

Minutes of Community Board 6 Transportation Committee Meeting

NYU Dental School, 433 First Ave., New York, NY

January 9, 2017

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members: Sandra McKee (Chair), Beatrice Disman, Molly Hollister, Kathleen Kelly, Joe Parrish, Gene Santoro, Larry Scheyer, Ann Seligman, Nick Smoley, Ronnie White, Ray Knowles (Public Member)

Department of Transportation Community Board Liaison: Colleen Chattergoon

Absent: Fred Arcaro, Bob Cohen (Public Member) Matt Roberts, Brian Van Nieuwenhoven, Bob Cohen, James Wilson (Public Member)

Chair Sandra McKee called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

“CASHLESS TOLLING” IN EFFECT AT QUEENS-MIDTOWN TUNNEL:

Joyce Mulvey of the MTA made a presentation on the new open-road “cashless” tolling that goes into effect at the Queens-Midtown tunnel as of 3AM on Tuesday January 10, 2017. That will be followed by systematic demolition of the Long Island City toll booths and reconfiguration of lanes approaching the tunnel. Toll collectors will be given other duties within the agency, not fired. Vehicles pass through the toll plaza without stopping. [E-ZPass](#) will work as before. For customers without E-ZPass, a [Tolls by Mail](#) bill for the cash toll amount of each crossing will be mailed to the registered vehicle owner. Non-E-ZPass customers may call **826 in advance from a mobile device to pay the toll. (Texting this number may help rental car drivers avoid hefty company charges for the privilege of using the E-ZPass tags mounted in those cars. In addition, MTA recommends cash-only EZ-Pass “holdouts” also consider this option.)

The Governor promised beautification of the gantry (which is covered by a canopy and supports E-ZPass transponder readers and license plate-reading cameras).

The switch to cashless tolling was in the works (it was being tested at the Henry Hudson Bridge), when Gov. Cuomo sped-up the adoption process. First came the conversion of the Hugh Carey (Brooklyn-Battery) Tunnel, followed by the Queens-Midtown Tunnel. The MTA’s bridges will be phased-in over the remainder of this year. For more information see: <http://web.mta.info/bandt/cashless/>

RESOLUTION ON INT. 1243-2016:

The Committee voted in favor of a resolution (prepared by two new Board members) backing Councilman Daniel Garodnick’s Introduction Number 1243-2016 – a Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York relating to The Taxi and Limousine Commission’s taking away commercial driving privileges of drivers with multiple license suspensions.

VOTE: 8 For, 1 Against, 1 Abstaining, 0 Not Entitled to Vote

The resolution may be submitted to the Full Board in February, because the committee agreed it would be desirable to consolidate the Whereas clauses to shorten the resolution.

REMOVAL OF PARKING SPACES ALONG 1ST AVE., BETWEEN 56TH AND 57TH ST.: This work is done.

RESTORATION OF BUS STOP ON 2ND AVE., SOUTH OF 57TH ST: The Committee advised DOT Liaison Colleen Chattergoon that construction on the building occupying this block, to E. 56th St. is done. But, the MTA's M15 and M15-SBS bus stops SBS payment machines have not returned.

Ms. Chattergoon said restoring this temporarily relocated bus stop will be complicated. First, she wants the CB 6 office to contact the MTA to tell them the building under construction is finished. Second, MTA will have to contact the DOT and the MTA will have to formally request that the DOT restore the bus stops. Ms. Chattergoon was unclear about whether DOT would delay the restoration if DOT did not get paid by the construction contractor for the cost of moving the bus stop.

EAST MIDTOWN RE-ZONING: Chair Sandy McKee encouraged committee members to become familiar with the proposed zoning change, which impacts transportation in the district. In return for extra bonus density some funding will be made available for a list of specified transportation projects which are "improvements" to circulation at a handful of existing Midtown Manhattan subway stations. LIRR East Side Access to Grand Central Terminal will be opening in 5 years, adding to the number of daily commuters. A suggestion was made to delay the effective date of rezoning to allow work to get underway on the new "T" line of the 2nd Ave. Subway (running on 2nd Ave. to Midtown and Downtown), to keep existing transit lines (even with the modest improvements proposed) from being overwhelmed by the rezoning's intended increase in building and population density.

TRACKING DOT'S UNFINISHED WORK:

The Community Board has passed resolutions requesting, and in support of, numerous NYC Department of Transportation projects. Ms. Chattergoon requested that the Committee compile a list of delayed projects, and Karen at the Board Office should transmit it to her. Chair McKee said that she would review old Board resolutions.

But, Committee members expressed their frustration with endless, and unexplained, delays by DOT. They reminded Ms. Chattergoon about: 2nd Ave. bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements (E. 59th St. – E. 43rd St.), promised for the Fall (but, not started); 1st Ave. bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements, ostensibly completed (but missing bicycle signals at E. 34th St., E. 57th St., and E. 59th St. and also lacking the promised re-configuration at the intersection at E. 48th St.); new pedestrian refuge tree pits not filled by trees after one year (requiring co-ordination with Parks' Department); improvements for the former Con Ed Pier along the East River Greenway, including bike path improvements and street furniture; designation of new "official" bus layover areas; improving safety where the 37th St. FDR Drive underpass and FDR Drive service road intersect.

Committee members and members of the public made additional complaints:

Following DOT's re-paving projects, lane re-striping lags more than a month behind; at various locations along protected bicycle paths, DOT's new, blinking yellow left turn arrow signals confuse motorists about the priority of green bicycle signals; in the vicinity of the elevated FDR Drive at 34 -35th St., large downspouts flush water from the elevated highway at great force onto the pavement and into the path

of cyclists and pedestrians; in the vicinity of the Southwest corner of Stuyvesant Town the eastbound extension of 16th St. bicycle lane from Rutherford Place to 1st Ave. is missing, and there is no clearly indicated safe eastbound route from there continuing around the 1st Ave. & E. 14th St. corner of Stuyvesant Town (from 1st Ave. & E. 16th St. to E. 14th St. & Ave. A) – which results in numerous cyclists riding the wrong way against traffic; one resident was intensely focused on unpredictable cyclist behavior at the intersection of E. 14th St. & Ave. A, her corner.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS: The Committee supports Bike New York’s bike education program, which starts up again in the spring. It was reported that handicapped-accessible elevators are now operational at the 23rd St. Station (at Park Ave. South) on the 6 Train line.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35PM.

Minutes taken by Lawrence Scheyer