



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR
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JESSICA CHAIT
Chair

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District Manager

January 16, 2024

Marie Therese Dominguez, Esq.
Commissioner
NYS Department of Transportation
Hunters Point Plaza
47-40 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101

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

Re: Route 9A Traffic Issues

Dear Commissioner Dominguez and Borough Commissioner Pincar,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) at its January 3rd Full Board meeting, by a vote of 40 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 1 present but not eligible, requests that signal timing and signs be modified at the intersection of route 9A with West 17th and West 18th Streets, to facilitate local traffic and improve pedestrian safety.

West 17th Street – 9A

West 17th Street, a one-lane westbound between 10th Avenue and route 9W, is frequently backed up all the way to 10th Avenue due to the signal cycle at the intersection with 9A. For each signal cycle, there is 20 seconds of green signal time and 2:10 minutes of red. Further, after such a long delay, cars going south from Chelsea Piers and West 17th Street are turning aggressively, making this highway crossing even more treacherous for pedestrians. This situation is inefficient and unsafe.

This signal timing may have been appropriate 20 years ago, but the re-zoning of Chelsea for residential and the development of Pier 70 have caused a significant increase in local traffic – vehicles and pedestrians – that must be rebalanced appropriately.

We ask that you study this intersection and increase the amount of green signal for West 17th Street and Chelsea Piers users. At the same time a Lead Pedestrian Interval (LPI) should be provided for pedestrians crossing 9A on the south leg of the intersection.

A possible model can be found at the intersections of West 19th and West 21st Streets at 10th Avenue: a yellow blinking signal on both streets allows cars coming from the East and the West to turn simultaneously onto 10th Avenue during the same cycle. Such a solution could apply to West 17th Street and Chelsea Piers resulting in 40 seconds of green time. A 10-second LPI for pedestrians could be added, with negligible impact on the flow on 9A.

West 18th Street and 9A

A “no U-Turn” sign was recently installed on southbound 9A at West 18th Street. Now, residents, galleries or deliveries trying to reach West 19th or West 21st Streets between 11th Avenue and 9A must make a U-turn on West 16th Street. That intersection is already very congested with four buses parked there.

It seems that balancing the traffic between West 18th and West 16th Streets would be preferable for all. Unless there is a prevalence of crashes at this intersection – which we are not aware of – we ask that you remove the “no U-Turn” sign at West 18th Street on Southbound 9A.

We are aware that New York State DOT is planning to undertake a study of 9A. These safety adjustments should not be delayed until such a study is done, which could take two or three years.

Sincerely,



Jessica Chait
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee



Jesse Greenwald
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee