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COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

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January 25, 2021

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 January 21, 2021, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution recommending alternative locations to DOT'S proposed CitiBike station location at the northwest roadbed of Bleecker St. btw. Broadway & Lafayette Sts.

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 5, 2020 meeting of CB2's Traffic and Transportation Committee; and

Whereas one of the proposed locations, in the north roadbed of Bleecker St., west of Lafayette St. toward Broadway, has elicited concerns regarding congestion and accessibility for pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles including delivery trucks; and

Whereas Bleecker St. btw. Broadway and Lafayette Sts. is a little more than 30 ft. wide with one 10 ft. wide travel lane, curb lanes for parking and standing, each approximately 7.7 ft. wide, and a 5 ft. bike lane, including block-long commercial parking meters on the north side and a UPS delivery and pickup location across the street, a tight situation accompanied by congestion and constrained access; and

Whereas the buildings at 55-65 Bleecker St. at that northwest streetbed location, in front of which the planned CitiBike station would be installed, have multiple tenants with heavy deliveries using the freight entrance who depend on the parking spaces dedicated to deliveries that are currently there to accommodate deliveries being made; and

Whereas it would be difficult to find sufficient conveniently located parking spaces in this busy commercial area to accommodate these delivery vehicles where they dispossessed. Double parking (which these vehicles might turn to) on crowded Bleecker St. would hold up both bicycle and vehicular traffic and exacerbate congestion; and

Whereas DOT installed the metered parking at this north side of Bleecker location for delivery vehicles only (i.e., 3 hrs. parking for Commercial Vehicles Only Mon-Fri 8am-6pm) in recognition of the need for deliveries parking to serve the businesses located there; and

Whereas nearby locations for the CitiBike station were suggested and discussed, and CB2's Traffic and Transportation Committee concluded that three different locations would qualify as alternatives and even possible improvements to the problematic Bleecker north roadbed location btw. Lafayette and Broadway. These include the following three locations, all on Lafayette St., which is 50 ft. wide with two moving lanes of vehicular traffic approximately 12 ft. wide each, parking lanes approximately 10-11 ft. wide each, and a 6 ft. wide bike lane with an approximately 4.3 ft, wide buffer, providing substantially more room than on Bleecker St. to amply and very safely accommodate a CitiBike station in a parking lane while allowing for the free flow of automotive and bicycle traffic, without conflict between the different modes and uses on the street:

1. Southeast corner of Bleecker & Lafayette Sts.

Advantages:

- There is more than enough space to accommodate an average or larger size CitiBike station (40 ft. - 70 ft. long). The length of available curbside street space from the crosswalk to where some small shops begin is 69 ft. 8 in., which, deducting the usual up to 3 ft. allowance for clearance to the crosswalk and a wheel stop of usually 3 ft., would still provide 63 ft. 8 in. This offers more space than the Bleecker St. location that is 64 ft. 5 in. from the end of the subway entrance to the fire hydrant that, after deducting at least 5 ft. clearance required for the hydrant and 3 ft. for a wheel stop would be 56 ft. 5 in.
- It is right near and clearly visible from 3 subway station entrances/exits: one on Mulberry St., one on Bleecker/Mulberry, and one directly across on the northeast side of Bleecker, (and is also across from 2 subway entrances/exits on Lafayette St. at the Bleecker northwest and southwest corners) convenient for subway riders who continue their trips using CitiBikes or return CitiBikes heading back to the subway.
- The sidewalk is wider than Bleecker's, giving people room to walk freely and to easily access a CitiBike station in less cramped conditions than on Bleecker St. and, with curbside room for a flipped station with bike facing the street, to safely retrieve or return a bike without being next to moving traffic.
- The area that would be occupied by a CitiBike station is in front of a structure with billboards only.
- It is just a few steps from the Bleecker St. bike lane and directly across the street from the Lafayette St. bike lane.

Potential Disadvantages

- It would necessitate crossing the street to access the Lafayette St. bike lane.
- The CitiBike station would be next to Bite's outdoor roadbed cafe (open restaurant), and the proprietor would like to extend the cafe in the summer. There's still sufficient room for a standard 40 ft. long or more CitiBike station (63 ft. 8 in. minus 20 ft. average storefront width = 43 ft. 8 in. (even more would be available, since the width for any Bite cafe extension would be less than 20 ft.)), and Bite's owner recognized the potential for more business from CitiBike users.

2. Northwest corner of Bleecker & Lafayette Sts.

Advantages:

- There is space to accommodate a CitiBike station (space approximately 30 ft. long on the south side of Jones Alley and approximately 30-40 ft. long on the north side of Jones).
- The space (currently with floating parking) is adjacent, therefore easily accessible, to the Lafayette St. bike lane. It also is steps away from the Bleecker St. bike lane.
- The CitiBike station would provide a buffer between the curbside bike lane and the street, with sufficient room to avoid user conflicts with moving traffic and ensure user safety.

- It is right near and clearly visible from 2 subway station entrances/exits: one at the northwest corner and one at the southwest corner of Bleecker St. (and across Lafayette St. one on the northeast side of Bleecker and one on the southeast side, one on Mulberry St. and one on Bleecker/Mulberry).
- The sidewalk is wider than on Bleecker St.
- There are no entrances to major buildings, i.e., no major deliveries.

Potetial Disadvantages:

- There's a sharp left turn from Bleecker St. onto Lafayette St. with a great deal of turning traffic creating hazardous conditions, but this could be offset by blocks, wheelstops or other barriers.

3. Northeast corner of Bleecker & Lafayette Sts.

Advantages:

- There is space to accommodate a CitiBike station (space approximately 30 ft. long on the south side of Jones Alley and possibly space 30 ft. long on the north side of Jones).
- It is right near and clearly visible from one subway station entrance/exit on the northeast side of Bleecker and directly across from one on Mulberry St. and one on Bleecker/Mulberry (and also across from 2 subway entrances/exits on Lafayette St. at the Bleecker northwest and southwest corners).
- The sidewalk is wider than on Bleecker St.

Potetial Disadvantages:

- There are many and frequent deliveries to the Kith store at that location as well as garbage pickups from five buildings.
- It would necessitate crossing the street to access the Lafayette St. bike lane.
- A sizable number of vehicles turning from Bleecker onto Lafayette often swing wide into the eastern lane there, adding more traffic, especially trucks.; and

Whereas no advance notice was given to CB2 of what locations were being considered for each of the 10 CitiBike stations that were presented at the November 5, 2020 meeting, preventing dissemination of information pinpointing these locations to inform the people who live and work there, who would be affected and would be the most knowledgeable about those sites and could have provided important input on their suitability; and

Whereas DOT is responsible for the planning, outreach and oversight of the Citibike program, including community notification, and in the past has sent advance information to CB2 giving specific locations that will be addressed in DOT presentations;

Therefore, be it resolved that CB2 has serious reservations about locating a Citibike station in the northwest roadbed of Bleecker St. btw. Broadway & Lafayette Sts. and urges DOT to do further examination and assessment of appropriate sites for a station in that area; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 calls upon DOT to consider and extensively study the three locations for a CitiBike station site CB2 reommends as alternatives to the Bleecker St. btw. Broadway & Lafayette Sts. location, i.e., the southeast corner of Lafayette & Bleecker Sts., the northwest corner of Lafayette & Bleecker Sts., and the northeast corner of Lafayette & Bleecker Sts.; and

Be it finally resolved that CB2 strongly implores DOT to send CB2 in advance of any CitiBike presentation information on the specific locations of any of the CitiBike stations being considered, as well as the length of each station, how many bikes each will accommodate, and whether each is in the roadbed, sidewalk or other.

Vote: Unanimous, with 43 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. Carolyn Maloney, Congresswoman
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NY State Senator
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NY Assembly Member
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member