

CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JEFFREY LEFRANCOIS
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

February 10, 2023

Ed Pincar
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 37th Floor
New York, NY 10038

Re: DOT CarShare Program

Dear Borough Commissioner Pincar,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) at its February 1st Full Board meeting, by a vote of 41 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible, voted to oppose the proposed locations for designated parking spaces for Getaround's car-sharing vehicles:

- 229 Ninth Avenue (corner 24th Street)
- 402 West 22nd Street (corner 9th Avenue)
- 270 West 21st Street (corner 8th Avenue)
- 100 Eighth Avenue (corner 15th Street)
- 301A West 29th Street (corner of 8th Avenue)

We object to these locations principally because they are at the intersections, which is in direct conflict with MCB4 and DOT Daylighting policy for safe crosswalks. A parked vehicle so close to the crosswalks impedes pedestrians' visibility to drivers crossing the intersection. These busy intersections would be better served by daylighting neck-downs and the installation of bike racks. The proposed locations are also heavily concentrated in one of the wealthiest parts of our district, Chelsea; more appropriate locations would be closer to NYCHA buildings or in Far West Hell's Kitchen¹ which would better meet the stated equity goals of the program.

Overall, the presentation left us with more questions about the program than answers. The stated public benefits of the program – equitable access to vehicles, lowering the rate of car ownership,

¹ 17th, 18th, 19th, 26th, 27th Streets (9/10) 50th, 51st, 54th, 55th Streets (10/11)

and lower carbon emissions – do not seem to be served by these locations or the program as proposed. The proposed locations do not meet the goals of equitable access to vehicles since they are in fairly affluent areas. Our district already has a low rate of car ownership. The environmental goals would be better served by an all-electric fleet rather than a combustion fleet, especially given the short-term nature of car-sharing usage. Were you to move to an EV fleet, we would also have to consider the suitability of any proposed locations for charging stations. The presentation also set out criteria for locating vehicles such as proximity to other modes of transit, yet the proposed locations are not especially connective.

One potential benefit not presented could be the reduction of vehicle miles travelled by using locally-suited car-sharing vehicles instead of ride-shares or taxis. We would like to hear of any research that demonstrate such a benefit.

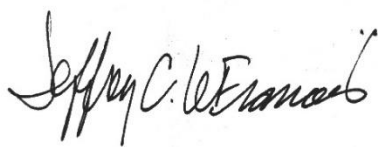
We understand that the set fee for the company to use a single curbside parking space for is \$475 per year, which seems like extraordinary favoritism to a single private company. While it was noted that the hourly rate for Getaround vehicles is “as low as” \$5 per hour in other markets, without an annual fee, the actual rates for sedans in Manhattan are around \$11 per hour when in a parking garage with gas refill as an additional cost. Restaurants pay far more for curbside sheds, for instance, and other car-sharing companies enter into agreements with private parking lot operators.

As far as curb usage is concerned, there is a demonstrable need for more neighborhood loading zones in our district as identified in our curb space survey; we see delivery vehicles impeding traffic and causing dangerous conflicts.

In the discussion of types of vehicles to be deployed, there were objections to SUVs since these large and high-striking models pose dangers to pedestrians and cyclists alike. There was a stated preference for compact vehicles and perhaps a limited number of vans to facilitate group travel and/or moves.

Finally the data provided on utilization during the pilot period (2018 to now) suggests that it was quite low (24 trips per month—less than one usage per vehicle per day) but still higher when located in a garage. Was there a benchmark for utilization set in order to consider expanding the program in New York City? The results of a two-year pilot do not seem unequivocal.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey LeFrancois
Chair
Manhattan Community
Board 4



Christine Berthet
Co-chair
Transportation Planning
Committee



Dale Corvino
Co-chair
Transportation Planning
Committee

Cc: Getaround Car Sharing Company