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COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE
NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

www.cb2manhattan.org

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Greenwich Village ✦ Little Italy ✦ SoHo ✦ NoHo ✦ Hudson Square ✦ Chinatown ✦ Gansevoort Market

March 27, 2013

Margaret Forgione
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 35th Floor
New York, NY 10038

Thomas F. Pendergast, President
MTA NYC Transit Authority
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Dear Manhattan Borough Commissioner Forgione and Mr. Pendergast:

At its Full Board meeting March 21, 2013, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in response to MTA NYC Transit proposal to add a new north-south bus route to the far west side of Manhattan, starting in Hudson Square, going through Chelsea and ending at W. 57th St.

Whereas MTA NYC Transit is proposing a new bus route on the far west side of Manhattan from 59th St. to Spring St., using Washington (going south) and Greenwich (going north) Sts. from Spring St. to 14th St. in Community Board 2, Manhattan (CB2) with a layover on Greenwich St. just north of Spring St. and a turnaround from Washington St. across Spring St. to Greenwich St.; and

Whereas the buses are proposed to run every 30 minutes, from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week, with stops spaced approximately every 3.5 blocks (750 ft.) and intentions to locate stops, where necessary, to match crosstown connections; and

Whereas traffic conditions on Spring St. are already problematic with vehicular congestion and conflicts, including drivers using the street as a shortcut to the Holland Tunnel; and

Whereas the proposed layover area on Greenwich St. is at the site of a new hotel, where buses would interfere with its loading zone and curbside operations, where new residential conversions are expected, near where traffic lines up for the FEGS facility and with UPS truck bays; and

Whereas the proposed northbound bus route on Greenwich St. is strongly opposed by both residents and businesses who cite the narrowness of the street and its potential with a bus added for exacerbated vehicular dangers, damaging fumes and noise and have expressed their preference for a northbound route on the east side of West St. that would better serve people's needs for access on the far west side and to the Hudson River Park, including Pier 40; and

Whereas community preference has been expressed for having the new bus lay over at Pier 40, which MTA NYC Transit discussed with the Hudson River Park Trust people who were favorable to the idea of having the bus stop there but uncertain about the resolution of Pier 40 physical conditions and the time frame for repairs, and thus unwilling to commit; and

Whereas MTA NYC Transit has indicated that Washington St. north of Spring St. was considered as a layover option, but construction going on there now rules out this possibility; and

Whereas the general consensus is that a north/south bus serving the Hudson River Park area is needed and, with stops connecting to crosstown buses such as the M8 and the M21, can afford more access along the waterfront park and to Pier 40, while the east-west M21 connection going east on Houston St. can provide subway access from this new route to the #1 on Houston and the C and E on Van Dam St. just 2 blocks south of Houston (precluding the need for the proposed route to go as far south as Spring St. for subway connections). The possibility of combining the M21 with the new bus route has been suggested to provide further convenient access; and

Whereas a frequency of service limited to every 30 minutes is insufficient for riders' needs and would discourage people from using the bus because of long waits; and

Whereas while a new bus route is generally welcome, M8 bus service on weekends and in late evenings still has not been restored despite CB2's many requests to reinstate these crucial services, and such services have been restored on many other routes;

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 supports the concept of a new north-south bus route on the far west side, but asks that the following options for its operation in the CB2 area (south of W. 14th St.) be considered:

- Route the bus north on West St. (east side) instead of on Greenwich St.
- Have the bus turnaround on Houston St. instead of on Spring St. and the layover on Houston St. just before West St.
- If the turnaround must be on Spring St. (a much less desirable option), have the bus layover on Washington St. once construction is done.
- Examine the possibility of combining the M21 with the new bus route.
- Increase frequency of service to at least every 20 minutes.
- Extend service to 1:00 a.m., the same time that the Hudson River Park closes.; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 recommends that Pier 40 become the permanent layover site for the proposed bus route as soon as conditions allow for that possibility and urges MTA NYC Transit to pursue this option; and

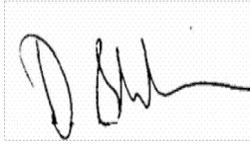
Be it further resolved that CB2 thanks MTA NYC Transit for the opportunity to comment on this new route and requests that MTA NYC Transit return to CB2 to present their final plan (including selected bus stops) prior to implementation; and

Be it finally resolved that CB2 again requests that M8 bus service on weekends and in late evenings be restored very quickly.

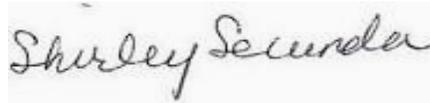
Vote: Passed, with 35 Board members in favor, 1 against-(R. Stewart), and 1 abstention-(K. Berger)

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

Sincerely,



David Gruber, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



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

DG/gh

- c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
Hon. Daniel L. Squadron, NY State Senator
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, Assembly Member
Hon. Christine C. Quinn, Council Speaker
Hon. Scott Stringer, Manhattan Borough President
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March 28, 2013

Margaret Forgione
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 35th Floor
New York, NY 10038

Dear Manhattan Borough Commissioner Forgione:

At its Full Board meeting March 21, 2013, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in response to presentation on reconstruction of 9th Ave. Gansevoort Plaza.

Whereas the NYC Dept. of Transportation's (DOT) preliminary urban design plan for reconstruction of the Gansevoort Plaza area was presented to Community Board 2, Manhattan (CB2), including furnishings, lighting, cobblestones, plantings and general use of materials recommended to convey the place's feel and character, and CB2 thanks DOT for this presentation; and

Whereas proposed elements of the plan include:

- Bringing cobblestones to the intersection of 9th Ave. and W. 14th St. (a thermal finish is being examined to ascertain if it can prevent slipperiness yet preserve the historic appearance).
- Installing new crosswalks at the entrance to 9th Ave. from Greenwich Ave., to be done in granite with bands of cobblestones (for less slipperiness and in keeping with the historic look), and resetting existing granite block crosswalks, all cut in smaller blocks horizontally and thicker vertically than the deteriorating and dangerous granite slab crosswalks in Soho, to avoid their cracking and their threat to safety.
- Putting in smaller planters to give scale and character, that are deeper and squarer than the current ones (like those in DUMBO), with plantings more garden-like than those on the Highline, but using few trees in response to the community's desire to retain the area's old industrial feel.
- Installing lighting with a black pole and luminaire in an updated Cobra style (to fit the industrial scheme) and using a standard NYC DOT bench.
- Moving the one historic Bishop's Crook light currently on the north side of Gansevoort St. just west of Hudson St to a more prominent place around the corner.

- Keeping the space open from building wall to building wall as it is (rather than pulling lights out to the new functional space).
- Building a low curb at the plaza (rather than bollards) to preserve openness and a historic feel and provide comfortable access.; and

Whereas, as previously presented, a new pedestrian public space is proposed by widening the eastern sidewalk to a new extended curb while preserving the original sidewalk curb there to delineate the old historic space, with cobblestones on the new area and concrete still on the old sidewalk, and Community Board 2, Manhattan (CB2), though generally supporting the concept, has asked that this alignment be tested first with temporary planters and/or bollards or other delineators to assess if it works in concert with the need to reduce congestion; and

Whereas there is concern that this extended east side sidewalk area may invite extensive sidewalk café usage; and

Whereas the Gansevoort Plaza area has a unique industrial history and character that calls for a unique approach to the design and frequency of use of planters, and those that have been presented appear more generic in design and spacing than would an authentic reflection of this place; and

Whereas it's preferable to keep the one Bishop's Crook light in its current location on the north side of Gansevoort St. where it historically belongs, rather than moving it for a faux historic effect;

Therefore be it resolved that CB2 supports a great many of the urban design approaches and elements proposed by DOT, including restoring old cobblestones and installing new ones as well as granite-cobblestone crosswalks, the updated Cobra lighting and the standard DOT bench, preserving the wall-to-wall outdoor space, using the low curb instead of bollards, and keeping trees sparse; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 asks DOT to re-evaluate the design, frequency and alignment of planters in terms of reflecting the unique character of the area and of the need to minimize the amount of plantings in keeping with the place's industrial flavor; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 requests that the Bishop's Crook light be kept in its current location on the north side of Gansevoort St.; and

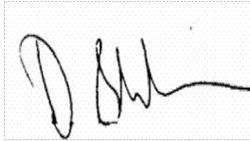
Be it further resolved that CB2 asks DOT to address the concern that the extended eastern sidewalk may invite extensive sidewalk café use, and develop rules and procedures and/or other approaches to prevent this from happening; and

Be it finally resolved that although CB2 generally supports the concept of the proposed alignment of the moved out eastern curb extending from the original preserved curb, CB2 again asks that it be tested in advance of implementation with temporary planters and/or bollards or other delineators to assess if it works in concert with the need to reduce congestion.

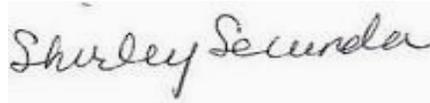
Vote: Passed, with 36 Board members in favor. And 1 against-(T. Bergman).

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

Sincerely,



David Gruber, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



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

DG/gh

- c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
Hon. Daniel L. Squadron, NY State Senator
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March 28, 2013

Margaret Forgione
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 35th Floor
New York, NY 10038

Dear Manhattan Borough Commissioner Forgione:

At its Full Board meeting March 21, 2013, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution of approval and in support of continuing the “Street Seats” program at Local (Local Shop Inc.), 144 Sullivan St. bet. Houston and Prince Sts.

Whereas Local has been participating in the NYC Department of Transportation’s (DOT) “Street Seats” program for two years, using benches and a small table constructed of sturdy cedar on a decking platform set in the street bed (approximately two parking spaces) along with a large umbrella, planters, sea grass and street-side barrier wall, providing both a buffer from the street and enhancement of the setting; and

Whereas Local’s “Street Seats” space is open to and used by not only the restaurant’s patrons, but also by their neighbors and passersby who stop to rest and socialize; unobtrusive signage is posted indicating that it’s a public space as well as that no smoking or alcohol is allowed; and

Whereas Local’s hours are 7:30 am-6:00 pm, sometimes later in the summertime; the “Street Seats” outdoor space closes no later than 9:00 pm and operates from April 15th to October 14th, after which its components are stored; and

Whereas Local’s proprietors hose and clean the space everyday and bring in the space’s furniture daily for overnight storage, barring passage to the space with a rope and sign that have never been violated; there have been no vermin or vandalism, and security is further enhanced by friendly neighbors’ “eyes on the street,” while no complaints of noise have ever been received; and

Whereas Local welcomes and encourages their neighbors to participate in what they regard as a common, shared space as part of the local life on this small, friendly street where apartments are small and there are no stoops or open space, and a great many residents on the street came to support continuing the “Street Seats” program, citing what a “respite it is from the city,” “how it promotes community and neighborhood spirit,” its place as a “community meeting point,” a “sanctuary,” an “oasis” and “for conversation,” in addition to the submission of a petition with over 400 signatures and more than a dozen letters of support;

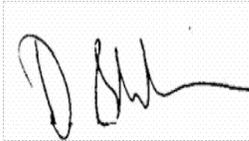
Therefore be it resolved that Community Board 2 Manhattan (CB2) fully approves and supports continuing the “Street Seats” program at Local (Local Shop Inc.), 144 Sullivan St. bet. Houston and Prince Sts.; and

Be it further resolved that CB2 recommends extending the duration for operating the “Street Seats” program at Local beyond the typical April 15th to October 14th time frame to as long as the weather permits.

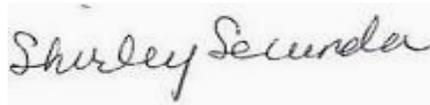
Vote: Passed, with 21 Board members in favor, and 12 against-(T. Bergman, C. Booth, P. Consagra, T. Cude, M. Derr, D. Diether, A. Kriemelman, B. Riccobono, R. Sanz, F. Sigel, R. Stewart, S. Sweeney).

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

Sincerely,



David Gruber, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



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

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- c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
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