

Carter Booth, *Chair*  
Daniel Miller, *First Vice Chair*  
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Antony Wong, *Treasurer*  
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Amy Brenna, *Assistant Secretary*

## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE

NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

[www.cb2manhattan.org](http://www.cb2manhattan.org)

P: 212-979-2272 F: 212-254-5102 E: [info@cb2manhattan.org](mailto:info@cb2manhattan.org)

Greenwich Village □ Little Italy □ SoHo □ NoHo □ Hudson Square □ Chinatown □ Gansevoort Market

December 18, 2020

Ed Pincar Jr.  
Manhattan Borough Commissioner  
NYC Department of Transportation  
59 Maiden Lane  
New York, NY 10038

Dear Commissioner Pincar:

At its Full Board meeting December 17, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

**Resolution requesting a CitiBike station just south of Clarkson & Varick Sts. as an alternative to the proposed King & Varick Sts. location.**

**Whereas** the NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) presented an overview of 10 new proposed locations for CitiBike stations in Community Board 2 Manhattan (CB2) at the November meeting of CB2's Traffic and Transportation Committee; and

**Whereas** one of the proposed locations, King St. & Varick St., in the northeast roadbed, has elicited concerns in terms of safety for both pedestrians and bicyclists; and

**Whereas** the 7th Ave. S. protected bike lane currently terminates at Houston St. & Varick St. (extension of 7th Ave. S.) with a large bulbout on the southeast corner of Houston & Varick that blocks bicyclists from proceeding further down Varick directly along the curb; and

**Whereas** the large bulbout jutting out presents an obstacle that is not only unsafe for bicyclists in compelling them to swerve around it into the street and into moving traffic, but also is hazardous for pedestrians standing on the bulbout waiting to cross the street who would be vulnerable to being struck by bicycles on their way to the King & Varick location whose riders may be unable to stop in time to avoid a collision; and

**Whereas** there has been some discussion about investigating the possibility of continuing the 7th Ave. S. bike lane further south on Varick, however conditions such as Holland Tunnel-bound traffic, local delivery and loading needs, and narrow sidewalks merit an in-depth study of this southern stretch to accommodate bicyclists' safety in balance with all users' needs, which would take a considerable amount of time, and a CitiBike station in this area is needed now; and

**Whereas** the Hudson Square Connection BID, which covers this area and is vastly familiar with its operations and needs (and also has several CitiBike stations in its precincts), has proposed locating a CitiBike station just south of Clarkson & Varick Sts. (on Varick's east side) as an alternative to the proposed King & Varick Sts. location; and

**Whereas** the Clarkson & Varicks Sts. location is just a little more than a block north of the King St. one, and would fulfill CitiBike network needs just as effectively; and

**Whereas** the Hudson Square BID is proposing that the Clarkson/Varick Citibike station they recommend be placed in the floating parking lane that buffers the bike lane at that Varick St. location, safe and convenient for bike lane users, while not interfering with emergency vehicle access. This approach has already been used successfully at 9th Ave. and W. 45th St. in midtown Manhattan; and

**Whereas** the small businesses adjacent to the proposed Clarkson & Varick St. CitiBike station site favor having the station there, and think it will be good for business; and

**Therefore, be it resolved** that Community Board 2 Manhattan (CB2) fully supports locating a new CitiBike station just south of Clarkson & Varick Sts. (on Varick's east side) as an alternative to the proposed King & Varick Sts. location; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 is in favor of the Citibike station being placed in the floating parking lane at the Clarkson/Varick location; and

**Be it finally resolved** that CB2 urges DOT to install the CitiBike station at the Clarkson/Varick location as soon as possible.

**Vote: Unanimous, with 46 Board Members in favor**

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Carter Booth, Chair  
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Shirley Secunda, Chair  
Traffic & Transportation Committee  
Community Board #2, Manhattan

CB/EM

c: Hon. Jerrold Nadler, Congressman  
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator  
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NY Assembly Member  
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, NYC City Council

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Ed Pincar Jr.  
Manhattan Borough Commissioner  
NYC Department of Transportation  
59 Maiden Lane  
New York, NY 10038

Dear Commissioner Pincar:

At its Full Board meeting December 17, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

### **Resolution recommending a study and plan for Canal St. to analyze and remedy its long-lived dangerous and community-destroying conditions.**

**Whereas** Canal St. has long been a severely dangerous thoroughfare threatening the safety and well-being of pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists alike, and its hazardous conditions continue to grow: from 2016 to 2020, at least 2,567 reported crashes occurred on Canal Street between Hudson St. and the Manhattan Bridge - almost 2 per day that injured at least 54 cyclists (killing one), 109 pedestrians (killing one) and 229 motor vehicle occupants (killing one)<sup>1</sup>; and

**Whereas** conditions on Canal St. not only endanger people's lives, but also interfere with the safe and effective conduct of business: the congested streets hinder deliveries to businesses, often leading to double-parking that blocks sidewalks and intersections, while crowded sidewalks limit space allocated to street vendors, resulting in sidewalk conflicts; and

**Whereas** with curb-to-curb street widths up to almost 100 ft. wide<sup>2</sup> (dimensions more akin to a super highway than a city street), Canal St. creates a vast chasm between its north and south sidewalks, thwarting people's safe crossing from one side of the street to the other and impeding community connections and cohesiveness; and

**Whereas** as many as seven lanes operate on segments of Canal St. (e.g., the east end of the street (near Bowery/Mott/Elizabeth) has left turn/center medians + three travel lanes in each direction, and btw. Broadway and W. Broadway there are three lanes in each direction + a parking lane that is No Standing during rush hour,

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<sup>1</sup> "Another Pedestrian is Killed in Chinatown," *Streetsblog NYC*, Jan. 26, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Manhattan Topographical Bureau, Office of the Manhattan Borough President, Manhattan Section Maps 16 and 17.

in both cases adding up to seven lanes). Many of these lanes are as wide as 12 or 13 ft., some even up to 15 ft.<sup>3</sup>, unnecessarily excessive widths not needed to accommodate even the widest trucks; and

**Whereas** pedestrian density on Canal St.'s sidewalks is so intense that pedestrians are often forced to walk in the street where they risk being hit by oncoming traffic. Although pedestrian volumes are three times those of motor vehicles, 90% of street space goes to the vehicles<sup>4</sup>; and

**Whereas** the heavy, snarled flow of vehicular traffic on Canal wreaks havoc on the orderly progression of vehicles, botching up movement at intersections and crosswalks by blocking vehicular passage and turning movements, while also obstructing and endangering pedestrians crossing the street. Gridlock often prevents drivers traveling east on Canal from moving across the street's many lanes to reach turning points heading north, such as at West Broadway, Greene, Centre, Mulberry and Elizabeth Sts., with drivers often ending up in Brooklyn; and

**Whereas** bicycling in NYC increased by 116% between 2008-2018, and 34% between 2013-2018<sup>5</sup>. While bicycling figures on Canal St. itself are not available, counts on the Manhattan Bridge which leads into and extends from Canal St. show an average increase in daily bicycle volumes from 6,008 in 2019 to 7,093 by Oct. 2020<sup>6</sup>, all indicating the increased need for safe and accessible bicycle facilities on Canal St.; and

**Whereas** after almost 35 years, 2-way tolling on the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge was reinstated on 12/01/2020, removing the impetus for vehicles to skirt an expensive one-way double toll that led New Jersey-bound motorists and truckers to take a long, alternate route over the toll-free Manhattan Bridge and through Canal Street to the westbound toll-free Holland Tunnel, exacerbating traffic congestion on Canal. These new conditions call for a fresh look at Canal St.; and

**Whereas** congestion pricing now expected, with its potential for eliminating toll-free travel on the Manhattan Bridge, merits a new look at Canal St. as well; and

**Whereas** Canal St. is in the midst of change, with new occupants moving in and on the cusp of additional change, making it a particularly suitable time ripe for a study to determine how Canal can be improved and to plan appropriately for its future;

**Therefore, be it resolved** that Community Board 2 Manhattan (CB2) urges the NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) to immediately conduct a study and create a plan to address the many traffic problems on Canal St. and formulate solutions to them that ensure safe passage and access for pedestrians, accommodation for vehicles of different types that reduce their negative impacts, and street improvements to facilitate the conduct of business and build community life; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 also urges DOT to include as part of a Canal St. improvement plan easy to implement improvements that can be quickly completed to provide swift betterment, using applications such as paint, markings, bollards, delineators and planters, as well as more permanent, built improvements to be accomplished in the long term; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 greatly encourages DOT to seriously consider removing a lane of traffic and/or reducing too-wide traffic lanes to 10 ft. or 10.5 ft. widths (which can easily accommodate a large truck) in order to provide more sidewalk space; and

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<sup>3</sup> NYC Dept. of Transportation, Traffic Engineering & Planning Dept.

<sup>4</sup> Transportation Alternatives, #Fix Canal Street, Presentation at CB2, Dec. 2020.

<sup>5</sup> NYC Dept. of Transportation, *Cycling in the City: Cyclists Trends in NYC*, July 2020, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> NYC Dept, of Transportation, Bicycle Unit, Cyclist Counts at East River Bridge Locations (1980-Oct. 2020).

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 strongly recommends that DOT design and implement a suitable protected bike lane to serve the needs of the growing number of bicyclists who use Canal St. for crosstown travel, if not on Canal than on a nearby westbound cross street to compliment the eastbound Grand St. lane; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 advises DOT to carefully examine the potential for employing additional means of improvement already proven to be effective in promoting pedestrian safety and creating an equitable and workable balance of street space between pedestrians and vehicular modes, such as neckdowns to shorten crossing distances, pedestrian priority traffic signals like Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs) or split phasing, simplified intersections (some with vehicular left turn bans where appropriate), curbside reform, including increased commercial loading zones and designated space for street vendors, and pedestrian safety islands; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 asks that a timeline be created that firmly establishes the start and completion dates of the study and times for reporting back to the community and receiving input; and

**Be it finally resolved** that CB2 implores DOT to work quickly to develop a Canal St. study plan and begin timely implementation.

**Vote: Unanimous, with 46 Board Members in favor**

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Carter Booth, Chair  
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Shirley Secunda, Chair  
Traffic & Transportation Committee  
Community Board #2, Manhattan

CB/EM

c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman  
Hon. Carolyn Maloney, Congresswoman  
Hon. Nydia Velasquez, Congresswoman  
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator  
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NY Senator  
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NY Assembly Member  
Hon. Yuh-Line Niou, NY Assembly Member  
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Corey Johnson, Council Speaker  
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member  
Hon. Carlina Rivera, Council Member