



THE CITY OF NEW YORK COMMUNITY BOARD SIX

Marty Markowitz
Borough President

Richard S. Bashner
Chairperson

Craig Hammerman
District Manager

July 13, 2009

Joseph Palmieri
Borough Commissioner
Department of Transportation
16 Court Street, 16th floor
Brooklyn, New York 11241

Dear Commissioner Palmieri:

I am writing to advise you that at its May 13, 2009 general meeting Brooklyn Community Board 6 resolved by a vote of 18 in favor, 9 against with 3 abstentions, to conditionally approve the department's proposal to reduce from 3 to 2 driving lanes and install two-way bicycle lanes in the parking lane with a painted median on the eastside of Prospect Park West between Union Street and Bartel Pritchard Square in our district.

After hearing a presentation from the department at its April 16, 2009 meeting, our Transportation Committee first wanted to thank the department for returning to us with a substantial traffic calming proposal. As you are aware, we have been seeking relief from speeding traffic along the Prospect Park West corridor for some time now, and we appreciate the opportunity to work with you to bring much-needed traffic calming to this particular location.

In that spirit, our support for the department's proposal was conditioned on the following due to our concerns that this ground-breaking proposal has the potential to create other dangerous conditions, if not implemented with great care.

First, we believe that, along with the installation of the bicycle lanes, a separate set of traffic signals should be installed to control the southbound and northbound bicycle traffic, particularly the northbound traffic that would not otherwise have any visible traffic signals. We note that on the westside of Manhattan the department has installed a separate set of signals for bicycle traffic control and we would expect nothing less for Prospect Park West.

Second, the department must study the Prospect Park West vehicular (including but not limited to personal vehicles, MTA buses, school buses, trucks, etc.) loading and unloading locations, especially at peak use times, and ensure that the proposed changes are implemented in a manner which does not result in a doubling-up of vehicles that blocks traffic and constricts moving

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traffic to just one lane. Particular hot spots requiring study include the curbsides around the Poly Prep School at 50 Prospect Park West, 9th Street park entrance, and the Pavilion Movie Theater at 188 Prospect Park West.

Third, that a fully built-out raised median replace the proposed striped median which is intended to physically separate the two-way bicycle traffic from the eastside parking lane as soon as possible. We realize that this might involve some capital work on the department's part, but we believe that it is an essential component toward making the physical separation complete. Ultimately, it is our belief that motorized vehicles, non-motorized vehicles and pedestrians all will be safest if there is a raised median separating the bicycle lanes from the parking lane. We would encourage you to continue to work with us and the Parks Department to develop an appropriately sensitive design for these medians so that they will compliment the historic nature of the park and the existing special treatments that are already in place along the Prospect Park West eastside sidewalk.

Our discussion about this issue did raise a number of additional questions that we were unable to address, which we would like your help in understanding. For that reason, and to allow for time for the department to work through the conditions above, a supplemental resolution was adopted by the Board by a vote of 16 in favor, 14 against, with no abstentions, that the department delay the installation of the bicycle lanes until September 2009. Between now and then we would like the department to address the above conditions and the following:

- 1) How would the eastside curb, bicycle lanes, and median area get cleaned, presumably by the Department of Sanitation's mechanical brooms?
- 2) What would happen to storm water run-off at the eastside curb, bicycle lanes, and median areas? Where would it drain?
- 3) How can we balance park users' loading and unloading needs with the community's desire to preserve and retain the maximum amount of parking on Prospect Park West?
- 4) Will the existing Street Cleaning Regulation and any other curbside signage be relocated from the eastside sidewalk onto the traffic medians?

We look forward to your answers and continuing to work with you to improve safety along Prospect Park West as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Richard S. Bashner
Chairperson

cc: Hon. Marty Markowitz
Hon. David Yassky
Hon. Bill de Blasio
Commissioner Jannette Sadik-Khan, DOT
Prospect Park Administrator Tupper Thomas, DPR/PPA
Ken Freeman, President, Park Slope Civic Council
Robert Witherwax, Grand Army Plaza Coalition
Randy Peers, Chairperson, Brooklyn CB7