

Bronx Community Board 8

Minutes of the Traffic & Transportation Committee Held on May 20th, 2014 Manhattan College – Fischbach Room

PRESENT

Daniel Padernacht
Robert Press
Sylvia Alexander
Bob Bender
Anthony Creaney
Margaret Donato
Arlene G. Feldmeier
Anthony Fella CB8
Mike Heller
Maria Khury
James Rather
Georgia Santiago
I.W. Stone
Herb Young
Karen Pesce
Justin Demko
Andrew Sandler
Katherine Broihier
J. Sproull
Claudia Bonn
Anne Kirrane
Amy Moore
Myra Joyce
Shoshana Shendelman
Constance Moran
Nichole Altma
Kessia DeLeo
Keith Kalb
Robert Davis
Al Chapman
G. Slade
B.C. Paul Kirak
Nina Velazquez
Edward Oleer
Barbara Co9nnelly
Audrey Malkin
Juan Pena
A.S. Ben-Merre
P. Wilson

AFFILIATION

CB8 T&T Committee Chair
CB8 T&T Committee Vice Chair
CB8 T&T committee member
CB8 T&T committee member
CB8 T&T committee member
CB8 T&T committee member
CB8 T&T committee member
CB8 T&T committee member
CB8 T&T committee member
CB8 T&T committee member
CB8 T&T committee member
CB8 T&T committee member
CB8 T&T committee member
CB8
rep. Assemblyman Dinowitz
rep. Councilman Cohen
Kingsbridge BID
Kingsbridge BID
Wave Hill
PS 81
PS81/CB8

Commissioner, Bronx DOT
NYC DOT
NYC DOT
Bronx DOT

KHNIA
KHNIA
FDNY
PS81

The meeting was called to order at 7:34pm by Chairman Dan Padernacht. A quorum was present.

1. The minutes of the March 2014 meeting were approved.
2. SAPO Application for Kingsbridge Heights Neighborhood Improvement Association Block Party to be held on September 29, 2014. Mr. Al Chapman from KHNIA spoke about the event which has been held for several years. It will go from 9am-5pm. The vote was unanimous for this SAPO application.
3. Street resurfacing. Chair Padernacht received lists of streets that needed resurfacing from the committee. Michael Heller asked Bronx DOT Commissioner Moran how DOT chooses which streets to resurface. Commissioner Moran said that streets are rated on a scale from 1 – 10 and streets rated below 6 are selected. Work in CB8 will commence in late summer to early fall. In response to a question, it was mentioned that New York State does repaving of state roads such as the Henry Hudson Parkway and the placement of pavement markings is done by a different part of DOT. Councilman Andrew Cohen stated that the mayor has increased the budget for street repaving.
4. The NYC DOT presented a proposal for pedestrian safety improvements at the intersection of Bailey Avenue and Albany Crescent. Within proximity to the intersection are two schools, two senior centers, and heavy pedestrian traffic. A crash analysis between 2007 and 2011 indicated six severe pedestrian injuries and one pedestrian death. More than 200 people cross at peak hours. DOT proposes to put an island in the middle of the Albany Crescent East side of Bailey Avenue in which it will remove one parking space to allow for the buses to turn. The crosswalk across Bailey Avenue is to be moved from its current diagonal position of 72 feet to a straight line across of 59 feet from the new traffic island. This will allow fire trucks to pull out of the adjacent fire house without going into the intersection. In addition, DOT will reverse the flow of traffic on Albany Crescent between Bailey Avenue and West 231st Street in order to eliminate right turns through the crosswalk. Parking lane stripes will be added to Albany Crescent and Bailey Avenue. Dot offered example of similar changes at Vernon Blvd. And 36th Ave. in Queens where crashes are down 19% and more recently at Grand Concourse and Van Cortlandt Avenue.

The chair brought up the questions of DOT speaking to the FDNY and MTA. Each agency was contacted. The MTA told DOT that it will have enough room even with the new longer articulated buses to maneuver around the traffic island on Albany Crescent. A question of a traffic control at Albany Crescent and West 231st Street was answered that West 231st Street is underutilized, having the capacity of 600 vehicles where only 280 currently use the roadway. CB 8 Vice Chair M. Khury said that there is a bank on the corner and that a light might be better than a stop sign. K. Broihier from the Kingsbridge BID said that she saw no major issues until the two new shopping centers open soon. DOT said that

surveys of the changes will be done after each year for the first three years. The committee voted unanimously to approve.

5. Budget Requests. More resurfacing miles. Talking crosswalks at Broadway & West 230th Street, West 231st Street and Manhattan College Parkway intersections. New entrance to Van Cortlandt Park via the Putnam Trail on Van Cortlandt Park South or West 238th Street. Drainage project on West 254th Street between Independence Avenue and Palisade Avenue.
6. Removal of parking West 252nd Street between Sycamore and Independence Avenues. Bronx BP maps show this as a public street. Parking is transient and only one homeowner in the area wants to keep parking mainly for his guests. Street is currently travels two ways and is approximately 18–31 feet wide depending on whether you include side walls and gully which take away street surface. Water floods into nearby Wave Hill from the street who does not encourage visitors to park on street. The committee voted unanimously to request that DOT evaluate the street on a weekday and on a weekend day for safety issues, to check the drainage problem and possible resurfacing of the street. If parking were suggested to be removed, the committee believed the south curb was best.
7. Removal of parking on South curb of West 254th Street between Sycamore and Independence Avenues. The Board approved a request for no parking in this area last year and the DOT removed parking on the north curb but left 10 parking spaces on the eastern portion of the south curb close to Independence Avenue. Several residents spoke of the danger that the parking presents because the street bends near this area, there are no sidewalks, the street is narrow with cars and buses sometimes speeding to the railroad station as well as the drainage problems during inclement weather. SAR supports the safety measures taken by the committee and that the school has increased its budget for safety at dismal and special events at the school. SAR did state that it needs street parking for its guests.

M. Heller voiced an objection to removing the parking and said that sidewalks should be installed along the length of West 254th Street. Chair Padernacht stated that if the Committee was to request sidewalks on the street, and DOT agreed, then property owners would be issued a Notice of Violation and be given a certain amount of time to install the sidewalk. If no action was taken by the property owner, then DOT could install the sidewalk and bill the property owner on their property tax bill. Chair Padernacht said the estimated cost is approximately \$7-\$9 per square foot. Chair Padernacht stated that he would not put forward such a request until the committee reached out to all property owners who would be affected. Matter to be discussed further at a future meeting.

A resident stated that the parking on the south curb in question is in a lane of traffic and therefore is illegal to begin with. B. Bender said that he often walks the street to the MTA station and it is a hazardous venture made worse in the cold or

bad weather. M. Khury asked if there were statistics on any incidents and was told by residents that every other winter a car slides into the SAR wall. It was also said that there are no storm drains in the street and water runs down the street. In the cold weather, the water quickly ices and is frequently salted which corrodes the street. R. Press suggested that the committee look into making the road a 20 MPH school zone. J. Rather asked for better police enforcement. The Chair stated that when DOT reviewed the Board's previous requests, that it removed parking in front of the school on the north curb. The committee voted unanimously to remove the parking on the south curb between Independence Avenue and Sycamore Avenue, install a 20 MPH speed limit and restore the seven parking spaces that on the north curb between Palisade Avenue and Sycamore Avenue.

8. A request to restore parking on the east Curb of Sycamore Avenue from 5286 Sycamore Avenue to 5243 Sycamore Avenue was denied because the applicant did not appear.
9. Street Renaming of Independence Avenue between West 235th Street and West 236th Street in honor of Debbie Bowden, a former board member and long time Education Committee chair. S. Alexander and several board members spoke on the item as to why this renaming should occur and the reasons why Ms. Bowden was so important to this school, the community, and the Community Board. The vote was unanimous for the street renaming. The chair mentioned that the full board must pass this resolution in June and September then be approved by the city council.
10. Community Board Member Amy Moore, in conjunction with P.S. 81 Parents Association President and P.S. 81 Principal requested left turn signals for Riverdale Avenue at West 256th Street for both the northbound and southbound travel lanes. There were letters of support from the school, clergy, and neighboring coop boards. The principal of PS 81 told of the danger to the children of crossing Riverdale Avenue and West 256th Street. Two children have been struck by cars. One resident stated that it takes an unusually long time to make the left turn to the school, at times waiting 5–7 lights for a clear turn. The vote by the committee to request left turn signals at Riverdale Avenue and West 254th Street in both directions was unanimous. A letter will be sent to DOT.
11. There was no Old Business or New Business and the meeting was adjourned at 9:57 PM.

Dan Padernacht
Chairman
Traffic & Transportation Committee