

CB12Traffic and Transportation Committee Meeting
May 6, 2020 at 7:00 PM

Committee Members Present –Chair, Debby Nabavian; Assistant Chair, Omar Tejada; Richard Allman, James Berlin, Gerard Dengel, Bruce Robertson; Mary Anderson

CB12: Maria Luna, Steve Simon, Vivian Ducat, Curtis Young

Public: DoT: Lyle Blackwood, Karissa Lidstrand, Kimberly Rancourt, Dan Wagner; Wendy Olivo; Kianna Diaz (Assemblyman Taylor), Daniel Allalemdjian, Hasouk, Tekla; Kevin Williams, Amanda Ianotti; Amber Kartalyan

Call to order 7:11 pm

1) Chair / Welcome and opening remarks.

- a) First 7 miles of street closures for additional social distancing space. Fort Tryon Park Drive, Laurel Hill Terrace near Highbridge Park, and 1 block of Dyckman west of Broadway.
- b) MTA has announced nightly closures for cleaning + revised codes of conduct

2) DOT Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety enhancement: Riverside Drive between 155th Street and 158th. The proposal also includes a conversion of the two-way section of Riverside Drive between 158th Street and Riverside Drive West (near 161st Street) to one-way southbound flow with new parallel parking.

DOT Karissa Lidstrand presented plan for improved pedestrian safety and traffic calming, including the fast right turn from RSD W at W. 155th, and addressing the 6 legged intersection at 158th and other issues at 158th. Street ambassadors spoke to area residents. Suggestion of adding concrete median and painted curb extensions, making each direction of RSD single lane; also pedestrian ramps, shortened crossing distances. The net change of parking is +1.

Questions and comments

- a) JB and GD- very impressed with presentation.
- b) OT- very glad and impressed with the presentation from a cyclist perspective.
- c) OT- if you do not convert lower riverside to single lane would you lose a primary aspect of this safety improvement. DOT: that is correct you would lose a portion of it.
- d) Bruce: suggests a compromise to Maria's concern to the two way conversation of middle river drive if parking can be removed to retain this? Maria disagreed.
- e) ML - Two way street connecting middle riverside drive to west riverside cannot be converted to a one way. This will cause a much longer drive to get to the middle of RSD. Buses have also caused blocking issues. DOT: there have been discussions of adjusting signage for standing areas. This would assist emergency vehicles and buses. DOT requested ML to send concerns.
- f) SS- requests to view Maria's request. There is a lot of good stuff. Asks if there be enough space to accommodate the cyclist traffics side by side. DOT/ space is 11 feet wide, not enough for side by side. Suggested that DOT try to fit that and that T&T not take a position until this is presented to community.
- g) SS- Concrete median between 157 - 158 is an option for trees. DOT agrees, will connect with Parks.
- h) VD- agrees with the conversation to a single lane as a safety measure. Signage needs improvement to clearly direct traffic. Happy with the design.
- i) Daniel: Single lanes would be safer for both cyclists and automobiles. Q/Would trees be an option in these spaces? DOT: trees in planters can be placed in painted spaces. DOT would need a partner to maintain them. The proposal includes a discussion with Parks to add trees to the concrete sections of the project.

- j) Hasouk - for safety reasons supports conversion of lower RSD. It will be inconvenient, as we are 70 years old, we but still support. One lane of parking would be appreciated to ensure the streets are wide enough for deliveries and buses. Could traffic cameras be installed on 158th?
- k) Tekla - from the comments suggested agrees with the DOT plan for A, B, and C. Suggests that section D (conversion of middle riverside) be tabled for later.
- l) **Committee resolution approval:** 6-0-0
Other board members: 3-0-0
Public: 4-0-0

3) BSA Calendar 2019-298-BZ 506 W 181st Street. Special permit for an area not zoned for a school.

Traffic study looked at arrival info based on how # walkers vs MTA vs vehicle arrivals. 344 students. Since doesn't pass 50 incremental vehicles at any intersection, limits scope of required analysis to "level 1." Only pedestrian arrivals were sufficient to require level 2. Looked at high crash intersections and developed protocol for safe arrival. Planning for 2-3 yellow buses only. Dropoff on Audubon. Noted that losing a garage with 75 cars and vehicle arrivals due to school estimated at 46, which would indicate limited impact to vehicle traffic.

Questions and Comments:

- a) OT- Where is the school currently located. A / 401 W. 164th. Also, noted to be aware of traffic issues when an elementary school is introduced, especially on a high traffic street like 181, considering the issues which SA created on FWA. Kevin Williams / These concerns taken seriously through various studies and are pending DOT review for the pedestrian impact.
- b) JB- wise to make the drop off on Audubon. Suggests that cab drop off be made on Audubon as well. Kevin William: Agrees - they studied Amsterdam as well and noted it would not be optimal.
- c) BR- has the impact on FDNY location been taken into account? Kevin Williams: collected environmental impact studies. The results show no impact; also have taken into account the large mixed use building being constructed next door.
- d) GD- would suggest, if not for the crises, a town hall for the community to voice opinions.
- e) DKN - We have high sensitivity around the traffic impact of this project because of situation around SA WaHi. The estimate from the traffic study is about 50 automobiles.
- f) JB - notes that he does not believe this would have a damaging impact on the community.
- g) GD- noted that this should be presented to the business committee too.
- h) RA- has there been reach out to businesses? Kevin Williams / check cashing, pharmacy are on Audubon and foot traffic is minimal at both AM arrival (7-7:40) and PM (3:15-3:45) pick-up times.
- i) SS- Does not believe this is a similar situation to Success Academy WaHi. What will occur with the bus stop in front of the proposed site? Loss of this garage how is this impact by the other garage being lost due to a conversion to the women's shelter? Kevin Williams: Maybe but it is probably due to the larger project being built.
- j) DKN: looking forward to updates on car drop off and environmental impacts.

4) Old Business -

- a) DOT Lyle - on Riverside viaduct work. Work has begun and road closures will begin. First phase should completed by May 22nd. The underpass work is almost complete. The overnight will begin today. The stone repair is 95% complete. Note: there have been no delays due to the pandemic. So far, this project is on pace to be completed on time.
- b) BR- noted the work has been impressive.

5) New Business

- a) RA- Proposes June Agenda include time on MTA changes occurring due to Covid.
- b) DKN- June agenda will also include Citi Bike presentation.