

Susan Kent, *Chair*
Valerie De La Rosa, *First Vice Chair*
Eugene Yoo, *Second Vice Chair*



Antony Wong, *Treasurer*
Emma Smith, *Secretary*
Brian Pape, *Assistant Secretary*
Mark Diller, *District Manager*

COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE
NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

www.manhattancb2.org

P: 212-979-2272 F: 212-254-5102 E: info@manhattancb2.org

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July 23, 2024

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

Philip Rivera
Chief, Transportation Bureau
NYC Police Department
One Police Plaza, Room 1102
New York, NY 10038

Honorable Commissioner Pincar:

At its Full Board meeting on July 18, 2024, Community Board #2, Manhattan adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in Response to presentation by NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) proposing Protected Bike Lane Upgrades on 6th Avenue from Lispenard St. to West 14th St.

Whereas the NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) presented a proposal for extending the 6th Ave. bike lane south from W. 8th St. to Lispenard St. and adding upgrades along that corridor and up to W. 14th St. to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and public bus (M55 and M21) users; and

Whereas DOT's proposed design includes:

Lispenard St. to W. Houston St.

- 8 ft. protected bike lane on e. side of 6th Ave. (e. side location avoids conflicts with and congested intersections from left-turning tunnel-bound traffic on w. side). 3 ft. buffer, 9 ft. parking lane/painted pedestrian space, three travel lanes (11 ft, 10 ft, 11 ft.), with 8 ft. parking lane on w. side.
- Bus boarding islands on e. side of 6th Ave. to reduce conflict btw. buses and bikes and improve MTA bus accessibility. Boarding island placements are being studied at existing bus stops at W. Broadway, Thompson, Broome, Prince and Spring Sts.
- Pedestrianization of Sullivan St. slip lane at Watts St. with northbound access retained from Broome St.

W. Houston St. to W. 8th St.

- 8 ft. protected bike lane on w. side of 6th Ave., 3 ft. buffer, 9 ft. parking lane/painted pedestrian space, three travel lanes (10 ft., 11 ft., 11 ft.), with 8 ft. parking lane on e. side.

- Bus stops remain in place on e. side of 6th.

W. 8th St. to W. 14th St.

- Widened (10 ft.) protected bike lane (allowing cyclists passing - 5 ft. + 5 ft.) on w. side of 6th Ave., 3 ft. buffer, 9 ft. parking lane/pedestrian island, three travel lanes (11 ft., 11 ft., 11 ft.), with 11ft. parking lane on e. side.
- Existing concrete islands preserved in place.
- Travel lanes continuing configuration from below 8th St.

Whereas Community Board No. 2 Manhattan (CB2) has been requesting that the 6th Ave. protected bike lane be extended from its W. 8th to W. 14th St. CB2 location south to Canal St. in several resolutions since 2016, and DOT is proposing an extension to Lispenard St., actually one block south of Canal, providing a continuous and very welcome protected bike lane connection and safe passage all the way from Church St. and 6th Ave. btw. Barclay and Lispenard Sts. to 59th St. where, except for the stretch btw. Lispenard and W. 8th St., protected bike lanes have previously been installed; and

Whereas in its resolution of January 22, 2016, CB2 requested that the travel lanes on 6th Ave. btw. Canal and W. 14th Sts. be reduced from four to three in the interest of shorter, safer street crossings for pedestrians and more room for bicycle safety plus amenities, citing similar lane reductions on 8th and 9th Aves. that DOT studies showed didn't cause additional congestion; and

Whereas currently, DOT has run traffic models that show that a preponderance of the traffic on 6th Ave. heads west to the Holland Tunnel, allowing sufficient space to accommodate the remaining moving vehicles in three lanes; and

Whereas although there are concrete pedestrian refuge islands at intersections on the W. 8th to W. 14th St. portion of 6th Ave. (with the existing bike lane) providing shorter crossings and safe havens for pedestrians traversing the street, the DOT's plans for such intersection crossings on the Lispenard to W. 8th St. proposed bike lane portion allow only for markings, paint and vertical plastic bollards. However, DOT has indicated that if CB2 feels strongly that concrete refuge islands are needed at specific locations, DOT encourages CB2 to share information with them about these locations and needs, and DOT will take another look and see what can be done, keeping in mind the limited amount of concrete DOT has available; and

Whereas bicycle volumes on 6th Ave. have grown heavily (2,000 bikes in a recent 12 hour count) and continue to grow, accompanied by greater e-bike use with larger speed differences and more passing in the bike lane as well as wider cargo bikes that leave less room for passing, necessitating added bike lane width; and

Whereas the bike lane crossover from the east to the west side of 6th Ave. is planned to occur at Houston St., aided by signalization and markings such as green dashes across the intersection directing cyclists where to go. Advance notice to be prepared for the switch is imperative; and

Whereas there are continuous problems with traffic conflicts, congestion and gridlock as vehicles advance to enter the Holland Tunnel from 6th Ave. that call for continuous oversight and enforcement by the NYPD which has been diminished and needs to be increased; and

Whereas attention needs to be paid to ensure an orderly progression of traffic on 6th Ave. that is headed to the Holland Tunnel and to organize and separate those vehicles that are proceeding to the Tunnel from the through traffic, i.e., vehicles that are continuing to go on straight ahead; and

Whereas it was observed that there is a significant amount of loading and unloading activity on 6th Ave. in the Canal to 14th St. bike lane area that needs to be accommodated to avoid double-parking and other vehicular conflicts; and

Whereas there were concerns that extensive subway construction and infrastructure projects taking place on both sides of 6th Ave. from Canal St. up and beyond Grand St. would conflict with the anticipated bike lane installation, and DOT assured that they've done a site visit with DOT engineers and have been conferring with MTA, and that they are prepared to work around the obstacles as needed.

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 thanks DOT for responding to the need to fill the gap of a missing protected bike lane on 6th Ave. btw. W. 8th and Canal Sts., as expressed by CB2's many resolutions since 2016, and extending the lane further south to Lispenard St., providing for a continuing safe route for cyclists from the Financial District to Central Park; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 is in favor of reducing the four travel lanes on 6th Ave, where motor vehicles often move at high speed, to three travel lanes; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 asks DOT to install concrete pedestrian refuge islands as initial elements in the protected bike lane upgrades on 6th Ave. at the following hazardous locations:

- SW corner of Greenwich Ave., considered to be an exceptionally (perhaps the most) dangerous 6th Ave. crossing, at a busy, complex intersection with an oddly angled left turn into Greenwich where a concrete refuge island also is needed for protection.
- SW corner of Waverly Pl., another location where motorists turn left from 6th.
- NW corner of Carmine St.
- NW corner of Bleecker St.
- NW corner of W. 4th St.
- NW corner of Washington Pl; (At these remaining four cross streets, motorists turn left into 6th Ave.); and

Be it further resolved that CB2 requests that DOT put in planters in the concrete pedestrian refuge islands that will be newly installed, similar to those that DOT previously installed in the concrete refuge islands on 6th Ave. btw. W. 8th and W. 14th Sts.; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 supports the greater width of the 6th Ave. bike lane from Lispenard to W. 14th Sts. to accommodate ever-increasing bicycle traffic as well as faster moving bikes and wider bike configurations; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 strongly recommends that DOT erect signage and other highly visible cues announcing the upcoming bike path switch from east to west on 6th Ave. at Houston St. at least one block, or more, in advance of reaching Houston; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 urges the NYC Police Department to increase its assignment of traffic officers at approaches to the Holland Tunnel to enforce the safe and orderly movement of motor vehicles to the Tunnel; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 advises DOT to separate 6th Ave.'s Holland Tunnel-bound traffic from its through traffic through the use of flex posts that form the dividing line between 2 tunnel-bound lanes on the west and one through-lane on the east, especially in the area of Canal, Watts and Broome Sts., similar to what is done on Varick St. and on Hudson St.; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 calls upon DOT to conduct a study to identify key spots where considerable delivery and loading/unloading activities take place on 6th Ave. from Canal St. to 14th St. and based on its findings, to develop and install dedicated loading zones where needed in that area; and

Be it finally resolved that CB2 encourages DOT to continue to confer with and monitor the construction work on 6th Ave. of MTA NYC Transit, particularly at Grand Canal Courts, as well as with DEP regarding construction at Duarte Sq., and to coordinate 6th Ave. bike lane installation with these efforts.

Vote: Unanimous, with 39 Board members in favor.

We respectfully request that your agency take action consistent with the positions expressed in the above.

Sincerely,



Susan Kent, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



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

SK/em

cc: Hon. Dan Goldman, U.S. Representative
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NYS Senator
Hon. Brad Hoylman-Sigal, NYS Senator
Hon. Deborah Glick, NYS Assembly Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Erik Bottcher, NYC Council Member
Hon. Carlina Rivera, NYC Council Member

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July 23, 2024

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

Honorable Commissioner Pincar:

At its Full Board meeting on July 18, 2024, Community Board #2, Manhattan adopted the following resolution:

Resolution Welcoming Stop Signs on Washington St. at Bank St.

Whereas the intersection where Bank St. crosses Washington St. is the only one where Washington St. has lacked either a Stop sign or a traffic light as it heads south from the Meatpacking District to Canal St., creating highly hazardous conditions for both pedestrians and cyclists crossing Washington at that location as well as for motorists either traveling on Washington or entering that intersection heading east from Bank, because these conditions have facilitated fast-moving, non-stop traffic there; and

Whereas there is a traffic light one block immediately north of the Washington/Bank St. intersection, at Bethune St., and a traffic light one block immediately south, at W. 11th St., which has exacerbated the tendency for drivers to speed up through Bank St., surging ahead to catch the next green light and failing to take account of those crossing Washington at Bank while they focus on trying to beat the light; and

Whereas there are Stop signs on the northwest and southwest corners of Bank St. at Washington St., but there's a small incline as Bank approaches Washington, interfering with visibility and making it necessary for drivers to advance halfway into the intersection before they can see approaching vehicles on Washington, that has further compounded the potential for dangerous conflicts that now can be avoided with oncoming motorists halted by Stop signs that the NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) now has installed on Washington; and

Whereas there are high visibility crosswalks traversing both the north and south sides of Washington St., but they have not been accompanied by the customary Stop signs or traffic lights which are usually required with crosswalks; and

Whereas there has been a pedestrian crossing sign at the northeast corner of Washington St. at Bank, which has been ignored by motorists, and, as a great majority of Community Board No. 2 Manhattan (CB2) members and community constituents have observed, these types of signs are neither noticed, nor recognized, nor heeded by drivers and are a weak and useless substitute for Stop signs and a totally ineffective traffic control. Stop signs are established and easily recognized, strong in their impact and highly effective; and

Whereas CB2 has been reporting these conditions and requesting Stop signs on Washington St. at Bank St. since 2014, 10 years, and constituents have noted that the danger at this crossing goes back many years before that; and

Whereas numerous complaints have continued to be received regarding this neglected threat to people's safety which has been worsening as automotive traffic has intensified, pedestrian and bicycle activity has increased and the population in the West Village area has grown. Constituents have reported not only endless near misses but also pedestrians hit by vehicles, plus vehicular collisions, some described vocally or in writing and others documented in photos and video; and

Whereas with the new Greenwich House Senior Center operating at 155 Bank St., a considerable number of highly vulnerable older people are now and will be using this Washington/Bank St. intersection frequently and need protection from the non-restrained traffic that has been there, along with the many others who have been regularly exposed to the dangers of this up to now uncontrolled crossing; and

Whereas this area is particularly crowded with pedestrians going back and forth all day: the many local families who reside there, people on their way to and from the Hudson River Park, children from the West Village Houses and Westbeth crossing Washington St. on their way to and from P.S. 41, P.S. 3 and other local schools, those heading to MS297/75 Morton, students going to the New School for Drama, preschoolers and their parents coming to the Perry Nursery School, patrons of the Westbeth Theater, people walking to art events at the Westbeth galleries, as well as bicyclists accessing the Citi Bike station on Bank St. and cycling across Washington St., all who have been exposed to the constant danger of oncoming, non-stopping, swift vehicular traffic; and

Whereas scaffolding juts out on the west side of Washington St. in relation to masonry and facade work that is being done there in Westbeth buildings beginning at 137 Bank St./744 Washington St. at the northwest Washington/Bank St. corner and going north to Bethune St., obscuring visibility. This will need to remain for approximately two more years; and

Whereas in past evaluations of this extremely dangerous situation at Washington and Bank St., DOT has relied rigidly on formulas such as those in the MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices), but these are only guidelines that don't reflect the actual day-to-day experience of those who live around and/or constantly use this intersection and are regularly exposed to the hazardous conditions at that location, a situation that it has been imperative to correct; and

Whereas DOT has now recognized the dangerous conditions at this intersection with its installation of Stop signs on the northeast and northwest corners of Washington St. at Bank St.;

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 thanks DOT for installing Stop signs on the northeast and northwest corners of Washington St. at Bank St.; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 further thanks DOT for adjusting the Stop sign placement on the northwest side of Washington St. at Bank St. to avoid interference with visibility by the existing scaffolding; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 appreciates DOT's recognition of the day-to-day experiences and observations of those who live around and/or constantly use this intersection and have been regularly exposed to the hazardous conditions at this location; and

Be it finally resolved that CB2 strongly recommends that DOT paint STOP on the roadbed of Washington St. as it approaches Bank St. without delay to provide needed extra protection from the untenable traffic conditions at this location that have required remediation for so long.

Vote: Unanimous, with 39 Board members in favor.

We respectfully request that your agency take action consistent with the positions expressed in the above.

Sincerely,



Susan Kent, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



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

SK/em

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