

CB12 Traffic and Transportation Committee Meeting December 6, 2021, at 7:00 PM

Committee Members – Chair, Debby Nabavian; Assistant Chair, Leo Jimenez; Jim Berlin; Bruce Robertson; Omar Tejada; Jay Mazur; Mary Anderson; Robin Cruz ; **CB12 Board Members** – Betty Lehman, Osi Kaminer

Students: “I Challenge Myself” – Johanna Garcia, Emma, Ana Rodriguez, Jonsly Sanchez, Anna Reyes ; **DOT:** Kimberly Rancourt, Director of Special Projects, School Safety Program Manager, Elena Lunyova, and Director Nina Haiman, Lyle Blackwood, Community Coordinator

Electeds: Mariel De La Cruz, Comptroller’s Office; Evelin Collado, CM Rodriguez

Public: Eve Kessler, Gabrielle Miller, Abraham Valentine, Anna Siegel, Brandon Barrera, Brandon Tesh, Charity Gonzalez, Joseph Nesci, Kelly Ray, Pamela DeAsis, Roberto Garcia, Rosa Yolanda Pineda, Selena Blackstone, Valerie Fred, Virginia, Dayana Moreno, Paul Hunter.

1. Call to order 7:15 pm
2. Chair pleased to make the following updates:
 - a. Subway deep station elevator replacement projects are completed, 181st 1 train re-opened as is 190th Station exit onto FWA - while that station was open given the topography made this a burden for those exiting to Fort Washington side.
 - b. New MTA Liaison: Jessica Stanton, replacing Howie Levine who moved to position at MTA accessibility.
3. **DOT and I Challenge Myself presentation on School Safety Improvement Project for Fort George Ave/Amsterdam Ave, W. 188 St to St. Nicholas.** Project came out of community concerns about speeding and reckless driving on Amsterdam Ave/ Fort George Hill. Elected officials, CB12 resolution also called for traffic calming and safety improvements on Amsterdam Ave, W 181 St to W 190 St. Wide streets. There are eight local schools near the study corridor and it’s a bus route. Wide streets encourage speeding. I Challenge Myself (ICM) is an after school program for high school students based at George Washington Educational Campus. ICM reached out to DOT asking for safety improvements on Amsterdam Ave, and DOT School Safety & ICM worked closely together to collaborate on solutions and develop a safety proposal for the street.
 - a. Jonsly Sanchez (student) - We measured the street and tracked the speed of drivers and created mock-ups of what we want the new street to look like. Found 63% of drivers go above the speed limit, one driver going 49 miles per hour. Found the street to very wide (42’) and easy for drivers to speed through. Focused on how to narrow the street to discourage speeding. Inefficient use of parking, no lines, no clear way to park efficiently resulting in a lot of space between cars and sometimes cars never move at all; just park there all the time.
 - b. Ana Rodriguez – GW student, discussed safety problems for students and pedestrians. Some use the street for a car wash and leave litter. Streets are dangerous.
 - c. Joanna Garcia GW student - cars and car washes block the bike lanes causing cyclists to go the sidewalk and endanger pedestrians, especially senior citizens and kids. Amsterdam is 42 feet wide and it takes a few times to cross the street at the lights. Cars jockey for position to get ahead when the light changes, endangering pedestrians. In summary, our group has interviewed many people and reached out to all the schools along Amsterdam Avenue corridor. We also met for a walk through and held digital and in-person meetings with Community Board 12, Isabella, NYC Transit, Parks Dept., and Mountain Bike Associations.
 - d. Elena Lunyova - Proposal follows a design scheme that you probably see elsewhere in Manhattan: bicycle lane protected by parked cars on a floating parking lane, pedestrian islands and curb extensions. Design effectively narrows the roadway and to shorten the crossing distances, an approach shown to be quite effective in reducing crashes with injuries; seen a 21% drop in pedestrian injuries in other similar designs. At W. 190th, back of Isabella Center and back of GW Educaiton campus, changes being proposed include to continue the two-way protected bike lane along the park side, pedestrian islands, a bus boarding island installed long enough to accommodate articulated buses. Will convert angled parking to parallel parking, and along the west curb, a large painted pedestrian curb extension. Angle parking with marked parking stalls. Protected bike lane goes to the top of the hill, switching to a pair of one-way bike lanes going to Saint Nicholas. No Standing zones located along the curve of the hill would change to community parking, and hopefully eliminate illegal long term parking by large trucks. Long-term goal is to continue two way protected bike lane to St. Nicholas Avenue, but that would require capital reconstruction that is already underway and scheduled to start construction in 2025.
 - e. Remaining **Studies in progress** include traffic controls on Audubon Ave at W 191, W 192 St and W 193 St., bus speed cushion feasibility; feasibility study for a one-way conversion of Audubon Ave (W 193 St – St Nicholas Ave); changes to school loading.
 - f. OT / A few years ago was a ride leader for “I Challenged Myself” whereby students complete a 100 mile event at the end of the year. It’s very exciting to see the students here, doing this type of work. It took me 30 years to realize that I do this type of work that you’re doing - being involved in city government right here at the community level. Kudos to you and to I Challenge Myself program. Very familiar with this area as a pedestrian, driver and cyclist, so am a huge advocate for this long overdue project. Need to complete this work and proposal can finally bringing safety to the connection of Fort George Hill and the Greenway. If losing 9-12 parking spots keeps our children safe, I can’t see anyone arguing against that. I 100% support this work.
 - g. JB – Young people participation is grand. Q / On one-way bike lane, where is the other way? A / Instead of being two-way on one side of the street it’s one way on each side of the street, long term would be to have it two-way continuously but that requires capital project. Q / Will angled park cover the area where trucks are currently parking illegally? A / That area would have parallel parking; can’t fit the angled parking but it will have the regulation changed to regular street regulations which discourages this sort of long-term illegal parking. KR - We will continue to monitor this. The engineering standards for angled parking are very specific so we wouldn’t be able to put that there but changing the regulation to become legal parking spaces has been successful. The crosswalk on 190 is a big issue and we reviewed this location as one of a number of locations along this corridor. Following a request from a number of elected officials and others it was determined that it wasn’t feasible for us to do at this location because of the drainage and other factors that come into play.
 - h. DN - Q / What is the time frame KR A/ We would like to do this over the next implementation season which starts next spring and goes through next fall.
 - i. OK Q/ What happens to No Standing? / KR A/ No standing anytime we’re proposing to change to regular alternate side.

- j. Kelly Ray - Q / Does DOT beta test their bike lanes? Concern with areas like Amsterdam around 179 where bike lane basically stops at the on-ramp to 195. Drivers using bike lane as a second right-hand turn lane, which makes it an unsafe alternative for cyclists. KR - A/ DOT does a lot of on the ground design work. Certainly room for improvement. DOT does follow-up safety studies and monitoring and have data on Fort George hill that could share. KR - A/ Regarding residential parking permits, the Chair and DOT were interested in discussing at CB12. There are a number of reasons why DOT is not currently reviewing residential parking permits due to a lot of complications. While we are looking at parking regulations in certain locations and working with NYPD to try to eliminate some of those illegal uses, don't have a resident potential parking permit process.
- k. DN - Motion in support of the changes indicated here; OT- seconds the motion. Anyone opposed - none, resolution passed unanimously (7)
- l. Abraham Valentine Q / has anyone questioned installing speed cameras on Fort George Hill and Fort George Avenue because this street has constant speeding around 9-midnight. KR – A/ speed camera installation is being considered to expand the program, so hopefully in the future. DN - there are some restrictions at the new york state legislature legislative level and actually not in the control of the city, but that seems to be finally changing a little bit.
- m. Gabrielle miller – is there is data that supports that narrowing of the street will reduce speeds, and by how much. And, is there a 2nd phase of this project that will extend south because other schools further south along Amsterdam Avenue could also be captured in some of this. KR - A/ We have the safety data which shows that these types of projects which involve narrowing the street realize safety benefits for everyone on the street and especially pedestrians. We're certainly looking to extend safety treatments further south.
- 4. Eve Kessler – Broadway Bridge is undergoing a large renovation project, and I've been hearing a lot of safety complaints from activists, cyclists and others. The sidewalk is blocked off on one side with workers parking; it's become even more dangerous because of the construction. Have you heard this at your meetings and if you have some statement of concern that you would like to make. DN - A/ we did discuss it at the meeting briefly last month, and DOT was going to look into it. The scene at 181st street and fort Washington during construction is also hair-raising. KR – A/ we'll followup with the Broadway Bridge liaison for to get a solid update. LB – A/ there is contact specifically for the Broadway Bridge which I'll put you in contact with their liaison. I forwarded your photos to them. There was work that was supposed to be completed by now, but they were delayed. Pre-pandemic and pandemic delays. DN – the liaison is for the community to know what's happening, please share.
- 5. OK – the non-functioning street light on Park Terrace east is a safety hazard, ongoing for a number of months. Martin collins is in conversation with you Kimberly. My understanding that DOT was supposed to fix it in 30 days, it's been roughly four to six months and it's a big safety concern, particularly for women, because it's really dark on that street without that light. When will it be fixed? LB – Issue with ConEd. martin's been emailing me as well and ConEd. It's in ConEd's hands to complete the work. OK – please add to the Minutes, so we have on record, that currently nobody at ConEd cares about women's safety. That's what it is. DN - request urgent attention at DSC. LB- yes, ConEd liaison usually attends. And there's a specific liaison that's on the thread, the person we're waiting to reply. Been trying you know for awhile to get a response.
- 6. Mary Anderson- Waiting for a bus on 178th and broadway with my rollator, there was plenty of space for the bus to pull into the curb. Two in a row refused to come to the curb, and they could have angled in but didn't. I requested that they raise the entry ramp into the bus, and they questioned me why I needed it. MTA always encourages to call 5-1-1, but i think this is worth a conversation, maybe with someone in accessibility. Ideally when this happens, we should get the number of the bus and the time but the problem to write fast enough. All about courtesy and customer service.

DN – committee members should suggest topics for our work in 2022.

DN - Special thanks to Omar Tejada our former Co-Chair who's retiring from CB12.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Link to video: <https://bit.ly/3p8OJQE>