

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AT MANHATTAN COLLEGE – FISHBACH ROOM
OCTOBER 15, 2013**

PRESENT

Dan Padernacht
Robert Press
Sylvia Alexander
B. Contant

Anthony Creaney
M. Donato
Anthony Fella
Michael Heller
Maria Khury
Karen Pesce
James Rather
Georgia Santiago
I.W. Stone
R. Fanuzzi
Andrew Sandler
Neil Garelik
J. Peag
Michael McCann
Debra May
Myra Joyce
Todd Rubinstein
Phil Shea
Tom Durham

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair
Committee Vice-Chair
CB8
CB8 & FPOA (Fieldston Property Owners
Association)
CB8
CB8
CB8
CB8
CB8 Vice Chair
CB8
CB8
CB8
CB8
CB8 Chair
rep. Councilman Koppel's office
Excel Security
Horace Mann
Horace Mann
S.A.R. School

The meeting was called to order at at 7:37 PM by Chairman Padernacht and a quorum was present.

Mr. Todd Rubinstein appeared at the October Community Board Meeting on October 8, 2013 during the gallery session and inquired about street closures in Fieldston. The matter was referred to the traffic and transportation committee. The matter deals with the purported closing of West 246th Street and College Road which runs inside the private community of Fieldston. Mr. Rubinstein stated that the Fieldston Property Owners Association (FPOA) has put up barricades that impede access to this public street which creates a hazardous condition. He mentioned that this is not the only entrance/exit point to Fieldston that barricades have been put in the middle of the street. He presented a photo of one such barricade up at night.

T&T Chair Padernacht explained that on September 4th he had received several e-mails, and in trying to clear up this problem he met with representatives from FPOA, Excel Security and Horace Mann School. Chairman Padernacht explained that he was told that the closures were for the first few days of the new school year at Horace Mann as the bus route had changed. Mr.

Rubinstein stated that the barricade placement has continued by FPOA and stated that they are now set up after he leaves for work and are gone before he arrives home with some exceptions.

Mr. Brendant Contant, President of FPOA (and also a member of Bronx Community Board 8) explained that the streets of Fieldston are privately owned streets by the FPOA. As per city law, these private streets are closed one day per year which normally occurs in August but this year it was done over two days at the beginning of the new school year in September. Three schools are inside of Fieldston. Mr. Contant stated that FPOA has worked with Horace Mann School to cut down on school traffic through Fieldston. He mentioned that FPOA pays for its own street cleaning and the maintenance of its sewers. Cut through traffic of commercial vehicles has increased through Fieldston and the 50th Precinct had suggested better signage to advise commercial drivers about the private streets. Hence, FPOA has placed portable barricades with signage of No Commercial Traffic. The barricades are not intended for private vehicles and cars can drive around these stanchions.

Mr. Neal Garelik of Excel Security, the company that patrols the private streets for FPOA, stated that when the barricades are posted agents are posted at entrances to allow for emergency vehicles to enter. He added that stanchions have been placed on College Road due to the traffic on the streets when there are events in nearby Van Cortlandt Park. He said that there are 70 school buses to and from Horace Mann School, and another 110 buses that travel the streets of Fieldston picking up students from the hundreds of homes in Fieldston. He added that any barricade that is placed is removed by 7pm.

Mr. Contant asked if there was any way to get more signage at the entrances to Fieldston. T&T Chair Padernacht proposed to the committee a resolution. "No trucks except local deliveries with the truck symbol on the signs be placed at all nine entrances to Fieldston". The vote was unanimous 12 - 0 - 0.

The next item on the agenda were two traffic proposals on West 259th Street between Netherland Avenue and Riverdale Avenue. The committee has previously placed a request for a Stop sign and crosswalk at the intersection of West 259th Street and Netherland Avenue. This proposal was denied by the DOT in October 2012. The committee once again voted for this traffic calming measure in September 2013. However, the Chair received a communication from DOT that there was an outstanding request by a private citizen to DOT seeking a change of this street from two-way to a one-way street and asked that we review this request before submitting our other request. A resident of the Skyview Coop on Arlington Avenue near West 259th Street said that cars go up West 256th Street and down West 259th Street. She added that both the Skyview and neighboring Netherland Gardens Coop were against making West 259th Street a one way street. Bob Fanuzzi, a Skyview resident and Chair of the Community Board, presented a letter from the Skyview Coop board stating that the coop is opposed to the idea of making West 259th Street one way. The Chair stated that he received a communication from Netherland Gardens who were also opposed to the idea of making this a one-way street. The Chair placed the matter for a vote. The committee voted against making a change to a one way street with 11 against – S. Alexander, A. Creaney, M. Donato, A. Fella, M. Heller, M. Khury, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, J. Rather, G. Santiago, I. W. Stone, one in favor – R. Press and 0 abstentions.

There was discussion of Skyview only having two entrance/exit points being West 256th & West 259th Streets. It was mentioned that there is an uncompleted partial unmapped city owned street connecting to Arlington Avenue that could lead to a third exit further north, but this would have to be a capital expenditure put in the next fiscal year

Discussion continued on the stop sign with the chair reading the resolution passed last month by the committee asking for any more comments Debra May of SAR School appeared with students of the school in support of the stop sign and crosswalk at the intersection of Netherland Avenue and West 259th Street. Ms. May of SAR told the committee of the hazard of students crossing West 259th Street by Netherland Avenue at the front of the school continued. Mr. Fanuzzi questioned Ms. May of SAR about the students crossing at the corner of Riverdale Avenue & West 259th Street where there is a traffic light which is about 25 feet away from Netherland Avenue. Ms. May said that there is a guard during school hours, that students cross West 259th Street to patronize the local merchants, they are students who may not walk up across and back down, or are sometimes distracted as are many people who now use their phones as they walk. Mr. Fanuzzi presented a letter from the Skyview Coop stating that the coop is not opposed to a stop sign at West 259th Street at Netherland Avenue.

The resolution was re-read to have a stop sign placed at the intersection of West 259th Street and Netherland Avenue. The following was added to the resolution – with the support of the local coop owners, and that a stop ahead sign also be placed on the hill. The vote was 11 in favor - S. Alexander, A. Creaney, M. Donato, A. Fella, M. Khury, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, J. Rather, G. Santiago, I. W. Stone, 1 against - M. Heller and 0 abstentions.

The next item on the agenda was Newsstand applicant #1472892 for a proposed newsstand to be built at the southwest corner of West 231 Street & Broadway. The applicant was present and when told that there was already a newsstand across West 231st Street on Broadway, he stated that up to three newsstands can be on a corner. There was a question about Veterans operated newsstands. Andrew Sandler of Councilman Koppell's office stated that veterans are preferred. The Newsstand hours would be 16 – 18 hours per day. When asked about foot traffic, the applicant answered that it is next to the subway station. When asked if this Newsstand is too close to the handicap accessible elevator for the subway the answer was that it is 20 feet away from the elevator. The construction time is estimated at six to nine months. Some committee members raised the issue of competition with competing businesses. Chairman Padernacht stated that, in his opinion, the committee should not look at the matter of competition when reviewing this application. Discussion began about the matter of the vacant newsstand across the street. Chairman Padernacht stated that he did not have any information about the newsstand on the northwest corner in which the shell is constructed but there is no occupant. The applicant was asked if he could use that newsstand, he said that he did not know. The Chair stated that he would like to lay the matter over to the next meeting to inquire about the vacant newsstand prior to approving another newsstand. A motion to lay the matter over to the next committee meeting was approved 12- 0 – 0.

Assemblyman Dinowitz had asked the committee to look into the city process of placing banners on city poles. The matter was laid over to the next meeting.

Old Business – The chair announced that the request for the changing of new no standing signs back to no parking signs that allow for Riverdale Hatzolah volunteers to park was denied by the DOT with the reason being that the new signs are part of the slow zone.

The request for no parking signs on Independence Avenue between West 246th & West 247th Streets was upgraded by DOT to No Standing signs.

The committee requests for change of traffic regulations on Independence Avenue, Sycamore Avenue, and West 254th Street around the SAR lower school were partially approved and modified by DOT.

New Business – A question of any tickets for speeding having been issued in the new slow zone would have to be answered by the 50 Pct.

Kingsbridge Avenue by Domino's Pizza & the 50 Pct. having double & triple parked cars would have to be referred to the Public Safety committee.

An e-mail will be sent to committee members to comment on any changes to improve bus service to the A train on Isham Street in Inwood from Riverdale.

Comments about commercial vehicles parking overnight on Waldo & Greystone Avenues were brought up.

A person speaking for Riverdale Country School asked that lines be painted on Fieldston Road on the Henry Hudson Parkway overpass to allow for more parking spaces as cars now park many different ways and are not optimizing the space usage. A resolution to have DOT paint parking space lines in the area of Fieldston Road by Riverdale Country School at the overpass of the Henry Hudson Parkway was approved 12 – 0 – 0 .

The minutes of the special July meeting were approved 12 - 0 - 0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM.

Dan Padernacht, Chair
Traffic & Transportation Committee