M. Goodman, K. Pesce, and R. Press.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) gave a presentation on the intersection of Albany Crescent and Bailey Avenue. There are two schools and a senior center in the area and data collected from 2007 to 2011 designate this as a high crash intersection. There have been five pedestrian incidents resulting in one fatality with many vehicle crashes. There is a very high failure to yield to pedestrian ratio compared to other intersections. There is a firehouse at the intersection and an entrance/exit to the Major Deegan Expressway within one block. The DOT proposes to install a safety island in the middle of Albany Crescent East, removing at least one parking spot on Albany Crescent East. In addition, DOT proposes to relocate the southern Bailey Avenue crosswalk to the newly created traffic island at Albany Crescent East to the western side of Bailey Avenue at the Firehouse. The Island on Albany Crescent East will take up 16 feet of the 64 foot wide roadway. In addition, DOT proposes to reverse the direction of Albany Crescent between Bailey Avenue and West 231st Street so that traffic will now travel towards West 231st Street. DOT believes that this will tighten the intersection by shortening crosswalks and the reversal of traffic will reduce traffic at the Bailey Avenue/Albany Crescent intersection.

DOT has spoken to the FDNY and they were told that fire trucks should have no problem passing the island. As to a question whether DOT spoke to the MTA on this matter, the answer was no and that there is enough to allow the BX 1 articulated bus to pass the island. DOT is seeking support from the community board.

T&T Chair Dan Padernacht asked at what times the study of the intersection was done. DOT said from April 10, 2013 to April 20, 2013, 7 days a week 24 hours a day breaking the data down to 15 minute intervals. The rush periods were described as 8am – 9am and 5pm – 6pm. Chair Padernacht asked if a left turn signal would be installed northbound on Bailey Avenue at the intersection. The answer by DOT was no.

The chair wants to discuss this matter further and have more community input at the next T&T committee meeting.

The minutes of the February 18th T&T meeting were approved 11- 0- 0 by members B. Bender, R. Press, M. Donato, K. Pesce, S. Alexander, G. Santiago, I.W. Stone, D. Padernacht, M. Khury, A. Creaney, and J. Rather.

The minutes of the February 26th T&T meeting were approved 10- 0 - 1 by members B. Bender, R. Press, M. Donato, K. Pesce, S. Alexander, G. Santiago, I.W. Stone, D. Padernacht, M. Khury, and A. Creaney. CB 8 member J. Rather abstaining.

The Safe Route to Transit Project on Broadway at West 231st and West 238th Streets was presented by the NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC). This was a DDC project to improve safety for pedestrians using mass transit by installing pedestrian islands. DDC presented these projects previously but now have significant changes as they have decided to include work on water mains, sewers, curbs, sidewalks, traffic signals and pavement markings at these two intersections.

The anticipated start date is Spring 2014 with a completion date scheduled for October 2014. Work is to be done from 8am – 4pm on Monday to Friday. DDC will start at West 231st Street. There will be water shutdowns, restricted parking, and movement of the current bus stops on Broadway at the four corners of the intersections at both West 231st & West 238th Streets. There will be a significant impact on these areas.

There were several questions raised by committee members with contradicting answers by the DDC representatives. T&T Chair Padernacht asked that this matter be laid over to next month's meeting when DDC could have all their drawings, facts, and one person can answer any questions that may be asked and that until such time as we can reconvene, DDC should accept a disapproval of the current plan. It was also stated that DDC should reach out to MTA as to how the articulated bus service would be affected.

The vote was 11– 0 – 0 by members B. Bender, R. Press, M. Donato, K. Pesce, S. Alexander, G. Santiago, I.W. Stone, D. Padernacht, M. Khury, A. Creaney, and J. Rather.

The next item was the question of signage and parking concerns on West 254th Street between Independence & Sycamore Avenues. Several homeowners in the area questioned the 6 or 7 parking spots that were left on the south side of West 254th Street where the residents were under the impression there would be no parking signs erected. She and other residents spoke of the road dangers due to speeding cars and buses, no sidewalks, a curve in the road, and lack of visibility where these parking spots were left on West 254th Street. The Chair wants to revisit this at the next meeting in order to contact DOT as to whether DOT intended to leave this parking area and to invite the SAR school across the street to see if they have any input on the issue. The Chair stated that if DOT intended to leave this parking in place, then the committee would have to take another vote as to whether this parking should be removed.

The vote was 8 – 3 – 0 members with R. Press, M. Donato, S. Alexander, G. Santiago, I.W. Stone, D. Padernacht, M. Khury, and A. Creaney, in favor, with members B. Bender, K. Pesce, and J. Rather against.

The SAPO application for the Amalgamated Nursery School Spring Bazaar street closure of one block of Gale Place was presented by Ms. Robyn Spiegel the applicant. The committee approved the SAPO application 11 – 0 – 0 by members B. Bender, R. Press, M. Donato, K.

Pesce, S. Alexander, G. Santiago, I.W. Stone, D. Padernacht, M. Khury, A. Creaney, and J. Rather.

Old Business

Mr. Bob Davis of Sycamore Avenue gave a presentation of West 252nd Street parking and that West 252nd Street was indeed a public street. The Chair tabled this item to the next meeting.

A discussion of the proposed Hudson Greenway and the use of one lane on the Henry Hudson Bridge was raised by Frank Anelante. The Chair tabled this discussion to the joint Parks/T&T meeting on March 26, 2014.

Bob Bender, Chair of the Parks Committee, presented a resolution seeking that if there was not a quorum of members for the joint Traffic and Transportation / Parks meeting, that the Parks Committee could take a vote on their own at the meeting. The resolution passed unanimously.

New Business

Aging Committee Chair Karen Pesce suggested intersections of Broadway and West 230th, West 231st, West 238th, and Manhattan College Parkway for talking crosswalk signs. Ms. Pesce stated that currently only the intersection of Kappock Street and Netherland Avenue has a talking crosswalk. Chair Padernacht asked that Chair Pesce forward these and any other locations to the Board office.

Mr. Ehud Kupperman, Director of Development for Equity One, the developer of the West 230th Street mall came before the committee seeking a letter of support from the community board for an after hour variance for work on the mall. He said that the crane used to lift support panels of the mall will obstruct two lanes of West 230th Street when in use. He said that the noise would be no greater than the subway and that work would be done from 9pm – 5 am weekdays and 9pm – 7am on weekends. The work is anticipated to take one week and currently one lane of West 230th Street is blocked by the crane at all times. There will be flagmen at the site 24/7. There are 12 – 15 panels that must be installed and it takes one hour to bring the crane into position and one hour to break it down.

Mr. Kupperman explained that they received permits from the Department of Buildings (DOB) to work until 10pm each day. He stated that when Equity One attempted to get permits from the Department of Transportation (DOT) to use the crane on West 230th Street, DOT recommended that the work be done at night to minimize the effect on the community. This meant that Equity One needed a variance on their permits from DOB in order to work after 10pm. When Equity One applied for its variance, DOB stated that Equity One needed Community Board approval in order to obtain the variance. Mr. Kupperman stated that the project was currently on hold because no other work could be done until the building exterior was completed. Mr. Kupperman stated that they intended to work as soon as they received the variance.

Chair Padernacht stated that Equity One contacted the Board Office on the day of this meeting seeking to be placed on the agenda. Chair Padernacht stated that when he was contacted, he refused to amend the agenda due to the notice requirements of our Board. Chair Padernacht told Equity One that they can appear under New Business which is open to the public to present their matter.

Mr. Kupperman stated that he was sorry for the short notice but that the DOT and DOB gave Equity One last minute notice. Chair Padernacht asked Mr. Kupperman when he learned of this issue. The answer was that he knew one week earlier. Chair Padernacht stated that Equity One should have notified the Community Board immediately so that we could get word out to the community. Mr. Kupperman stated that he intended to be at the meeting for the Safe Routes presentation and thought he could present his issue. Mr. Kupperman apologized to the

committee. Chair Padernacht stated that any future issues should be brought to the Board's attention right away.

Chair Padernacht stated that the Traffic and Transportation Committee cannot speak for the entire board and as such, our committee cannot give Community Board approval. The Chair stated that, at best, we can draft a letter from the Traffic and Transportation Committee giving its thoughts on the matter. Any letter, if approved by the committee, would come with a disclaimer that the letter was from the committee and not intended to be construed as a Community Board approval. Chair Padernacht commended both DOT and DOB for their recommendations. A discussion ensued in which most committee members believed that overnight work was the best for the community. The balance was, of course, the lack of notice to the community about the issue.

Traffic and Transportation Committee member Georgia Santiago recommended that Equity One attend the Marble Hill Tenants Association meeting on Thursday, March 20th. The committee believed this was an excellent idea.

The Traffic and transportation Committee voted unanimously to write a letter of support with the conditions that (1) Equity One notify the residents of the Marble Hill Houses by placing flyers in each of the buildings; and (2) Equity One attend the March 20th Marble Hill Tenants Association Meeting.

A copy of the committee letter to DOB is attached to these minutes and made a part of the minutes.

A resident from Netherland Avenue asked about having DOT paint a crosswalk at the intersection of Kappock and Netherland Avenues. This goes from the Century garage to the other side of the street on Netherland Avenue. While there are presently no markings at the location, cars receive tickets for parking in the crosswalk. The Chair will send a letter to DOT to have them investigate this matter.

The meeting adjourned at 10:07 PM.

Dan Padernacht, Chair
Traffic & Transportation Committee