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THE CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD SIX
P.O. BOX 1672
NEW YORK, NY 10159-1672

Transportation Committee
March 5, 2018 07:00 PM
433 First Avenue, Room 210

Meeting Minutes

Present: Sandra McKee (Chair), Gene Santoro (Vice Chair), Fred Arcaro, Amelia Acosta, Beatrice Disman, Andrew Gross, Molly Hollister, Kathleen Kelly, Joe Parrish, Matthew Roberts, Lawrence Scheyer, Ann Seligman, Brian Van Nieuwenhoven, Ronnie White

Absent: Bob Cohen and Ray Knowles (public members)

Guests: Paige Judge (CB6 Member), Claude Winfield

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 07:00p.

Adoption of the Agenda/Previous Meeting's Minutes

Gene made a motion to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ann and passed.

Gene made a motion to adopt the minutes from the February 5, 2018 meeting. The motion was seconded by Larry and passed.

Committee Business

Agenda Item #1: Discussion of Proposal for Honorary Street Co-naming of Jimmy Breslin Way on East 42nd Street between 2nd and 3rd Avenues.

Jimmy Breslin's son, Kevin Breslin, presented support of the honorary street co-naming of Jimmy Breslin. He expressed how important journalism matters and the impact seeing "Jimmy Breslin Way" on the sign would have on the community and children passing by.

Question by A. Gross: Why 43rd and 3rd Ave? The corner is representative of the journalist's favorite place to write his articles, the Automat, close to the "News" Building

Comment from Fred: He knew Jimmy and Jimmy's boss.

Motion to pass a resolution in support: Ann Seligman
2nd the motion: Gene Santoro

10 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstentions, 0 abstentions for cause

Agenda Item #2: Proposal to install a speed hump on Tudor City Place between East 41st and 42nd Streets

Paige Judge resident of Tudor City, representative of Tudor City green and CB6 member spoke in favor of the measure and stressed the need for 2 speed humps in addition to the one speed hump presented in today's agenda. Collen from DOT commented that they received the request for the speed hump by the Tudor City residents and it was discussed amongst city agencies (DOT, NYPD).

Member of the public, 40-year resident of Tudor City agrees with Paige. Included in his comments that the lady who was struck by a van during the Pope's last visit was a traumatic act and that he also supports adding the (2) additional speed humps in the area.

Request to include in resolution to ask to look at the two additional speed humps will be added.

Motion of Support: Kathleen Kelly
2nd the motion: Fred Acaro

Motion passes unanimously.

Agenda Item #3: A proposal by NYU Langone Medical Center to reconfigure East 33rd Street between 1st and 2nd Avenues to be two-way so that ambulances can more quickly reach their Emergency Center

NYU Representative, Rob Famia (emergency room physician, chair of emergency room at Langone) made presentation on behalf of NYU. Dr. Famia first presented what will happen with the 7 minute difference, should 33rd St become a two-way street. When a patient is coming in, the new process is to meet the patient at the ambulance and administer support starting right when they're out of the ambulance and still on the stretcher. From a medical perspective, making this street a two-way street will help save lives and bring the best patient care.

The key purpose is to minimize time to obtain critical time in treating patients.

Eric Arselman, representing Sam Schwartz Engineering DPC, presenting the research and study on the changes/design. Intersections studied: 33rd and 2nd and 33rd and 1st. Currently, 33rd street is 50' wide which for a one-way minor crosstown street is unusual. Typical cross-town streets are between 30' and 34' wide.

Proposed configuration for the corner of 2nd Avenue and 33rd St: Add a "mixing zone" between bikes and vehicles (standard DOT design). Increase available pedestrian space (this was a project already considered by the DOT and at the request of the DOT, was included in this proposed configuration). The configuration speaks to the Vision Zero policies that the city is implementing.

Analysis Summary presented included; a traffic study, travel time data, and additional data points. The original study took place in July 2015 and was then updated in January 2018. Summary includes new traffic/pedestrian count data, analysis results based on conservative 2019 projections. The request from NUYLH to look into angled parking and mid-block crossing was completed and found not feasible.

1st and 33rd: Operations would improve due to fewer north-bound left turns.

2nd and 33rd: There would be a new "mixing zone" for left-turn movement, and increased pedestrian space on the south-east corner.

There are peaks in traffic patterns in the day where cutting 7 minutes would make a real difference in the timeline for a patient to obtain critical care. Residents of Kips Bay towers would be helped because they could now turn onto 33rd from 2nd Ave to enter their area and use 33rd Ave to exit to 1st Ave.

Committee Member Questions:

BVH: agrees and supports the benefits of making 33rd St a two-way street. There are two problem spots that generally have the same problem. 50' wide street is essentially a highway on-ramp. Need to include some type of way to physically separate and protect the cyclists in the bike lane on Second Ave. There should be traffic calming measures put in place to protect the cyclists. Brain is in favor of supporting this on the condition that they address these concerns he's voiced this evening.

Matt Lorenz, DOT Department of Traffic and Planning. We find that the "mixed" lane design to be feasible and not the counter flow design (aka Emergency Vehicles Only Lane). DOT feels that the counter flow design would not be safe or enforced.

James: What will happen to the fruit stand? Answer is, it would move. CB6 member asks if there will be light included because it is very dark. DOT responded that they will be conducting an illumination study on the block.

Larry speaking in support/add to Brian's comment. There should be light included in the design to address the lighting issues on the block. Consider removing a car parking

spot or two to create a shallower approach for cars and bikes to turn in the mixed lane design.

Kathleen: Is there no way to make the median lane with enough space, if necessary, for an ambulance to get to the ER if the lanes are blocked due to double parking? This issue can be re-addressed in future iteration once it is approved.

Andrew's perspective is to vote to pass a motion in support of a resolution because there is no other option when there is the chance to save.

Fred's comment: pedestrian median is a refuge for pedestrians crossing the street and should be marked so that it is specifically used as thorough fare for the emergency vehicles.

Matt's question: What are the dimension of the lanes: Parking Lane: 12'10; Traffic lane: 10'; Pedestrian Refuge 4'

Clarification from DOT, Matt Lorenz, on why they did not move forward with designating an "Emergency only" lane. There isn't a design like this anywhere in the city and a precedent they do not want to set. Traffic volumes are low on this street.

James comment #2: Can we add in a flashing light to indicate when an emergency vehicle is coming? To do that we would need significant more pedestrian traffic and standard warnings than the city uses.

Larry: Is there any possibility of moving the City Bike station from 33rd and 1st SE corner to NW corner of 33rd and 2nd? Engineers are proposing that they move the City Bike station to the pedestrian area on the SW corner of 33rd and 2nd

Members of the Public:

Todd Winder, board president of 33 E 33rd St. Comments: math of the width of the street was wrong.

Why do ambulances need to get another lane if they can already use lane if needed? Why is the estimate 7 minutes to move 4 blocks to use the roadways as they already are?

If the concern is pedestrian safety, how will the proposed layout support a safer structure for pedestrians?

Public: Ambulances already drive on E 33rd Street so why do they need to change the one-way?

Eric: response was that the existing is an unsafe condition for all users, can not ask anyone to travel the wrong way on a street it is not safe.

Mark Zimmerman, resident and board member of Kips Bay for over 40 years. The new building for NYU has a driveway on 34th which is closer to the emergency room driveway why can't they enter from 34th street to go into the emergency room rather than 33rd St.

Eric: Proposed plans is that the two-way street will become a signaled street and in many instances hospitals separate traffic for the ER from other hospital traffic (people bringing in sick family members).

Public: At least consider making 34th street driveway accessible to all cars.

David Ridell, owner of architecture firm in the city. Noise concerns: a lot of noise in the neighborhood due to the ambulance. He applauds the DOT in trying to make this a safer environment.

DOT has not shown a concerted effort to alleviate the traffic that ambulances get stuck in when they are trying to do. There is dedicated lane on 57th street and that should be considered here. There should be enforcement to those cars that are blocking the box.

Brenda Ling, Kips Bay resident. In all the presentations, no one has mentioned street signs. 1-way street sign was taken off years ago and people still do U-turns. There should be a no U-turn sign and will there be a speed signal put in place too?

Resident Lives in Kips Bay 40 Years, NYU medical center has used E 33rd street for emergencies for 4 decades. By opening 2-way: delivery and moving trucks and Con Ed will be affected. Con Ed has opened the street at least once a year but more so multiple times of the year. East 33rd street is a street and not an avenue.

Jason Framowitz, former EMT of 6 years and resident of the area. Supports this proposal. Ambulances that drive against traffic on a one-way are supposed to do that in last-resort situations.

Kathleen Schwartz, lives in Kips Bay towers and works at NYU. An additional hazard to consider is that when an ambulance makes a right off East 33rd, the ambulance is turning INTO the 1st avenue traffic.

Michael Cousins, opposes making E 33rd street to two-way street. More lanes mean more traffic. Primary first responders have not made this request and in previous meetings with Rosie Mendez the first responders did not mention that they needed this. Calls this a "Land Grab" and that this change is just trying to turn a profit at the residents' expense.

Erwin Glad, 303 East 33 Board member: how many accidents have there been with emergency vehicles using the one-way lane to get to NYU? Answer: 0. There is a current proposal for a multi-story building going up on E 33rd that currently occupies 4 buildings. The city has advised for 40 years that a one-way street is safest.

Jim Claire, East 33rd St Resident. In response to the bicycle concerns, it should also be considered that the street's decline on 1st Ave has cyclists riding down the street at high speeds and that also includes cars. No one has addressed the potential issues with the speeding cyclists and cars on 1st Ave.

Karen Lee, Exec Director of the Kips Bay Association: They absolutely agree with the doctor and think that this plan will kill people. She feels that 1st Ave is the problem and not 33rd St. If this is going to be done to E 33rd St, she suggests that it be done without affecting the service road. The residents of East 33rd street have been saying the exact same thing for 4 years and haven't received a response.

Molly: Have we received support from any elected officials? We have support from Councilman Keith Powers and Senator Kruger.

Madeleine Grunewald from Senator Kruger's office was present and stated that they were in support of the two-way conversion but have not written a letter. Madelaine was present to gather residents concerns.

Ben Jacobs from Councilmember Keith Prowers's office was present, and the office did write a letter in support of the two-way conversion.

Fred, move the agenda (08:38p)

Sandy: We have a resolution in place to support

Motion to Reiterate Support of two-way traffic on 33rd St.: Gene; volunteers to write the resolution in support that includes the public communities' concerns expressed in today's committee meeting.

2nd the motion: Fred Acaro

14 in favor; 0 against; 0 abstained.

Old/New Business

New Business:

1. Commanding officer, Rahm Dialh, EM station 8, FDNY 499 East 26th contacted the board office requesting speed humps be put in place on East 26th between First Ave. and FDR. No residential impact; the impact on response time would be negligible.

A collision happened on Sunday 8am, car was driving the wrong way and collided with a divider and that speed humps may have slowed him down.

Ann: What's the signage like at 1st Ave and 26th street?
Speed hump would be only on the service road.

Beatrice: isn't this just a letter to DOT to look at the whole situation? Office will write a service letter, in the letter, specifically suggest a speed limit sign to help alert drivers.

2. Con Ed reached out to the office. They will be installing gas regular (3rd Ave between 55th and 54th) and gas main on 54th street between 1st and 2nd.

DOT is willing to address the permit working time change to Mon-Fri 7a-6p (which means that the work would complete by End of Summer) (DOT recommends working on weekends only) instead of the current proposed 9a-6p (which means the work will continue until end of the year). DOT has a standard process that they go through to grant working times and they will review with Con ED.

3. There is an exhibit about the median on Park Ave between 46th – 48th that will be open until this Friday.
4. There is a discussion the committee wants to have about Uber and that will be moved to next month's meeting.

Chair's Report

Report waived.

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned 8:56p.

Minutes submitted by: Amelia Acosta on 03/26/18