Jeannine Kiely, *Chair*
Daniel Miller, *First Vice Chair*
Susan Kent, *Second Vice Chair*
Bob Gormley, *District Manager*

Antony Wong, *Treasurer*
Eugene Yoo, *Secretary*
Ritu Chattree, *Assistant Secretary*

\=

COMMUNITY OARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE
NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899
www.cb2manhattan.org
P: 212-979-2272 **F**: 212-254-5102 **E:** info@cb2manhattan.org
Greenwich Village ❖ Little Italy ❖ SoHo ❖ NoHo ❖ Hudson Square ❖ Chinatown ❖ Gansevoort Market

June 22, 2021

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

Dear Commissioner Pincar:

At its Full Board meeting June 17, 2021, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in response to a presentation by the NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) on the Hudson Sq. W. Village long-term study re comprehensive transportation improvements.

Whereas the NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT**)** presented an overview of the results of their comprehensive transportation study of Hudson Sq. and the W. Village (study area boundaries: East-6th Ave, Greene St., Church St.; West-West St.; North-Christopher St.; South-primary border Canal St./secondary border Watts St., Leonard St.) along with recommendations for both early-action improvements (2021) and longer-term improvements (2022 and beyond) and an update on implemented improvements; and

Whereas this study was in response to requests by Community Board 2 Manhattan (CB2), Council Speaker Corey Johnson, and the Hudson Square BID and focused largely on CB2 capital and expense budget and resolution requests. It was conducted over a period of more than three years in conjunction and including periodic consultations with CB2, several government agencies and community partners; and

Whereas early-action improvements were postponed because of the pandemic, but DOT is looking to implement them this year with CB2 input and approval; and

Whereas among the 10 already implemented improvements, all of which CB2 welcomes, CB2 is particularly pleased with the following that address long-time concerns that the Board has asked to be resolved:

- Extension of protected bicycle lane on Varick St. from Clarkson St. to W. Houston St. and provision of pedestrian islands and curb extensions from Clarkson to W. Houston St. These measures have made the area much safer for pedestrians and bicyclists who have both reported the improved conditions. (CB2 has also suggested extending the bike lane west on Houston from Varick to West St.)
- Installation of all-way Stop control signs at Washington & Morton Sts. This safety measure was particularly important because of its promimity to MS297, the new middle school at 75 Morton St.
- Provision of Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) for north crosswalk at 6th Ave./W. 4th & Cornelia Sts., a dangerous intersection where a bus coming from the west on W. 4th, turning north on 6th severely injured a pedestrian crossing on 6th with the light. The extra crossing time provides protection to be enhanced further by early-action improvements.

- Installation of new traffic signal at 7th Ave. S. & Leroy St. and a curb extension at its n.w. corner. This long and dangerous crossing that people use, following their desire lines despite the lack of protection, is now shortened and signalized for their safety.; and

Whereas the following recommended early-action improvements are expected to be implemented in 2021, based on CB 2 input and approval:

- Installation of one curb extension at the n.w. corner of Hudson & Canal Sts. intersection. This will shorten the pedestrian crossing over Canal St.at that location.
- Remove existing painted curb extension on the n.w. corner of Canal & Varick Sts. (that creates a difficult sharp turn for trucks) and install a new painted curb extension on the n.e. corner. Some constituents indicated that the south Grand St. crosswalk on Varick, one block north of Canal also is heavily used and needs higher visibility.
- Because buses now turning left from 6th Ave. to Watts St. to reach the Holland Tunnel make a difficult sweeping turn obstructing other vehicular and pedestrian movements, and congestion on Watts St. causes delays, reroute buses to the Holland Tunnel via Canal St. during the weekday pm peak period, reducing travel time by 12.4 minutes. This activity would be monitored for impacts and possible adjustments.
- Install three curb extensions (around the n.w. and s.w. corner of Broome St. & 6th Ave. and on the n.w. corner of Broome & Little 6th Ave.) to shorten the long crossing distance (70 ft.) on 6th Ave., increase pedestrian circulation and channelize traffic movements.
- Revise signs that are confusing to drivers on Broome St. approaching the diverge btw. westbound Watts St. & Broome St. at W. Broadway for greater clarity and add Peg-A-Trak markings to improve guidance for motorists.
- Install curb extensions at 6th Ave with the intersection of Cornelia St. & W. 4th St. to provide pedestrian crossing safety at all five corners.
- Restripe the north side of westbound Grove St. approaching W. 4th St. and provide on-street parking (one car space) on Grove's north side btw. W. 4th St. & 7th Ave. S. to redirect traffic to avoid the median tip on 7th Ave. S. that extends into the Grove St. travel lane making left turns difficult and potentially colliding with vehicles. DOT has also agreed to add a height element for visibility of the median tip, e.g. in the snow.
- Install small curb extension on the n.w. corner of 7th Ave. S. & Commerce St. to slow down the speed of right turns through the west crosswalk that are currently facilitated by the wide turning geometry.
- Install a new pedestrian-only phase for the west crosswalk at the Pier 40 Driveway on West St. at Houston St. to address concerns about high volume of turning vehicles conflicting with people walking in the west crosswalk by Hudson River Park/Pier 40. CB2 favors this improvement, but still has concerns about vehicles turning swifty from Houston St. into the east crosswalk that endanger pedestrians, which DOT acknowledges but observes that there's no room in the signal cycle for adjustment and that an added light and crosswalk south of Houston may relieve crossing demand at Houston.; and

Whereas among the longer-term improvements recommended, CB2 is particularly pleased with the proposal to extend the eastbound bicycle lane on Clarkson St. btw. Greenwich & West Sts. by constructing a granite strip there to accommodate bicycles that now avoid the street's cobblestones by using the sidewalk, endangering (and having injured) pedestrians. This proposal is in keeping with CB2's own recommendation and request; and

Whereas the following longer-term improvements have also been proposed:

- To address the long pedestrian crossing distances at Charlton & Van Dam Sts. along Hudson St., install one curb extension at the s.e. corner of Hudson & Van Dam and two curb extensions at the n.e. and s.e. corners at the Hudson/Charlton Sts. intersection.
- To address unmarked loading docks interfering with moving traffic and crossing pedestrians on King St. btw. Hudson & Varick Sts., restripe King St. to separate moving traffic from the loading area along the south curb and install curb extensions on the s.e. corner at Hudson St. and the SW corner at Varick St.
- To address traffic and safety issues on 6th Ave. northbound btw. W. Houston & King Sts. where vehicles coming east from King St. have difficulty accessing the 6th Ave. right turn lane to turn east into W. Houston, reverse King St.'s direction btw. 6th Ave. & MacDougal St. and install a new Stop control sign on the new King St. eastbound approach to MacDougal.

- Close the median opening at Leroy and West St. where there is no crosswalk or traffic signal to direct pedestrians toward signalized crosswalks at Morton St. (to the north) and Clarkson St. (to the south).
- Extend the tip of Canal Park in a concrete median island on Canal St. to Greenwich St. and add crosswalks on eastbound Canal St. east of Washington St. and on westbound Canal St. west of Washington St. to improve the pedestrian environment by Canal Park.
- Add a new signalized pedestrian crossing midblock btw. Charlton & W. Houston Sts. for additional pedestrian access to the Hudson River Greenway.
- To address congestion and confusion at the intersections along Broome/Watts St. approaching the Holland Tunnel, construct concrete curb extensions along Watts St. at the n.e. corner of Varick St. & s.e. corner of 6th Ave. (option 1) plus (opton 2) add traffic cones to streamline the traffic flow to the tunnel.
- To improve pedestrian safety crossing Varick St. approaching the Holland Tunnel, provide Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs) along Varick at King, Charlton, Vandam and Spring Sts.;

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 thanks DOT for conducting this study in response to and focusing on a range of CB2's transportation needs and for working in cooperation with CB2 and City and State agency partners to develop practicable solutions; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 appreciates that a great many of the improvements, whether early-action, longer-term or implemented, are directly responsive to CB2 requests and in keeping with CB2's recommendations; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 is in favor of all the early-action improvements and looks forward to their implementation, but asks that consideration also be given to the following:

- CB2 asks that DOT consider angling the crosswalk at Grand St. across Varick St. slightly more to the southeast in the direction of the subway station at Canal & Varick and ensure that it's striped for high visibility (in addition to installing the curb extension at the n.e. corner on Varick at Canal).
- CB2 recognizes and appreciates that DOT will be monitoring the bus route to the Holland Tunnel change from 6th Ave. to Canal St. and asks that DOT share with CB2 the monitoring results and whatever impacts are discovered and adjustments that are made.
- CB2 asks that DOT show CB2 the vertical element chosen to increase the visibility of the median tip on 7th Ave. S. at Grove St. in advance of installation. CB2 also requests that DOT consider using planters to channel traffic to avoid the 7th Ave. S. median tip instead of parking on Grove St.'s north side btw. W. 4th St. & 7th Ave. S. and instead of striping on westbound Grove St.'s north side approaching W. 4th St. in a future installation once the early-action diversion has been evaluated.
- CB2 is aware that at this time DOT finds it difficult to adjust signalization at Houston & West Sts. but still has great concern about danger to pedestrians crossing in West 's east crosswalk from swift-turning vehicles from Houston heading north and urges DOT to continue observing conditions at that hazaardous spot for potential changes (e.g. from congestion pricing) that warrant adjustments to promote pedestrian safety there; and

Be it further resolved that concerning the proposed longer-term improvements, CB2 is especially glad to learn that the granite bicycle lane strip proposed for Clarkson St. btw. Greenwich & West Sts, can be constructed and finished in 2022 because of new techniques; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 sees merit in many of the other proposed longer-term improvements and looks forward to further discussions as the opportunity for their implementation comes up, but has reservations about the following to consider:

- CB2 understands that reversing King St.'s direction from east-west to west-east btw. 6th Ave. & MacDougal St. could help avoid vehicular conflicts at 6th & King and allow for a clearer path in the 6th Ave. right turn lane, but also recognizes that MacDougal St. forms a dead end that could lead to extra turning movements down MacDougal and back up on the 6th Ave. right turn lane. Additionally, this may introduce more traffic to an otherwise quiet neighborhood street. As such, CB2 asks that DOT reconsider the reversal of the traffic flow on this block.
- CB2 is not in favor of closing the median opening at Leroy & West St. The population in that area is increasing, especially with the advent of 550 Washington St. and an event space nearby. CB2

encourages DOT to consider adding a signalized crosswalk at Leroy & West St. supplementing those already in operation at Morton & Clarkson Sts. to safely accommodate the ever-growing population and Hudson River Park users there; and

Be it finally resolved that CB2 asks that as an addition to the implemented (and welcome) extension of the protected bicycle lane on Varick St. from Clarkson St. to W. Houston St. and provision of pedestrian islands and curb extensions from Clarkson to W. Houston St. that DOT also consider CB2's request in its resolution adopted by the Full Board on May 23, 2019 (entitled: Resolution in response to presentation by NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) on improvements planned for Varick St.: Clarkson St./Carmine St. to King St) to install a protected bike lane on Houston St. from Varick St. to the Hudson River by removing parking on the north side of Houston on that stretch.

Vote: Unanimous, with 44 Board Members in favor.

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

Sincerely,

Jeannine Kiely, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan

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

JK/EM

c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NY Assembly Member
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Corey Johnson, Council Speaker
Matt Lorenz, DOT
Gregory Haas, DOT