



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

BURT LAZARIN
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

March 12, 2019

James O'Neill
Commissioner
New York City Police Department
One Police Plaza
New York, NY 10007

Re: Cyclist killed at W. 45th Street and 8th Avenue & pedestrian severely injured at W. 47th Street and 10th Avenue in Hell's Kitchen

Dear Commissioner O'Neill,

Over the years, Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) has worked in a close and effective partnership with all of its Precincts (Midtown North, Midtown South, 10th and 13th Precincts) as well as the Traffic Division.

The death of a cyclist two weeks ago killed by a driver in a hit and run and the severe injuries to a pedestrian in another hit and run has saddened and shaken the MCB4 community and the cyclists who ride up Eighth Avenue in particular. The subsequent campaign of enforcement against cyclists at the location of the crash has brought out intense emotions in our cycling and pedestrian community that were expressed in a peaceful demonstration in front of the Midtown North precinct.

At its March 6th Full Board meeting, MCB4 voted with 38 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstaining and 0 present but not eligible to vote to request that you meet with us in the next three weeks to discuss these issues and share the measures you will take to prevent such tragedies in the future. We also would like to invite you to our next Transportation Committee meeting to open the dialogue with the community.

After a bicycle or pedestrian crash, enforcement focused on drivers' behaviors, like "refusal to yield" and "bike lane obstructions," would send the message that NYPD – at that particular time – is seeking to reduce dangerous situations, and not engaging in what can be perceived as victim-blaming. While having more officers on bikes (who made an impressive show at the rally)

issuing tickets for “riding on the sidewalk” and “riding the wrong way” violations would be welcome, enhanced education is also critical.

Bicyclists do not get training; therefore it may be constructive to require that cyclists and drivers attend remedial education whenever they receive a summons. We’d also like to ensure that officers are well trained in the laws governing cyclists and issue tickets for actual violations only.

We were very pleased that the NYPD officers in these recent cases did not make any speculative comments to the press, but instead suggested to wait until the investigation is completed. This is very helpful. We now need to understand when the information will be released.

Some changes in protocol and focus could address those issues, improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians and improve the dynamic between cyclists, pedestrians and NYPD as it relates to the Mayor’s Vision Zero plan.

We thank you again for the terrific job your units are doing in protecting our community.

Respectfully,



Burt Lazarin
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee



Dale Corvino
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee

Cc: Thomas Chan, Chief of Transportation Division, NYPD