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## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

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November 28, 2022

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

Dear Commissioner Pincar:

At its Full Board meeting November 17, 2022, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

### **2. Resolution in response to presentation by NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) on DOT's new Carshare Program.**

**Whereas** the NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) is launching a new Carshare program to provide on-demand access for renting a car for short-term, roundtrip use, usually by the hour or for a day, typically through a membership and hourly fee (with insurance, gas, roadside assistance/customer support, and a dedicated parking spot included); and

**Whereas** DOT will designate dedicated parking spaces for use by eligible carshare organizations (CSOs) at both curbside locations and municipal parking lots for which the CSOs must apply for a permit to operate and must be approved by DOT based on criteria including but not limited to being an unmetered space, sited in pairs, + if curbside, being a parking lane 24/7, located next to an intersection on a residential block, non-truck loading, with alternate side parking and street cleaning no more than twice per week; and

**Whereas** carshare sites (all curbside) in Community Board 2 Manhattan (CB2) are expected to be on W. 11th St. btw. Bleecker & Hudson Sts. (S side), Washington Pl. btw. Washington Sq. W. & 6th Ave. (S), Thompson St. btw. W. Houston & Prince Sts. (W), Greenwich St. btw. Canal & Spring Sts. (W), Sullivan St. btw. Broome & Spring Sts. (W), Thompson St. btw. Prince & Spring Sts. (W), and Mott St. btw. Prince & Spring Sts. (W), seven locations, each with two spaces, altogether a total of 14 spaces, with six locations run by Getaround CSO and one by Zipcar CSO (Washington Pl.); and

**Whereas** a two-year Carshare Pilot Parking Program was conducted starting June 2018 with 230 on-street spaces and 55 municipal parking facilities spaces in Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens neighborhoods (but none with characteristics similar to CB2 neighborhoods) to ascertain use and

ownership patterns and environmental impacts. The Berkeley Transportation Sustainability Research Center did evaluation of the pilot and system impacts, employing three in-depth surveys and collecting activity data from operators and individual members; and

**Whereas** findings showed that for every one car-shared vehicle, four personal vehicles were either not purchased or sold. About 8% of members either sold a vehicle or avoided a car purchase. Greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) declined 7%, and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) went down 6%<sup>1</sup>. The modes most often combined with carsharing included walking, public transit and Citi Bike. Individual Zipcar figures show 85% of their NYC members don't own cars, and 25% got rid of them after joining Zipcar, while 40% drive fewer miles than before and 70% ride public transit at least 5X/week, with each Zipcar taking up to 13 personally owned vehicles off city streets. Because shared cars are in rotation rather than parked 95% of the time like privately owned cars, more curb space is available; and

**Whereas** the annual site permit fee for CSOs (the businesses using these spaces, for profit) for an on-street, reserved curbside parking site of **2** spaces is \$475 for **a year**, a vast discrepancy from the average fair market rate for a private citizen renting **one** reserved parking space in Manhattan for approximately \$1,000 for **a month**; and

**Whereas** concerns were voiced about what happens on street cleaning days if a carshare vehicle is legally parked and not in use when the DSNY sweeper comes by and is unable to sweep in that occupied spot. The reply was that CSOs are responsible for cleaning their sites 15 ft. before and 15 ft. after their spaces, but this doesn't always appear to be done or done enough; and

**Whereas** a question arose about what could be done if the dedicated parking spot was taken up by another vehicle when the carshare vehicle was being returned. It was indicated that steps are being taken to address this problem, such as marking the street bed "Car Share Parking Only," along with "Car Share Parking Only Others No Standing Anytime" signage; and

**Whereas** the CB2 carshare vehicles appear to be clustered mostly in one place (the southern part of the District in the area around SoHo) while there's little or no coverage in other areas. When questioned about the rationale, the answer was that the intention is to learn how these vehicles are being used, how much and how often, what works and where, to ascertain where to expand or change location, this will need more attention for the CB2 locations; and

**Whereas the** Carshare Program presents an opportunity to establish and demonstrate needed safeguards in driving to protect walkers, cyclists and drivers by requiring carshare vehicles to have advanced safety technology, e.g., with GPS-based speed governors, anti-drunk and distracted driving features, automatic detection of wrong way driving, and other high tech safety capabilities as well as safe vehicle design, e.g., low vehicle hood and lower mass; and

**Whereas** heavier cars are more deadly to vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists, driving up traffic fatalities in New York and nationally;

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<sup>1</sup> "Overall findings suggest carsharing activity reduced VMT approx. 38.7 million miles and GHG approx. 12,000 metric tons per year," Berkeley Transp. Sustainability Research Center, *Roundtrip Carsharing in NYC: An Evaluation of a Pilot Program and System Impacts, Final Report*, Feb. 2021.

**Therefore be it resolved** that CB2 recognizes the potential that the Carshare Program offers to reduce car ownership and activity and thereby help reduce occupation of curb and street space, vehicle miles travelled, and greenhouse gas emissions; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 understands that the Carshare Program offers a useful option for those who need to use a car occasionally for short or less extensive trips and provides an alternative to having to own a car; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 strongly advises that DOT incorporate a pricing structure and fee requirement for CSOs that reflects the true fair market rate charge for parking space and the high value of public street space, especially in view of the carshare spaces being reserved for private enterprise and profit; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 is in favor of the Carshare Program but cautions that it is still incomplete and needs further development of operational procedures along with a recognition that each community is different and requires consideration of its unique makeup and needs, thus we urge extensive and repeated monitoring of the procedures and how well they are addressing these needs and modifying approaches where necessary. This would include assuring that the dedicated carshare parking spots and the street areas they occupy are adequately cleaned and that the vehicles themselves are cleaned thoroughly, that ample attention is given to keeping the dedicated parking spaces clear of illegally parked vehicles, and that these spaces are distributed more evenly. We emphasize that all of this should be assessed and applied to CB2, keeping in mind the specific needs and character of the CB2 District; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 highly recommends that DOT, or a third party, update the 2021 evaluation to include CB2 activity data from operators, members of the community, and customers. Performance metrics can include car and parking spot cleanliness, traffic violations, changes in GHG, and VMT; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 firmly supports and requests that DOT require CSOs to provide carshare vehicles with advanced safety technology as well as lightweight electric or hybrid vehicles and a process to ban unsafe drivers; and

**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. Nydia M. Velázquez, Congresswoman  
Hon Carolyn Maloney, Congresswoman  
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator  
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NY State Senator  
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NY State Assembly Member  
Hon. Yuh-Line Niou, NY State Assembly Member  
Hon. Brad Lander, NYC Comptroller  
Hon. Michael Levine, Man. Borough President  
Hon. Erik Bottcher, NYC Council Speaker  
Hon. Christopher Marte, NYC Council Member  
Hon. Carlina Rivera, NYC Council Member

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November 28, 2022

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

Adam S. Levine, P.E., AICP  
Traffic Safety and Mobility Director  
NYS Department of Transportation  
New York City Region  
47-40 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Long Island City, NY 11101

Dear Commissioner Pincar and Director Levine:

At its Full Board meeting November 17, 2022, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

### **1. Resolution in response to proposed pedestrian, bicycle, and public space improvements on 10th Ave. btw. Gansevoort and Horatio Sts.**

**Whereas** the NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) in coordination with the Meatpacking Business Improvement District (MPD) and TF Cornerstone (TFC), presented a proposal for improving 10th Ave btw. Gansevoort and Horatio Sts., including changes in design, markings and signalization along with public space enhancements to accommodate and safeguard pedestrians and bicyclists; and

**Whereas** the proposed improvements address existing conditions of concern similar to those set forth in Community Board 2 Manhattan's (CB2) resolution adopted June 23, 2022, such as 10th Ave.'s overly wide roadway that enables drag racing and other negative behaviors, unused space no longer needed for servicing Meatpacking District trucks that could be repurposed for community-friendly use, a confusing road design and lack of markings that both mislead and endanger pedestrians and drivers alike, and a need for safer crossings to the Hudson River Park (HRP); and

**Whereas** proposed improvements include:

- Creation of a new public space/plaza in combination with one southbound travel lane.
- Design of the travel lane (on 10th Ave.), in combination with a bike lane, new signage, and markings, to accommodate Whitney Museum art deliveries, channel traffic south on 9A (West St.), connect cyclists from Gansevoort St. to the HRP Greenway and clarify the route for a safer passage.
- Creation of a new West St. crossing for pedestrians with a new pedestrian signal.
- Extend the westbound W. 13th St. bike lane further west to the new 10th Ave. bikeway providing a connection to the HRP Greenway.

- Extend the eastbound Little W. 12th St. bike lane further west to the new 10th Ave. bikeway providing a connection leading back from the HRP Greenway. (This is proposed for longer into the future).
- Installation of planters and other greenery, movable furniture, boulders (granite blocks) and other public amenities.; and

**Whereas** DOT will implement markings, signals and signage changes, while MPD and TFC will supply edge objects and movable furniture and implement pedestrian space color, while the Whitney will help define plaza design elements. Once implementation is complete, MPD will provide maintenance as it does now for the MPD's other public spaces; and

**Whereas** the proposed West St. crosswalk is diagonal, i.e. longer than one that would be straight across, and ample signal time will be needed to safely traverse this very long crossing. Many pedestrians can cross no more than 3 ft. (in some cases, no more than 2 ft.) per second;<sup>1, 2</sup> on West St. at least 40 seconds are needed for these users to safely cross, which DOT has previously indicated is feasible. 43 seconds is being considered, but the final signal time has yet to be determined; and

**Whereas**, the majority of community members enthusiastically welcomed the proposal and supported its concepts; and

**Whereas** several expressed their preference for a fully pedestrianized area, and it was indicated that this is envisioned for a future phase; and

**Whereas** the primary reason to maintain a through vehicle lane on 10th Ave. is to allow for local deliveries to the Whitney, and local deliveries are allowed on Open Streets, areas by definition that allow pedestrians, cyclists and local deliveries only and bar through traffic; and

**Whereas** preference was expressed for extending and connecting both the W. 13th St. and Little W. 12th St. bike lanes to 10th Ave. at the same time, in the initial implementation, since each provides needed (and complementary) access in a different direction (W. 13th west to the HRP/Little W. 12th east from the HRP); and

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<sup>1</sup> Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways, Federal Highway Administration. 2009 Edition including Revision 2 dated May 2012. 4E.06 Pedestrian Intervals and Signal Phases, Paragraph 10, Page 98.

<https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009r1r2/mutcd2009r1r2edition.pdf> "Where pedestrians who walk slower than 3.5 feet per second, or pedestrians who use wheelchairs, routinely use the crosswalk, a walking speed of less than 3.5 feet per second should be considered in determining the pedestrian clearance time.

<sup>2</sup> Federal Highway Administration University Course on Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. LESSON 8: PEDESTRIAN CHARACTERISTICS. Section 8.4. July 2006.

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/pedbike/05085/chapt8.cfm> By definition, about half of all pedestrians travel at a slower pace than the average walking speed. These slower walking pedestrians include older pedestrians, people with disabilities, and people pushing a baby stroller and/or paying attention to younger children walking alongside (see figure 8-1). Therefore, the slower walking speeds of these groups should be considered when designing pedestrian facilities such as crossing times at intersections.

**Whereas** the Union Square pedestrian area on Broadway btw. E. 17th and E. 18th Sts. was presented photographically as one model demonstrating what's visualized for the proposed public space improvements, being approximately the same size as the 10th Ave. area and employing elements that would clearly and attractively define the plaza and safeguard pedestrians from vehicular activity, including granite blocks and plantings. Granite blocks are part of DOT in-house materials, and DOT providing them would be both efficient and cost-saving; and

**Whereas** it is expected that final design details will be coordinated throughout the winter, 2022-2023, with implementation scheduled for Spring 2023. At this point, details about what is visualized are still vague, such as type and placement of furniture (movable and/or otherwise), incorporation of plantings and granite blocks, design of the bike paths, as well as signalization;

**Therefore be it resolved** that CB2 is in favor of the proposal to transform the currently underutilized space on 10th Ave. btw. Gansevoort and Horatio Sts. to public space with needed enhancements and safety measures that will benefit the community and supports the opportunity to employ short-term recommendations for quick implementation and betterment; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 urges applying signal timing at the new West St. crossing that allows for at least 40 seconds of crossing time (and more, if necessary) to provide sufficient time to cross for both the physically challenged and all those traversing West St.'s substantial width and also encourages coordination with other West St. traffic signals to render all in sync with ample crossing time; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 looks forward to MPD's presentation next month addressing a longer term vision including full pedestrianization of the 10th Ave. area at a later phase when sufficient study and resources are available to explore this potential. Until this later phase occurs, CB2 asks that consideration be given to the possibility of converting this piece of 10th Ave. to an Open Street; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 strongly recommends that the planned extension of both the W. 13th St. and Little W. 12th St. bike lanes to 10th Ave. be implemented concurrently as part of the first phase of improvements; and

**Be it further resolved** that CB2 recognizes the important role that granite blocks can play in both defining and safeguarding the proposed plaza's perimeter while adding design interest and asks that DOT ensure their use by providing the blocks needed from in-house stock and/or from those that exist elsewhere; and

**Be it finally resolved** that CB2 emphatically requests that once design details and signalization plans are finalized that they be presented to CB2 with renderings and other backup materials that provide a clear and thorough overview of what is planned for final comments in advance of implementation.

**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, NYS Senator  
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NYS Assembly Member  
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Erik Bottcher, Council Member  
Jeffrey Le Francois, Exec. Dir. MPD BID  
Evan Sweet, Planning/Oper. Dir. MPD BID  
Jake Elghanayin, TF Cornerstone