

Jeannine Kiely, *Chair*
Susan Kent, *First Vice Chair*
Valerie De La Rosa, *Second Vice Chair*
Bob Gormley, *District Manager*



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

COMMUNITY BOARD 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

January 27, 2022

Edward Pincar Jr.
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane
New York, NY 10038
Long Island City, NY 11101

Dear Commissioner Pincar:

At its Full Board meeting January 20, 2022, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution recommending a study to incorporate new Citi Bike infill stations by the Hudson River Park.

Whereas on December 2, 2021, the NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) provided updates to Community Board 2 Manhattan (CB2) on reinstatement of existing as well as proposed new Citi Bike stations within CB2, and all presented locations were east of Varick St.; and

Whereas the Hudson River Park's (HRP) Greenway is the nation's busiest bikeway with only one Citi Bike station in the park, directly across the street from 550 Washington St., Google's new NYC Headquarters, and cycle traffic on the Greenway is increasing every year; and

Whereas CB2 has one of the lowest public open space to populace ratios in NYC. HRP is CB2's largest open space that provides passive and active recreation space, and increased accommodation for Citi Bikes is needed for community access to that park; and

Whereas it is a well known issue amongst Hudson River Park Trust (HRPT) leadership that many cyclists who begin and end their rides from the Citi Bike station in HRP are likely to ride on the heavily used esplanade, which is for pedestrians only and is off limits to cyclists; and

Whereas leadership at HRPT supports the concept of adding Citi Bike stations in close proximity to the park and recognizes that doing so will help make HRP more accessible; and

Whereas there is no apparent area in the CB2 section of HRP that could house a Citi Bike station without compromising the park's function as a pedestrian friendly respite and adding the potential for

dangerous cycling activity that conflicts with users' comfort and enjoyment; and

Whereas there are a multitude of suitable areas for Citi Bike stations on or adjacent to West St., from north of W. 12th St. to Little West 12th St.; and

Whereas there is a dearth of suitable Citi Bike station areas south of W. 12th St. due to street width restrictions, community parking loss, road textures (e.g., Belgian Block), and construction that is blocking areas on Clarkson St., Houston St. and areas south to Canal St.; and

Whereas DOT provides specific guidelines to meet its threshold before installing new Citi Bike stations, including width of street, access to bike lanes, and community requests; and

Whereas these areas noted as suitable for Citi Bike stations have “No Parking” or “No Standing” signs, therefore no parking spots will be lost; and

Whereas the streets in these areas either loop with wide bends like Jane St. and Horatio St. or are light trafficked and exceptionally wide (up to 35 feet) at 10th St. and Gansevoort St.; and

Whereas these streets were originally designed to service one of the city’s most active markets (Gansevoort), having wide turning areas so that long meatpacking trucks could back up their freight into meatpacking warehouses, an industry no longer in the local area, having been replaced by tech firms, residences, galleries, and restaurants; and

Whereas the nearest Citi Bike station adjacent to HRP is 3 to 5 blocks away between W. 13th and W. 14th St. on 10th Ave., with one other station servicing the Whitney Museum on Washington and Gansevoort; and

Whereas the area being recommended for study has multiple heavy use crossings to HRP, which provides a short walk to popular areas such as Pier 51, Little Island and Gansevoort Peninsula, a new HRPT development that is due to come online in a couple of years and will attract even larger numbers of active and passive users;

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 strongly recommends that DOT launch a study to incorporate new Citi Bike infill station options on the east side of West St., extending east to the origin of 10th Avenue, from W. 12th St. to Little West 12th St.

Vote: Unanimous, with 45 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: Craig F. Ruyle, P.E., Regional Director, NYS DOT
Adam S. Levine, P.E., AICP Traffic Safety/Mobility Director, NYS
Thomas G. Bayer, P.E., Asst. to Regional Director, NYS DOT
Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NYS Senator
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NYS Assembly Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Erik Bottcher, Council Member
Noreen Doyle, President & Chief Executive Officer, Hudson River Park Trust
Jeffrey C. LeFrancois, Meapacking DMA/HRPTAC

Jeannine Kiely, *Chair*
Susan Kent, *First Vice Chair*
Valerie De La Rosa, *Second Vice Chair*
Bob Gormley, *District Manager*



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

COMMUNITY BOARD 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

January 28, 2022

Maria Torres-Springer
Deputy Mayor
Economic & Workplace Development
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

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

William T. Castro
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Arsenal West
24 W. 61st Street
New York, NY 10023

Hon. Christopher Marte
NYC Council Member
117 Hester Street
New York, NY 10002

Dear Deputy Mayor Springer, Commissioner Pincar, Commissioner Castro, and Council Member Marte:

At its Full Board meeting January 20, 2022, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution urging relocation of the Citi Bike station at the north side of Petrosino Sq. to the west side of Lafayette St., south of Spring St. or north of Spring St., and the reinstatement of the public art venue originally assigned to that north side of Petrosino Sq. location.

Whereas Petrosino Sq., a small triangular park bordered by Lafayette St., Cleveland Pl., Spring and Kenmare Sts. that is well-used by the local community to relax and socialize and valued as a special community place in an area significantly devoid of open space,¹ has a history of being a home for public art installations since 1984; and

Whereas a NYC-funded capital renovation improving and expanding Petrosino Sq. that was completed in 2009 by the NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) in conjunction with the NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation (DPR) included extending the park to the north (to the Spring St. crosswalk) by reclaiming the street with a distinctive pavement, specifically setting aside that area to accommodate public art

¹ In all of Community District 2, there are only .40 acres of parkland per 1,000 people, while New York City's benchmark for sufficient open space is 2.5 acres per 1,000.

displays, as well as to provide safe access to the park's northern section for pedestrians along with all those who have special needs; and

Whereas after Petrosino Sq.'s reopening, the extended northern end dedicated to displaying public art became the scene of continuing public art installations in coordination with DPR's Art in the Parks program carrying on the core public art tradition. These installations were a focus of community pride where community people (who had worked hard to establish this amenity) gathered and shared ideas, socialized, admired the art, relaxed and enjoyed spending their time - a center of positive neighborhood activity that helped build community; and

Whereas in 2013, DOT installed a Citi Bike station in the extended north end space of Petrosino Sq. that had been designated for exhibiting public art, despite the vehement protests of the local community, Community Board 2 Manhattan (CB2) (Resolution-November 2013), and every one of their local elected officials, despite the comment from DPR Manhattan Borough Commissioner William Castro that "this is not an appropriate location for a bike station," and despite the community's recommendations for relocating the bike station just down the block. This left no viable room for public art presentation; and

Whereas in May 2012 CB2's resolution supporting the NYC Bike Share (Citi Bike) program had emphatically requested that Bike Share (Citi Bike) docking stations not be located in any of the CB2 district's parks, large or small, because they would take up valuable park space in an area where there's already a severe dearth of it, would encourage people to bike ride in these parks (both a hazard and obstruction to park users), and would interfere with people's access and enjoyment of the parks, and CB2 maintains this position; and

Whereas in CB2's November 2013 resolution protesting the City Bike installation at Petrosino Sq., it was observed that "the addition of a Citi Bike station undoes that safe haven with ongoing bicycle activity and crowding of that space by cyclists removing and returning bikes and moving back and forth there, obstructing pedestrian passage," and community members confirm that these conditions currently exist and endanger the community, with bicyclists using the sidewalk like a roadway and preventing people from walking there safely and fully enjoying the park; and

Whereas in her letter of December 9, 2021 to then NYC Council Speaker Corey Johnson, NYC Council Member Carlina Rivera and then NYC Council Member Margaret Chin, then Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development Vicki L. Been stated that in parallel with the SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Plan and land use and zoning changes in that area, "the City is committing strategic investments for improvements to nearby parks and open spaces" that include a "Reimagine Petrosino Square" initiative, slated to begin in Q.3 2022, with \$500,000 in funding, that commits DOT and DPR "to studying the potential redesign and expansion of Petrosino Square to expand public space and *create new opportunities for public art programming....the potential modification or relocation of existing furniture within the Square, including...,the bike share station....As we await the findings and recommendations of that study, Parks commits to advancing opportunities for activating the space at Petrosino Square by promoting the site through Parks rotating public art installation program.* Upon completion of the study, DOT and Parks will share its findings with the Manhattan Borough President, local Council Member, and Community Board."; and

Whereas this anticipated study presents an opportunity to restore the north end of Petrosino Sq. to its intended role as a venue for exhibiting public art, which the local community continues to seek and would gratefully welcome after all these years; and

Whereas conditions surrounding Petrosino Sq. are different from those in 2013: An Open Street has been established on its west side (Lafayette St. btw. Spring and Kenmare Sts.) that operates every day from 12 pm to 11 pm, and Open Restaurants also operate around the sidewalks and roadbeds surrounding Petrosino. Locals report that the Open Street has been taken over by skateboarders, and that there are several Open Restaurants there that all jut out beyond their boundaries, making it difficult for pedestrians to navigate. They note that the street is not well-managed, and that it needs observation and cooperative discussion to make adjustments; and

Whereas the local community recommends two choices for relocating the Citi Bike station from Petrosino Sq.'s north end. Their first choice is on the west side of Lafayette St. on Petrosino's west side, south of Spring St. (in the roadbed), where the Open Street can provide a safer, more protected environment for bicyclists to access the dock and also go directly south along Lafayette St. or directly north along Lafayette. The second, alternative choice is on the west side of Lafayette St. off the park, north of Spring St. (in the roadbed), which is adjacent to the Lafayette bike lane and next to the Spring St. bike lane; and

Whereas there has been some talk about the possibility of a large open dining space at the recommended south of Spring St. location, however there's already a massive indoor restaurant and a large sidewalk cafe there, as well as the only bit of roadbed not taken up by wall-to-wall dining sheds on that stretch, where the introduction of a Citi Bike station could better balance the use of that space for the wider community; and

Whereas in presentations and meetings with the CB2 community, DOT Citi Bike representatives have pointed out that the stations are not attached to the ground (but held down by heavy steel plates), so that they can be easily moved around, which would enable the Citi Bike Station at the north end of Petrosino Sq. to be moved with speed and ease to either of the recommended locations or others; and

Whereas the community has in-depth knowledge of the Petrosino Park area, its history, conditions, operations and activities because of its day-to-day experience living and working there, and can provide valuable information and thoughtful ideas to advance a productive study; and

Whereas numerous studies concerning Petrosino Sq. and/or its surrounding area have been undertaken over the years with findings that can inform the upcoming study and reduce the time and effort needed to reach conclusions and a significant plan of action, while also saving funds that can be allocated to other related purposes; and

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 strongly entreats DOT to move the Citi Bike station at the northern end of Petrosino Sq. to one of the community's recommended locations (either, 1. on the west side of Lafayette St. on Petrosino's west side, south of Spring St. (in the roadbed), or 2. on the west side of Lafayette off the park, north of Spring St. (in the roadbed), with preference given to the first choice, if feasible, and urges that it be moved as soon as possible; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 wholeheartedly supports restoring the public art program at the northern end of the Petrosino site; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 welcomes the prospect of DOT and DCP conducting the anticipated "Reimagine Petrosino Square" study, but firmly recommends that CB2 and the affected community be invited to take part in the study throughout its duration rather than just receive its findings upon completion; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 advocates doing an overview of current conditions at Petrosino Sq. and conferring with residents and businesses to ascertain where improvements can be devised and to identify opportunities for people to work together to develop more manageable and balanced surroundings. This would include investigating new approaches to creating a viable Open Street, such as using devices for easy control of entries and exits like retractable bollards and rolling planters and creating a plan to manage activities; and

Be it finally resolved that CB2 encourages review of previous studies concerning Petrosino Sq. and its surrounding area.

Vote: Unanimous, with 45 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. Brian Kavanagh, NY State Senator
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NY Assembly Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Steve Simon, Chief of Staff Manhattan Borough Parks Commissioner