



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

October 7, 2008

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

Re: Sheltered Bike Parking

Dear Commissioner Forgione:

Manhattan Community Board 4 is a strong supporter of New York City Department of Transportation efforts to promote safe bicycling as a transportation mode. However, we oppose the installation of obtrusive parking furniture for bikes at the expense of pedestrian space; specifically, we oppose the installation of sheltered bike parking, on the northeast sidewalk of West 23rd Street at Eighth Avenue.

This location is not a good choice because it is too far from the bike lane and too crowded:

- This location is on the east side of the avenue, while the bike lane is located on the west side. Each cyclist will have to cross four lanes of traffic to reach the parking location. As you know, 23rd Street is not a bike route. There is another subway entrance, on 23rd Street at the southwest corner, a safer location for the parking.
- The proposed bike shelter would be located between (to the west of the proposed site) a phone booth, a newsstand flanked by two external metallic storage boxes and subway entrance, and (to the east of the proposed site) a store canopy located only four feet from the shelter.

CB4 is on record for consistently and repeatedly asking that bicycle parking be installed in configurations that preserve the maximum of sidewalk real estate for pedestrian flow:

- In our March 14, 2008, letter to you, we asked for the vast majority of installations to be single "U", in order to minimize the space taken away from pedestrians. We provided a long list of locations where bike racks are needed and we are waiting for an update on these requests. In contrast, the design introduces for the first time a perpendicular parking to the curb. This set up combined with the shelter consumes an inordinate amount of sidewalk space.
- We also requested that a number of car parking spaces in our district be converted to bike parking, as it was successfully done in Brooklyn. We provided a list of possible locations.
- In our July 28, 2008 comments on the Ninth Avenue bike lane extension and the Eighth Avenue proposed bike lane, we recommended that the planted median be extended to offer space for bike parking away from the sidewalk.

CB4 opposes taking away the precious little space originally allocated for the pedestrians and commuters to walk from place to place. Even though in New York over the vast majority of the population commutes by mass transit and walks to its final destination, the space reserved for pedestrians is limited to approximately a third of the sidewalk. At this point, every sidewalk on every block in our neighborhood and every sidewalk “choke point” is being significantly diminished with restaurant flower pots, menu stands, overhanging umbrellas, delivery bikes, stanchions, and MUNI meters, streetlight posts, US mailboxes, Newsstands, dozens of plastic news boxes, trash baskets, DOT sign posts, Con Ed equipment carts, cellar trap doors, subway grates, etc.

If the Cemusa contract requires more installations, our community welcomes as many bus shelters as possible throughout the district and at many intersections which are not yet equipped (on Ninth Avenue at 42nd Street, northwest corner, or on 23rd Street at Eighth Avenue, southeast corner for example). Another option is to accelerate the replacement of older bus shelters.

CB4 respectfully asks you to reconsider this plan, which serves well neither the cyclists nor the pedestrians. We ask that this furniture not be installed at this location for bikes, but rather at other locations for bus riders and that bike racks and parking be installed at the very many locations the community requested, in a configuration that is the least intrusive to the pedestrian flow.

Sincerely,



Jean-Daniel Noland
Chair
Manhattan
Community Board 4



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning
Committee



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C.c:

Colleen Chattergoon, DOT
Brooke Mc Kenna, DOT
Speaker Christine Quinn
Assembly member Richard Gottfried
Borough President Scott Stringer
Senator Thomas Duane