

Brooklyn Community Board 9
890 Nostrand Avenue Brooklyn, New York 11225
Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2024
Meeting ID: 824 4280 6395

Attendance (Board Members): Ethan Norville, Committee Chair; Felice Robertson; Benny Rosenberger; Lorianne Wolseley

Attendance (Community Resident Members): Paco Abraham; Valerie Fleming; Jeffrey Grannum; Andrew Magnus

Absent (Board Members): Lorianne Wolseley

Absent (Community Resident Members): Calista DeJesus; Stanley Greenberg

Guests: Anthonine; Nicolas Almonor; Julie Fissingner; Rod Herbert; Kerbie Joseph; Catt Small; Theresa Westerdahl, CB9; Zach Youngren; Theresa Westerdahl; Eric Vassell

CB9 Staff: Mia N. Hilton, Assistant District Manager

I. Welcome/Greetings

a. Committee Chair, Ethan Norville called the meeting to order at 7:15pm

II. Review of Previous Decisions

a. Resolutions on Traffic Calming and Bike Lane Plans

b. Chairman Norville reviewed the draft resolutions sent out to committee via email which formalized the ideas previously discussed and approved by committee during the November meeting.

c. Specific discussion began with the Empire Blvd resolution, asking for a protected bike lane between Flatbush Avenue and Bedford Avenue to complete the existing gap between segments of local bike infrastructure.

d. Jeff Granum commented that he wished the police department would implement more enforcement techniques, and there would be more severe penalties for vehicles violating space they're meant to share with bike lanes.

e. Paco Abraham said he appreciated the drafted motion asking for protected bike lane as that yields the most consistent safety and said it is best for us to ask for the safest option, and then let the experts within DOT decide if it is feasible or if a bike lane with lesser protection is warranted.

f. Andrew Magnus pointed out that the street itself is 100 feet wide and so there is ample width for a robust design, and also reminded the board that that it may be hard to recall the true width of the Blvd. as its been under construction for much of the last half decade with machinery occupying many lanes for months on end.

g. Valerie asked about the multiple driveways near the fast-food restaurants and how that might affect a protected.

h. Chairman Norville said we could ask for a specific, maximum safety version or just be vague; it was up to us. He also acknowledged protected bike lanes do tend to go along parks and other spaces with a consistent, unbroken stretch... but that there are many tools in DOT's toolkit.

i. Paco Abraham replied that there are protected bike lanes all over the city now. They started in 2009 in Manhattan, but driveways and all sorts of other atypical designs have long been handled by DOT in more recent designs and we need not worry about specifics. We should make an ask and let them offer us a design to critique.

j. Andrew Magnus also encouraged us to ask for the safest possible design and noted that DOT often meets the minimum compliance; if we only ask for a light touch, that is all they would likely offer so we ought to ask for true safety rather than water things down unnecessarily. He also pointed out that data shows protected bike lanes actually make the roads safer for ALL users, so we need not look at this as merely a project for one mode share.

k. Chairman Norville noted that was wise and agreed we ought to ask for specifics.

- l. Catt Small introduced herself as a longtime resident but new to the meetings and concurred that she wanted the CB to ask for specifics and that they should be far reaching and aim for optimum bike safety. She also noted how protected bike lanes can also be good for local business too.
- m. Valerie Fleming asked if an impact study was done or if we asked for one. Andrew Magnus pointed out that the resolution does ask for that type of data.
- n. Jeff Granum asked if the language in the draft of the Kingston Avenue bike lane resolution could be boiler plate for all as it asks to minimize vehicle parking loss. Chairman Norville agreed.
- o. Chairman Norville noted that DOT may give us something, or nothing at all, but that they have tremendous expertise and there is no problem is us asking for everything we want.
- p. Committee discussion about whether or not we would be voting on these draft resolutions tonight or now. Chairman Norville noted that was the goal but also realized it was getting late and we had only looked at one so far.
- q. Group decision was made to send the current drafts out as google docs for us to work on in between meetings so that we can all agree on what we send over to the full board.
- r. Point was made that we've already been discussing these safety measures for years and specifically these resolutions since November. Consensus was to ask CB9 Chairman Fred Baptiste and the exec board committee to agree to a firm timeline on entertaining this DOT request. Chairman Norville understood and agreed he would move it along as quickly as possible. He aims to have the bike lane resolutions along with the Washington Avenue traffic calming resolution to go to board in either March or April

III. Unfinished Business

- a. Street Co-Naming Request - Saheed Vassell
 - i. Eric Vassel's father returned to the committee to re-request the street co-naming in honor of his son Saheed.
 - ii. Kerrie Joseph alerted the committee that the family now has letters of support from both Brooklyn Boro Pres Reynoso as well as local Councilmember Hudson. The family has also cleared their schedules in order to be able to address any outstanding questions that might arise during a full community board vote.
 - iii. Valerie Fleming spoke in favor of the motion to honor this resident
 - iv. Paco Abraham spoke in favor as well and asked for a point of information that all in committee were in favor of it last month, so now with further elected officials support can we just call the question formally.
 - v. Chairman Norville called the question to see if anyone was not in favor/ opposed to the street co-naming.
 1. Hearing no opposition, the motion passes by unanimous consent and will move forward to the general board.
- b. Community Fair Planning
 - i. Chairman Norville reviewed and confirmed the committee's plans to join a CB9 Community Fair, likely in June.
 - ii. Transportation Committee will have maps of the area with pins for people to identify transportation issues. It will also invite transit advocacy groups to speak as well.
 - iii. In April's meeting, we'll have a budget for these items and can vote on the issue formally then.

IV. New Business

- a. MTA Subway Station Accessibility in CD9
 - i. Committee discussion about our district's lack of ADA accessible subway stations. Chairman Norville proposed we give the MTA a list to know which stations are of highest priority to us.
 - ii. Jeff Grannum asked why we're paying attention to it because there is already a process and federal money for these changes. He doubts the MTA is waiting for our input to move ahead but also does not oppose giving them a priority list.
 - iii. Andrew Magnus noted that we missed the window for the next MTA capital plan and that one is already set and does not include any accessibility enhancements for our district.
 - iv. Valerie Fleming suggested we avoid advocating for any stations that would not be possible to easily build an elevator. Rod Hebert agreed that elevators require a lot of sidewalk space and if a location doesn't work, we should avoid it.
 - v. Andrew Magnus suggested we focus on connection points so that no one would have to use multiple stations to get to an accessible one. He suggested Franklin because it is a transfer point to multiple lines and the City already owns the land.

- vi. Group discussion also pointed out that Winthrop station on the 2 / 5 line is a good choice because of the adjacent Hospital at Suny Downstate.
- vii. Julie Fissinger spoke up briefly to ask about Lefferts Ave speeding. Chairman Norville acknowledged the concern and said we can talk about it further at the next meeting but that it is on their ongoing list of discussion points with DOT but there are no recent updates.
- viii. Chairman Norville makes a motion.
 - 1. Motion to prepare a priority list for the MTA to consider when looking at our district for accessibility upgrades, and to have the Franklin Ave - Medgar Evers College 2/3/4/5 station (at Eastern Parkway) as a top priority along with the Winthrop 2 / 5 Station (at Nostrand Ave).
 - 2. Valerie Fleming seconds the motion.
 - 3. Hearing no opposition, the motion passes by unanimous consent and will move forward to the general board.
- b. FDNY Sidewalk Parking 249/113 - Rogers Avenue
 - i. Paco Abraham offers his concerns about the illegal sidewalk parking he notices outside of the local firehouse by private vehicles belonging to the FDNY staff. He cites it being a very common frustration of local parents as there are schools along Rogers and the large trucks block the sidewalk and block sightlines to pedestrians, especially little kids. He also notes the illegal parking happens daily and that it seems to softly condone other illegal driving and reckless behavior, as evident by the long list of parking violations many of the FDNY trucks have accrued. Paco noted there is widespread concern about delivery workers riding on the sidewalk and thinks we should similarly be worried about these cars parking on the sidewalk. Acknowledging that the Firefighter may be coming from an area lacking mass transit, he wonders about converting some of the spaces across the street on Rogers to FDNY parking to add to their supply and ideally get them all park parallel to the curb rather than on top of the sidewalk.
 - ii. Jeff Granum agreed with many of Paco's points but noted it is very different than the way delivery workers have been seen riding on the sidewalk. He also suggested we should not just identify a problem but ought to also try and come up with a workable solution.
 - iii. Valerie Fleming asked if there is clearance when the cars are on the sidewalk.
 - iv. Chairman Norville added that if we suggest converting other spaces to FDNY parking we should be conscious this is also a time when Citi bike, car share, etc. have taken away from curb space previously available to the public.
 - v. Rod Herbert suggested angle parking as a solution. Point of information though, the current condition already is angled parking.
 - vi. Chairman Norville added the idea of using the sidewalk but with designation of space to ensure there is space to pass.
 - vii. Andrew Magnus made a cautious note of us formally condoning this. He suggested it would look bad on our committee and board to welcome such clear, illegal behavior. He also noted that the adjacent business... PLG cafe... has made comments against the practice and how it affects their customers.
 - viii. Valerie Flemming asked if there were other complaints or injuries here. Point of information - Andrew noted hearing complaints from the cafe and Paco vocalized many complaints from parents in the neighborhood fearing for child safety when passing the station.
 - ix. Chairman Norville noted that there is more discussion likely needed and a solution to be sought so we will continue this topic's discussion at the next committee meeting.

V. Adjourn

- a. Chair Norville makes a motion to adjourn.
- b. Motion is seconded by Valerie Fleming. Motion passes by unanimous consent