

Transportation Committee 1/27/20

Presentation by the DOT to signalize 59th street and open pedestrian crossing for the the new school PS 939/IS 936

In attendance were two representatives from DOT as well as 3 officers from the 72nd Precinct traffic unit

- A brief presentation by DOT was given to show what work they planned to do in the area around the school.
- They proposed changing the direction of 59th from current direction of east to west to proposed direction of west to east. This would allow for bus drop offs at the new school to be on the right side of the bus, which is the side that students exit the bus. Especially important for students who require extra assistance.
- 59th street does not currently cross 3rd avenue so this change in direction of a single block would have limited impact on traffic in the area.
- DOT also wants to create pedestrian access at 59th street. Currently there are barriers and fencing that people often will climb over to avoid crossing at 60th street.
- The committee questioned why the islands that are proposed for pedestrians in the middle of 3rd avenue couldn't be made much larger. This would greatly increase pedestrian safety. We pointed out how difficult it is to cross 3rd avenue with the allotted time to cross and every safety measure possible should be taken.
- The committee also was very concerned that this plan mentioned nothing of 60th street. Inclusion of this intersection was a requirement that the board had stipulated whenever we talked about community needs for this school
- The committee requested that a broader plan be laid out by the DOT. Even though there are no entrances to the school on 60th street, much of the pedestrian, transit, and vehicular traffic will use the 60th street approach to the school.
- Also brought up was the need for traffic calming measures. Rumble strips were proposed as an idea for the blocks leading up to the school. This seems especially important on the North bound side that has an exit from the expressway. Cars tend to exit speeding and aren't expecting a school crossing.
- A request was made for speed cameras around the school as well.
- Also requested was robust 'way-finding' signage that would direct pedestrian traffic to the new crossing at 59th street.
- The Committee voted unanimously to support the change of direction to 59th street between 2nd & 3rd avenues. We also voted unanimously to submit a letter that strongly states the demands we have in order to complete this project. These are demands we first made when construction on the school was announced.