

Good Evening:

The Traffic and Transportation Committee met in the CB 10 District Office on October 4, 2007 and a quorum of members were present at the meeting. We had a presentation from Heather McCown about the status of proposed restoration of Ferry Service from the 69th Street pier to Manhattan, a street naming application for Firefighter Joseph Graffagnino, complaints about express bus service, 6th Ave. Reconstruction, the Belt Parkway VNB exit and worn out street and pavement markings.

In attendance was Joe Mancino from Council Member Gentile's office.

Ms Heather McCown spoke about her efforts to garner support for ferry service to return to the 69th Street pier. She collected over 1,400 signatures of adults in the community that support the idea of a return of such service. These signatures have been forwarded to the Mayor, our State Senator, Council Member and Assembly person. \$500,000 was allocated in the City budget for construction of a "spud barge" improvement to the 69th St. Pier which would allow water ferries to dock and ferry passengers without any substantive change to the existing recreational pier. New York Water Taxi currently operates ferry service from the Brooklyn Army Terminal (BAT) and it is apparent that restoring this service would alleviate express bus overcrowding and reduce vehicle traffic to Manhattan from CB10. These are goals of Mayor Bloomberg's proposed congestion pricing plan and PlaNYC. In attendance were Thomas Paladino and Frank Desantis from TWFM, Inc who operate NY Water Taxi's service from the BAT. Ms. McCown contends that the BAT service does not serve CB 10 commuters well, who do not drive, since the BAT location is under served with connecting bus service. It was suggested that shuttle bus service along Shore Road be restored to complement and encourage ferry use.

Committee member Doris Cruz expressed concern about increased vehicular traffic around the pier. Committee member Stelter pointed out a ferry operated from the pier in the past. James Koutsaylis wondered if the ferry service would increase bus congestion on 69th Street. The representatives from TWFM informed the Committee that the fare for ferry service would be \$5 and that 30-40 regular passengers would be enough to justify a regular run from the pier. It was brought to the attention of the Committee that the City has a policy not to subsidize ferry service but that recently two ferry services from Yonkers and Haverstraw to Manhattan were receiving a subsidy. In fact all of our mass transit is significantly subsidized.

It was discussed and agreed that our community deserves all the transportation options it can get and that if the service is reinstated it could engender greater ferry service as well. It is a fact that the community was promised the spud barge and the money had been allotted. The Committee voted to endorse a resolution directed to Elliot Sander, Chair of MTA, Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan, NYC DOT and our elected officials to do what is necessary to release the budgeted money for the spud barge and for ferry service to return to the 69th Street pier and for this ferry service to receive the same subsidy provided for other ferry services.

Request motion.

We had a request from Joseph and Rosemarie Graffagnino, long time neighborhood residents to rename the southwest corner of 13th Ave. And 77th St. Firefighter Joseph Graffagnino Memorial Way. The application was made by his parents to recognize Joseph's heroic efforts to protect the lives of construction workers and rescue brother firefighters in the recent Deutsche Bank fire. Joe was well known and well liked in our community. He served refreshment and good conversation to patrons of the Salty Dog restaurant on 3rd Ave. in his off duty hours. Firefighter Graffagnino is a candidate for a Public Geographic Area memorial name change under CB 10's guidelines for naming PGAs. His sacrifice and public service make him an appropriate candidate for this for this honor. The Committee voted unanimously to endorse a resolution to rename the SW corner of 13th Ave. And 77th St. "Firefighter Joey Graffagnino Memorial Way". Our community wants to thank him and his family and offer our condolences on their loss.

Request motion.

On worn out and confusing pavement markings the Committee discussed various problems that trouble our community. Committee member Bortnick pointed out that there seems to be an unneeded amount of curb cuts for pedestrian traffic including mid-block cuts. There are faded cross walk signs, confusing stop lines and confusing signs. The Committee decided that we should gather information and report at our next scheduled T&T meeting on November 5, 2007. The committee will survey the major thoroughfares: 3rd, 4th, 5th, Fort Hamilton Parkway and 13th Ave. I want to thank the members for sacrificing more of their own time to tackle this assignment.

Joe Mancino informed the Committee that our Council Member introduced an amendment to Local Law 217 requiring the city to improve demarcation of curb cuts and crosswalks.

The issue of the westbound Belt Parkway exit to the Verrazano Narrows Bridge (VNB) was brought to the fore by Chair Rasinya with input from members Cassara and Ryan and after lively debate it was proposed that the Board should follow up on prior recommendations to make that exit more safe and convenient. There is a need to get the volume of traffic off the parkway as quickly as possible. The back up off the bridge, even when there is no construction causes long delays for drivers in our community. The traffic merge from the highway to the exit ramp is designed so that the driver has incentive to wait until the last opportunity to merge to the right in order to exit and avoid the congestion on the exit ramp. The exiting traffic is separated by an unbroken white line that forces any traffic looking to exit at Fourth Ave in Bay Ridge to stay in the left lane. The Committee voted to endorse a resolution to widen the exit into the northern shoulder, use the property on that northern edge to add a full exit lane, if possible, and improve the lane markings with a broken stripe and other traffic control devices so the traffic which does not exit does not get enmeshed in exiting traffic at the VNB exit. Since any widening of the highway would more than likely encroach on Fort Hamilton property, Committee member Bortnick volunteered to ascertain which entity has title to that property. The Committee endorsed a resolution to request: the Commissioner of NYS DOT to order a study of the existing traffic operation problems and propose a contract that would ameliorate the problems. We endorsed resolution to send a letter to Congressman Fosella and all our elected officials asking for some

timely action, from NYS DOT. Action is long overdue for this long standing and dangerous condition.

Request motion.

Initiatives and problems with express service were brought up in reference to a complaint letter about express service directed to Borough President Markowitz. The proposed reconstruction of 6th Ave was added to the T&T agenda for discussion as well. Time and notice constraints led the Committee to adjourn those topics for our next meeting on November 5, 2007 at 7:15 p.m. in the district office.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Kieran /dg
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