



Eleazar Bueno, Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

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December 23, 2021

Hon. Henry Gutman
Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
55 Water Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10041

Re: Resolution Regarding DOT Street Safety Improvements on Upper Amsterdam Ave. and Ft. George Avenue Area.

Dear Commissioner Gutman:

Please be advised that Community Board 12, Manhattan, passed a resolution with 22 votes in favor, 11 opposed, 5 abstentions, 0 not voting at its Tuesday, December 21st, 2021, General Meeting, supporting the improvements to pedestrian and cyclist safety on Amsterdam Avenue north of W. 188th Street and Fort George Avenue, St. Nicholas Avenue, and the street changes as presented and proposed by DOT and ICM; and encouraging NYC DOT to implement these safety improvements as soon as possible.

Whereas: Amsterdam Avenue ("Amsterdam") north of 188th Street is home to several public schools, including those at the George Washington High School Campus and PS 189, as well as the Isabella Geriatric Facility; and

Whereas: In September 2020, CB12M passed a resolution that called "upon NYC Department of Transportation ("DOT") to take immediate steps to address the dangerous current conditions at Amsterdam's northern end, including that section of Amsterdam (or Fort George Avenue) adjacent to the Michael J. Buczek Ballfields. Measures should give special consideration to the heaviest pedestrian crossings..., and utilize the full complement of approaches that can be brought to bear, ... to improve safety for the many pedestrians..."; and

Whereas: As the first phase of streets changes to improve safety, DOT's School Safety team, along with a student program "I Challenge Myself" ("ICM") based at the GW Educational Campus, addressed the area north of 188th, along with Amsterdam and Ft. George Avenues, to St Nicholas Ave; and

Whereas: In this area, injury and fatality data shows how unsafe the street conditions are: from 2014-2018, there were 45 total injuries and 2 deaths. Over 40% of motor-vehicle injuries related to rear-end accidents, indicative of speeding, and the level of children who were injured was almost three times the Manhattan average; and

Whereas: DOT School Safety & ICM worked together to develop a proposal; they met for a series of field meetings and design workshops to study the area and develop improvements. Outreach was done to schools, Isabella Geriatric, CB12M, MTA, and other entities. ICM students observed 63% of drivers driving above the speed limit - the max speed recorded was 49 mph. They also kept very wide streets and long crossing distances, inefficient parking spaces, and unwanted uses such as large trucks parking over the long-term and car washes in the bike lane; and

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Whereas: DOT and ICM presented a street design proposal to calm traffic and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, proposal elements include a two-way parking-protected bike lane on Amsterdam, which would transition to one-way lanes after the curve on Ft George Avenue, pedestrian islands, painted curb extensions, hardened center lines, conversion of the No Standing zone on the Ft. George curve to parking, and conversion to angle parking on W. 190th from Wadsworth Ave - Amsterdam Ave. Net parking loss is estimated to be 9-12 spots. Additionally, a speed cushion feasibility study will be undertaken concerning this new tool for streets that are bus routes that cannot accommodate traditional speed humps; and be it

Resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan supports improvements to pedestrian and cyclist safety on Amsterdam Ave north of W. 188th Street and Fort George Ave. and St. Nicholas Ave, and the street changes presented and proposed by DOT and ICM program participants at the December 6, 2021, CB12M Traffic & Transportation meeting. CB12M encourages NYC DOT to implement these safety improvements as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Eleazar Bueno', written over a horizontal line.

Eleazar Bueno
Chairperson

cc: Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman
Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator

Hon. Brian Benjamin, State Senator
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member
Hon. Carmen de la Rosa, Assembly Member
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member