

**Community Board Ten Board Meeting Attendance**  
**Norwegian Christian Home**  
**Monday, July 31, 2013 – 7:15 pm**

Board Members Present: 35

Greg Ahl  
Liz Amato  
Allen Bortnick  
Jaynemie Capetanakis  
Kevin Peter Carroll  
Shirley Chin  
Judith Collins  
Doris Cruz  
Ida D'Amelio  
Khader El-Yateem  
Ann Falutico  
Barbara Germack  
Andrew Gounardes  
Judith Grimaldi  
Ronald Gross  
Stephen Harrison  
Robert Hudock  
June Johnson  
Habib Joudeh  
Brian Kaszuba  
Brian Kieran  
Nikolaos Leonardos  
Mary Nolan  
Susan Pulaski  
Dean Rasinya  
Husam Rimawi  
Susan Romero  
Jean Ryan  
Eleanor Schiano  
Joanne Seminara  
Joseph Sokoloski  
Lawrence Stelter  
Sandy Vallas  
Fran Vella-Marrone  
Mary Ann Walsh

Board Members Excused: 5

Michael Festa  
Katherine Khatari  
Rita Meade  
Mary Quinones  
Dilia Schack

Board Members Absent: 10

Anna DeMetz  
Stella Kokolis  
Luigi Lobuglio  
Jeannie May  
Rhea McCone  
Adil Oualim  
Linda Sarsour  
Lori Willis  
Tony Wu  
Jonathan Yedin

Ex-Officio:

Councilman Vincent Gentile

## COMMUNITY BOARD TEN GUESTS

Date: July 31, 2013 - 7:15 PM

Subject: CB10 Board Meeting - Norwegian Christian Home

PLEASE PROVIDE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE. THANK YOU.

Name/Address	Phone #	Fax #	E-Mail Address	Organization/Affiliation
JOSEPH AVANZATO JR. 7401 SHORE ROAD APT 5L	---	---	---	---
Will Breddermen 237 77 <sup>th</sup> St	718 260 4507		Wbreddermen@ Cny@aol.com	Bay Ridge League
Lorraine Caramico 1207 65 <sup>th</sup> St	718-836- 3081		lcaramico507 @aol.com	Hamilton Heights Condos
Fred XuereB 561 62 <sup>nd</sup> St	70-492 0946		ATX561@HOTMAIL .COM	
460 45 <sup>th</sup> St Gene Aronowitz	718-753- 3553		genenyc@earthlink, net	
LINDA LURIA				AM BROOK #124
KATE CUCCO			kate.cucco@gmail	AM BROOK #124
Angela Sisto	718-207 1971		asisto2@NYC.RR.com	
LIAM MCCABE	718-630 5277		liam.mccabe @mail.house.gov	Rep GRIMM
John P. Murphy	(718) 373-0618		610 Ovington Ave SB Brooklyn NY 11209	Bay Ridge Resident

**COMMUNITY BOARD TEN BOARD MEETING**  
**July 31, 2013 – Norwegian Christian Home**  
**MINUTES**

Chair Kieran called the meeting to order at 7:20 PM and thanked the Board Members for attending the special summer meeting. He then began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Kieran asked for a motion from the floor to adopt the amended Agenda. Motion by BM Falutico, second by BM Sokoloski. Agenda adopted as amended.

Chair Kieran asked for a motion from the floor to adopt the Minutes from the June 17, 2013 Board Meeting. Motion by BM Romero. Minutes adopted as written.

**PUBLIC SESSION**

Lorraine Caramico asked for help with a problem they are having with public school buses parking in the area of Regina Pacis and IS 187 on all holidays. She called 311 and was told the buses are not allowed to do that. She called the bus companies and was told to call the 68<sup>th</sup> Precinct for enforcement. DM Beckmann replied that the difficulty with enforcement is that school buses are allowed to park on a City street overnight alongside a school, so they cannot be summonsed. This is a difficulty that we have experienced and it is something we will work on. DM Beckmann told Ms. Caramico that we have her contact information and will get back to her.

Fred Xuereb, former Chair of Community Board 7 in Sunset Park, spoke in favor of the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue redesign in Sunset Park, but he has a problem with the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 66<sup>th</sup> Street to the BQE overpass. Now everything is bottlenecking into one lane. There is the bus lane/parking lane, the center lane which is only northbound, and the left lane which now has markings in the road for left turns. The 68<sup>th</sup> Precinct has police officers there pulling cars over, so if you are in the left lane and want to go straight, you cannot. This forces everyone into one lane. Traffic backs up especially during morning rush hour, and people are taking 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, feeding more traffic into our own neighborhood because of the problem at 65<sup>th</sup> Street. Chair Kieran noted that this will be addressed in his report.

Council Member Vincent Gentile announced that the following day he will be with Department of Sanitation Commissioner Doherty as he officially announces the plan that the Councilman worked out with the Mayor's office to have Sanitation pick up baskets twice a day on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, parts of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue four days a week, which has already begun.

The Councilman stated that the B37 bus will be returning, probably in January. On the very day the Transit Authority was voting for the return of the B37, he was negotiating a plan with Deputy Mayor Wolfson to institute ferry service to help alleviate the overcrowding that will happen starting on Monday with the R train tunnel closure. Through Deputy Mayor Wolfson the Councilman was able to get EDC to promise us a ferry at the 58<sup>th</sup> Street Army Terminal starting on Monday, August 5<sup>th</sup>. There is free parking at the Brooklyn Army Terminal or people can take their bike onto the Ferry. It will be a 15 minute trip from the Army Terminal to Wall Street. This service will be re-evaluated after Labor Day, so we have to show them in one month's time that this is a valuable service and we want to keep it running. BM Bortnick asked if they are charging \$2 for the trip, and the Councilman said that is correct.

Gene Aronowitz, a Sunset Park resident, spoke in favor of the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue redesign. Sunset Park implemented the safety measures on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and he finds that it is wonderful.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### ZONING AND LAND USE COMMITTEE

Zoning and Land Use Committee Chair Falutico rendered the Committee report. See Attached. Discussion followed.

The applicant's representative, Howard Weinberg, stated that this permit is for an interior enlargement. He noted that they are in compliance with everything except one substandard condition, which is the side yard at the north side of the front extension.

BM Grimaldi feels that as a Board we should just say no to special permits, and she hopes they will eliminate them. Committee Chair Falutico responded that the overall point of view of the Committee has not changed on our distaste for special permits. However they took this case on its own merits and it did not seem to have any detrimental aspects. BM Romero asked if the whole front of the house is coming out 4'. Committee Chair Falutico replied that the request is to come forward so the whole front of the house is flush with the garage. As-of-right they can fill all of this as they wish. BM Romero asked if neighbors were at the Committee meeting and was told the neighbor was present and supported it. DM Beckmann noted that the Community Board did a comprehensive mailing and lit drop, and did not get one phone call regarding this.

BM Vallas made a motion to support the Committee's recommendation to approve this special permit. BM Seminara asked if the enlargement will be larger than the rest of the house and was told no, that it would be in line with the current house. BM Seminara asked then if it is conforming the house to itself and that it is not an obvious change, and was told yes.

**Motion: CB 10 to approve the Special Permit BSA Cal# 186-13-BZ at 117 Gelston Avenue (Pursuant to Section 73-622, Special Permit Section entitled Enlargement of single and two-family detached and semi-attached residence Special Permit). 33 in favor; 3 recusals: BM Falutico (knows home owner), BM Rasinya (knows applicant), BM Stelter (Department of Buildings). Motion carried.**

With regard to the Committee report on Community Board 10's continuing efforts to revise Zoning Text Amendment Section 73-622, BM Harrison stated that what disturbs him is that the applicant said "the law permits us to do this", omitting the fact that the law permits them to do this if the special permit is granted. That is the same attitude that the BSA has taken, rather than something we have an obligation to look at particularly as it affects the block from an aesthetic point of view. He asked that it be transcribed because he thinks together with the information DM Beckmann got at the BSA we bring it to the City Council and explain that this is a problem when the BSA and the attorneys and people who practice in front of them believe that this is an as-of-right situation that they are entitled to. They are not entitled to it until they actually get the special permit, which is a big difference. Chair Kieran asked if we had to do anything procedurally and was told no. BM Amato asked where we stand on this issue. DM Beckmann replied that last month we sent an official letter to the Department of City Planning and are awaiting a response. She feels we should continue to put pressure on City Planning. Councilman Gentile stated that he has had several conversations about this issue and he saw the attitude of the BSA when they went to speak two months ago, which is that we allowed this special permit to exist so they should be able to use it. Everybody had the right to opt out but CB10 and CB11 decided to stay in. As BM Harrison said, it is almost as an as-of-right even before it has been granted. He thinks that hurts us because the point was to keep people here and not to have people come in and expand.

### TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

As Traffic and Transportation Committee Chair, Chair Kieran rendered the Committee report. See Attached. Discussion followed.

With regard to Shore Road Drive to 65<sup>th</sup> Street, BM Cruz asked if we are voting to support only if they install a left turn bay, and was told yes. BM Grimaldi asked how we will be voting, and Chair Kieran replied that we would vote on one area at a time, and then move to the next geographic area. When asked if we are voting tonight, Chair Kieran replied that tonight we are technically here for an informational report. BM Harrison stated that the motion in June was to postpone voting to a definite date, which was October because many members are not here, so a motion now would be out of order. BM Bortnick noted that as it is now there is a turn signal on the exit of the Belt Parkway at 65<sup>th</sup> Street, which is a light with arrows. When they move the spaces no one mentioned the fact that you might have to put some traffic lights in which might also be a necessity. When asked how many parking spots would be removed, Chair Kieran responded eight.

With regard to 67<sup>th</sup> Street, BM Leonardos thinks we can vote on this tonight. Chair Kieran does not disagree, but reminded him that it is summer time and this is a special Board Meeting. We have approved the agenda and it is not on the agenda. BM Grimaldi asked what people should do if they have comments about the proposal, and Chair Kieran recommended they put a note to themselves and come back to it unless it is really essential to what is going on. When we go over it at the end, it might answer someone else's question.

With regard to Ovington Avenue to 86<sup>th</sup> Street, BM Falutico asked what would be the hot spots. Chair Kieran replied that the hot spots would be Ovington Avenue, 75<sup>th</sup> Street, and 86<sup>th</sup> Street. BM Johnson said that cars that are not making a left turn would come into the right lane. Chair Kieran said that one or two cars at most would be accommodated in the left turn bay. BM Harrison wanted to clarify that it is Ovington to 86<sup>th</sup> Street and is typical of every street. Chair Kieran replied that it is going north to south from Ovington Avenue to 86<sup>th</sup> Street, and DOT's proposal is for every street. BM Pulaski asked if there will be a turn bay along every block and only one lane on either side, and the reply was yes. BM Bortnick said this will create traffic on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues only because drivers are going to get locked behind cars and will not be able to move. BM Seminara was having trouble following the report and Chair Kieran directed her to the correct section.

BM Stelter spoke of the folly of the 13' parking lane, which he feels is an invitation for double parking. There will be double parking in the driving lane and people driving down the street will have to go around the car and into the oncoming traffic. He does not think this is going to be safer but will cause more illegal parking and more dangerous conditions. BM Vallas asked if DOT will be putting traffic lights with signals at the dedicated turn lanes and was told no. He said then they are making each side one lane, and he feels they should have the light so people can make the left turn and get out of the way. BM Falutico asked when the two lanes resume and was told it will remain one lane. BM Hudock feels that there have been many criticisms of the plan such as it will create illegal double parking and backups in the left turn lane will reduce safety – however, no one has offered evidence to support these statements. There have been hundreds of studies on road diets. He asked if it might be appropriate for a representative from DOT to address some of these issues. Chair Kieran responded that he wants to get all the information to the Board before we re-discuss and re-analyze this.

BM Rasinya said his common sense observation is that if you are driving along at the 30 mph speed limit in the one lane of traffic and you want to make a left turn and have approximately 2 car lengths to get to the left, you are going to have to slow down substantially sooner than that point, which means slowing down to 10 or 15 mph, which will further slow down that lane of traffic. Now if you are making the left turn you have the option to go into that second lane and slow down appropriately without affecting the flow of traffic. BM Capetanakis said that there is a similar situation when you drive on 75<sup>th</sup> Street between 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Fort Hamilton Parkway, so we should bear that in mind. DOT is proposing that we have that kind of situation, not for a two block stretch, but from Ovington Avenue to 86<sup>th</sup> Street. This is a very weighty plan to consider for our community. She drives on 75<sup>th</sup> Street every day and there are usually people who get into the left turn only lane and then go straight. We have to rely on everyone following the rules of the road and some of them are not following them. When she thinks about this proposal she thinks about this two block stretch and what it would mean to the community in Bay Ridge going from Ovington to 86<sup>th</sup> Street. We should consider this when going forward.

BM Ryan feels that slowing traffic is the whole point of making it safer. We have to do something; it is really important for safety. BM Bortnick said to go down to the 30's to see what is happening in the Sunset Park area. They have blocks there that say "no left turn" but cars are making left turns despite the fact that they put the rubber piles in. If we reduce it to one lane we are literally committing traffic suicide. BM Harrison said the whole point here is to slow traffic. If traffic continued at the same rate of speed, it would not be doing its job. The issue is whether in fact it slows it to the point where it becomes an impossible burden on traffic. Obviously it is going to slow down traffic; it is designed to do exactly that. He then asked if the reason it is noted that the committee voted 6/5 in the report was because this vote was close. Chair Kieran responded that this was the closest vote. BM Harrison asked if it was discussed in the terms that it is intended to slow things down. Chair Kieran wanted everyone to know that no one really wants cars to speed. Everyone would like people to obey the law and if people did travel 25-30 mph we would have a lot less fatalities and at the same time would have reasonable movement of traffic. The real concern was will this so impede traffic that it will bring it so far below the legal speed limit to maybe cause unintended effects, for instance, people will drive onto other thoroughfares or speed or go into the painted median to get around traffic.

BM Cruz is concerned that we are a senior area. An average car or small minivan will take up 7'; an ambulance is 8' and when it is parked it takes 3' to open the door. So we are up to 18'. When that happens, traffic will be impeded. She is worried about the driver who sees an ambulance blocking the street and makes an erratic turn without looking carefully, or backs out of the block. An ambulance can be parked in front of a building for a long time and she thinks this is an important consideration. BM Seminara's observation is that if she is driving in the one lane and wants to turn left, she has to get into the left turn lane. If she wants to turn right she has to turn from the lane she is in, which will also slow traffic. BM Ahl said he has a lot of experience driving on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. He sees the people in the turn lanes who go straight; the people who stay in the right lane which gets backed up; and even worse are the people who jump in front of you to get out of the turn lane. It is really creating a situation on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue which is our major thoroughfare through Brooklyn. BM Kaszuba asked Chair Kieran to elaborate, and he responded that it was apparent that it will definitely slow traffic, which is a good thing. This will be like an experiment because until it is put in place we will not know exactly what will happen.

BM Gounardes said that he voted for the lane reduction at the Committee meeting. He felt that with all the research on the project and everything he looked at on the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue thoroughfare, he did not see a good enough reason not to try it. BM Romero commented that we are dealing with people who are always in a rush, both in the cars and out of the cars; people that are distracted. She sees people driving on what is supposed to be a moving thoroughfare, especially at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Bay Ridge Parkway, and there are people trying to make right and left turns. So the cars that are trying to get through are going around the traffic in any way they can. They do not care about pedestrians trying to cross the street. They are honking their horns and forcing the drivers to nudge into the pedestrian crossing because they have some place to be. She agrees 100% that we have to do something. BM Hudock sees a pattern of people talking about idiot drivers and impatient drivers. The plan is designed to give pedestrians a fighting chance. Forty percent of the people living in this community do not own cars. BM Vella-Marrone said that she is one of the 40% who takes mass transit and walks. She would be concerned about some of the situations that could occur as a result of some of this. She has seen it on Bay Ridge Parkway and it can be dangerous at times. Let's not always say that these changes will actually make it better for everyone; in some cases they might make it worse. BM Rasinya said that all his comments are assuming everybody follows the law. From common sense, when making a right turn a good percent of the time there is a pedestrian crossing the street, so you stop. If there is only one lane of traffic when you stop everyone backs up because they do not have the option of going around you. This could cause road rage to become a factor. We cannot minimize that drivers will get frustrated either. It is something we have to think about.

BM Grimaldi feels that certain streets in our community have to be thoroughfares. Fourth Avenue is the only thoroughfare we have and it becomes an alternate whenever the highways get backed up. We share it not only with Bay Ridge but with the rest of the borough. Third Avenue and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue are torture to drive through. We

have to keep something free and have at least one street as a thoroughfare. BM Bortnick said we have heard a lot here, but he has not heard anyone come up with a few positive ideas that will substitute for what DOT is trying to dump on our laps. First of all, there is no such thing as 100% safety. The problem is not the cars but the people, whether drivers or pedestrians. People tend to break the law more often than obey it when they are in a hurry. There are better ideas and we should address some of them. Chair Kieran replied that he did mention in the report that certain things were brought up, but he does not see why they were rejected. There are some problems with putting anti-speeding measures on a fast street, but there are different technologies and options to look at. BM Gross suggested adjusting the sequence lighting, which is something that used to work on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. BM Ahl feels that traffic from Bay Ridge to Atlantic Avenue stopped working when they changed 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

With regard to Bay Ridge Parkway, BM Bortnick noted a bicycle needs 3' to turn; a car needs 10' to turn; a bus needs at least 20' to turn. If they are putting a concrete extension, you will not be able to make the turn. It does not belong there because it does not serve a practical purpose. Chair Kieran responded that it shortens the distance for the pedestrian and makes them more visible when they are out there. BM Rasinya asked if this will be painted or an actual concrete construction. Chair Kieran replied that the extension mentioned in the report was a concrete bump out.

With regard to 82<sup>nd</sup> Street, BM Harrison noted that 82<sup>nd</sup> Street had only one fatality and asked why have a bump out on that corner. Chair Kieran said that he thinks the Community Board office received reports of cars speeding on 82<sup>nd</sup> Street to make the light to get onto 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. There is a speed bump on that block, so it is a recognized problem. BM Harrison asked what the logic is; what makes this different from all the other blocks. Chair Kieran replied that if it was for a street that did not have a fatality, that did not have a speed bump on it, that did not have reports of speeding problems, he would say it did not make sense. And it would not make sense for every corner either. He thought that this corner merited it, and while they were doing it there, the SE corner across from the church where a lot of seniors cross could use the shorter distance to cross the street. If they bumped it out, there is a hydrant there so it would not cost a spot. They asked that if they do the bump outs they put bollards which would protect people who are standing there. The Committee voted to recommend approval of the change. This was also added on; it was not part of the original proposal. However, the Committee felt that although it was not part of the original proposal, it did fit the aim of the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue vision mission statement, and the proposal was very exact and specific, so the Committee entertained it with the rest of the proposal. BM Falutico asked if the bump outs are coupled with single lanes or if can they be done with two lanes, and the reply was yes. BM Rasinya asked the Board to consider recommending asking for bump outs to be on every corner where we have a house of worship or a school, because they do shorten the distance you have to walk in the street, and those are busy intersections. Chair Kieran said that does have merit, but we have to get to some point where we say to DOT please do something rather than reforming. BM Harrison said that these can be additions at the end when we make recommendations. Chair Kieran said if it works really well, we can go back. He believes we have more freedom to go back and get the advice of experts as well for the Community Board. Independently we will have our own information, statistics and experts to advise us. BM Rasinya noted that many of the churches on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue already have no parking on the corner in front of the church. BM Seminara asked for clarification about the size of the sidewalk extension and whether it would be wider than the parking lane. Chair Kieran was not sure, but he believes it would be somehow related to whatever else is put in place. BM Cruz is very concerned because there is speeding on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue every day. When she is waiting to cross the street, she stands behind the traffic light further in on the sidewalk because she is concerned with a car coming very quickly to make a turn, hitting a bump and bashing into her. She thinks the bump out will cause people to be further out in traffic and that is a serious risk. BM Ryan said that she avoids crossing at 86<sup>th</sup> Street because it is really dangerous and asked about the painted section. Chair Kieran noted that we will be talking about that next.

BM Ryan said that when she goes to 86<sup>th</sup> Street she always has to go on the east side of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue because of missing curb cuts on the west side. She often crosses from east to west at 85<sup>th</sup> Street to avoid the crowds and turning vehicles at 86<sup>th</sup> Street. She is concerned that if the striped crosswalk is widened like a fan at the west

side of 85<sup>th</sup> Street, wheelchair users still might not be able to get up to the sidewalk except at the corner where the cars are turning right onto 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue because the subway stairs might not leave enough room for a wider curb cut. BM Cruz said that 85<sup>th</sup> Street demonstrates something that we have throughout 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which is an intersection that is not a right angle. We have many skewed intersections, and she feels we have to look at all of them. Also, we have very few countdown lights on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. There are none from 94<sup>th</sup> Street to 101<sup>st</sup> Street. Bay Ridge is a senior area and qualifies for special timing which allows more time to cross. These are important safety issues that should be incorporated into the report. BM Germack said that a pedestrian faces cars making turns. Chair Kieran noted that we will talk about that next.

With regard to 86<sup>th</sup> Street, BM Kaszuba agrees with moving the bus, but thinks it is necessary to have the no turn lane for cars going southbound on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue onto 87<sup>th</sup> Street as pedestrians will be crossing. Chair Kieran noted that there will also be northbound traffic so turns should be prohibited both ways. BM Harrison agrees but thinks the time should be limited to rush hour and not all day. BM Cruz said we also have to remember that there will be an increase in the number of buses. DM Beckmann noted that over the summer CB10 was notified that S93 service will be expanded and it will be there full time. BM Grimaldi said that the painted bus lane is a generous lane and she asked if that much space is needed for a bus or could it be made smaller and still have two lanes. Chair Kieran replied that this is a proposal so you cannot go by the scale. However, he thinks the reason it looks so wide is that it is offset from the curb because DOT is suggesting they have a fence along there, so the passengers discharging from the bus would be going into the fence; they need to have some space. There will be two lanes along that portion; they are not talking about lane elimination. But that is the reason the Committee did not believe the island would fit effectively. BM Gounardes noted that those pictures are just ideas.

BM Stelter mentioned his objection to the railing. The bus people waiting for the bus line up on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue from 87<sup>th</sup> to 86<sup>th</sup> Street and all the way down the block. Now everyone will start crossing to 87<sup>th</sup> Street, all the people coming out from the 86<sup>th</sup> Street station, running to cross 86<sup>th</sup> Street, waiting by the fruit and vegetable stand and wrapping around 87<sup>th</sup> Street, or going straight across the crosswalk and down to 86<sup>th</sup> Street waiting for the bus. Chair Kieran said that the Committee took what was proposed. BM Stelter said that there will be more people crossing 87<sup>th</sup> Street waiting for the bus. Chair Kieran noted that the fence will be from the corner to the middle of the block. He understands the idea; a lot of cars do stop in the bus stop and impede bus traffic because they go into the deli or are dropping someone off for the subway. BM Gounardes noted that when he walking on 87<sup>th</sup> Street there were four cars parked in that bus lane; two of them went into the deli, and two were picking up and dropping off passengers. He does not feel the painting would stop the cars from parking there. Chair Kieran believes if it is painted a contrasting color and the buses are equipped with cameras they would be liable to be summonsed.

DM Beckmann stated that the biggest problem is the volume of buses. If you have the slightest problem on the Verrazano Bridge and those buses are delayed, you can have buses double parked discharging passengers. With the expansion of the S93 the number of buses at times could be 10 to 12 buses on the street. She does not know if 87<sup>th</sup> to 88<sup>th</sup> Streets will be able to accommodate that, so we really have to work with the MTA on this. BM Romero knows the Committee voted down the pedestrian island, and she wanted to say that there is nothing safe about that island. That is one of the most congested intersections going from east to west as they are waiting at the light on the east side. Many people will be right next to the cars. Under no circumstances should there be an island there.

BM Bortnick said that New York is the third most populous state in the world; it is the fourth worst in the world for congestion and traffic problems. New York is also the hub of the financial world and basically the center of commerce and industry for the United States. We have the finest port on the east coast, rail transportation and other means of getting in and out. You cannot continue to exist and grow as a city without adequate transportation. We are facing a decision as to what to do to help us in the most crowded city in the United States and to help traffic move. He has a few ideas for 86<sup>th</sup> Street that he thinks will work very well, but he does not know how we will get DOT to go against their principles. He feels this problem can be resolved one

easy way: build a stand with a cabin on it for a traffic officer in the middle of the block with a PA system and a method to control the lights. You set up a light system there with turns, 4-way stop for pedestrians to cross, and the ability to voice something if someone is doing something wrong. Chair Kieran showed a photograph of where they want to move the first stop pick up for the S53 – 87<sup>th</sup> to 88<sup>th</sup> Streets. DM Beckmann noted it will end right before the bank's driveway. It cannot go beyond that in signage, but in reality we do not know.

Chair Kieran noted that DOT proposes to leave the thoroughfare unchanged from 87<sup>th</sup> Street to 95<sup>th</sup> Street. BM Cruz feels that to not address 92<sup>nd</sup> Street and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue is completely irresponsible. It is an incredibly dangerous intersection, and she cannot understand why it is not addressed. BM Ahl noted that there is always double parking in front of Ponte Vecchio.

With regard to 95<sup>th</sup> Street to 101<sup>st</sup> Street, BM Grimaldi asked why 101<sup>st</sup> Street is such a desirable turning block, and Chair Kieran said it is used to get onto Fort Hamilton Army Base. BM Cruz said that at the second visioning session she asked DOT why they do not have anything about speeding from 95<sup>th</sup> Street to Shore Road, and they said that it does not warrant it; there is much more speeding at Ovington Avenue. So they added the configuration for northbound traffic. She told them the southbound traffic is worse. To direct more traffic on 100<sup>th</sup> Street would bring us back to the situation we had five years ago when the residents of 100<sup>th</sup> Street had terrible traffic problems. You are encouraging more people to turn there. The northbound turn on Fort Hamilton Parkway is very dangerous. DOT said they could daylight it, but it has been daylighted, and cars still park in that spot. She feels if we are having changes on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, it should be all of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. There should be a 30 mph speed limit sign off the Belt Parkway. This proposal will direct traffic onto 100<sup>th</sup> Street which will cause problems, and it does not address speeding and the unique situation of 95<sup>th</sup> Street at the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue/5<sup>th</sup> Avenue split at St. Patrick's. None of the schools in Bay Ridge have been approached about how this proposal will affect them. BM Vella-Marrone agrees and noted this is a bad block that they have been complaining about for years. They had even asked to reverse traffic on that block. There is a lot of traffic going in and out of the Fort all the time.

BM Bortnick said one of the problems we have is that there are means of cutting down speed. The problem is that the speed cameras they talked about are not that expensive and they have to come out of the state. He does not know why Senator Golden voted against them on several occasions. They also have traffic monitors that tell you your speed as you approach that sign. Those are two ideas that should be put in on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue because they will definitely slow down traffic, especially if there is enforcement. Chair Kieran said that we have previously been told that the speed boards cannot be put in place, but Annmarie Doherty did say in conjunction with this it is something we could ask for. He also noted that we are working hard to get one or two cameras.

BM Rasinya said there is a dangerous condition that has not been addressed. When you come off the Belt Parkway at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue heading westbound, there are currently two lanes of traffic. During peak hours, exiting traffic is almost down into the traffic lanes on the Belt Parkway. If we reduce 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue to one lane, that traffic will be in the Belt Parkway lanes of traffic, and could cause very bad accidents.

With regard to the speed signs, BM Stelter said they have speed blocks on Queens Boulevard that are very effective. It is a reminder that you are driving faster than you should be and encourages the behavior to not speed. Chair Kieran said that is actually the last part of this proposal.

With regard to 101<sup>st</sup> Street to Shore Road, Chair Kieran added that there are other locations in DOT's proposal where they want to replace regular markings with higher visibility paint. The one question that came up was why not replace them all. We might lose some of the effectiveness of the differentiation between one crosswalk and another, but a lot of our painted crosswalks are in bad shape anyway. He does not see the harm in having all of them being high visibility paint. BM Schiano said that going down Shore Road and making the turn to the Belt Parkway is very bad.

Chair Kieran editorialized in terms of the entire proposal, the most decisive and difficult to decide upon and the ones that will have the greatest affect on the roadway are the proposals for lane reductions from Ovington Avenue to 86<sup>th</sup> Street, and the changes at 86<sup>th</sup> Street. The other ones do not change the roadway that much. They should enhance safety in every instance; how much, we do not know. Keeping that in mind, when we have to vote if we have great reservations, if we need to more thoroughly examine the proposals, maybe we do not have to do it to all.

BM Harrison said that one thing that seems to be completely missing in the entire proposal is that every auto collision involves a car and a pedestrian. We have heard a lot about the cars, but pedestrian laws regarding crosswalks and lights are suggestions. He has not seen an accident yet where, if the pedestrian had been obeying the laws that were there to protect them, the accident would have occurred. He is not forgiving the automobile, but he is saying that it seems to him that something is missing. Maybe there is an opportunity to look at it and start that culture here. There is no enforcement whatsoever. If you step off a sidewalk in California, you get ticketed because people take that seriously there. It seems to him that there has to be something we can do from that end. Chair Kieran responded that some of the photographs shown tonight show examples of people walking against the light, not looking in a very busy and dangerous intersection, which certainly contributes to the possibility of having a bad accident. When we talked about safety on the 65<sup>th</sup> Street corridor, DOT had programs for education in schools for just that issue. They are making a public outreach on that, concentrating mostly on drivers. He does remember when their advertising used to reach out to pedestrians as well, saying "cross at the green and not in between." It is possible that this is the time to start again. BM Harrison said that is what he is saying; that maybe there is an opportunity here where something could be added to this. He said that he walks on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue every day and recognizes that if he is going to cross the avenue contrary to the law, he is taking his life in his hands. Yes, cars go quickly along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue but we have a responsibility to at least try to educate pedestrians. Chair Kieran said there are a lot of enhancements that can go along with this. In Bay Ridge there are signs on the sidewalks and intersections that say "Look" for people who are not looking. That is something that would be inexpensive and should be added to the proposals and paintings.

BM Ahl said that pedestrians are stupid. When he was in Berlin he was fined twice for putting his foot off the curb when he was not supposed to. And there you go down to the precinct and pay the fine right away. They also have mobile speed vehicles. If you drive by too fast, you get a ticket in the mail. It has slowed traffic down considerably. We need to start thinking more like the Europeans.

BM Vella-Marrone thinks that safety is a two-way street. It is not just the cars; it is also the pedestrians and the bicycles. Maybe in accordance with anything we pass, we make a commentary about that. It is a part of safety and everyone has to participate in safety. BM Germack said she is also a pedestrian and sees bikes going every way, not following directions. It is a challenge when walking.

BM Bortnick said that one of the problems we face is that DOT does not want to listen period. 78<sup>th</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a perfect example. DOT said they would not go back. They wanted a year to play with and when the year was up they had to go back because it was so bad. Another most important thing is enforcement.

BM Gounardes asked what the next step would be. Chair Kieran responded that this will be added to the October meeting. This is the report. If he has something there is no way to add it unless we send it to the Committee. BM Harrison said he could make the motion and the motion can be considered. The whole purpose of this was so people truly understood the proposal. BM Pulaski asked if there will be a list of recommendations. Chair Kieran replied that he has notes that could easily be added. BM Germack asked about speed tables and was told it is in the report. BM Grimaldi suggested that if anyone has concrete ideas, they should email the District Office. BM Harrison suggested that between now and October the Committee meet and maybe have the extras as an addendum, and Chair Kieran said absolutely.

With no further business, Chair Kieran adjourned the meeting at 9:50 PM.

Fred Xuereb spoke from the rear of the room saying that a lot of issues discussed tonight had been discussed at Community Board 7. The difference is that they have a center median which CB10 does not have. Reducing the three lanes going northbound and the three lanes southbound to two lanes from 65<sup>th</sup> Street to 38<sup>th</sup> Street slowed the traffic down. (Since Mr. Xuereb was speaking from the rear of the room as people were packing up and leaving the meeting, the remainder of his comments was inaudible on tape.)

# ZONING AND LAND USE COMMITTEE

Community Planning Board #10/Brooklyn

July 24<sup>th</sup> 2013 @7:00 pm

ZALUC Committee Meeting was called to order @ 7:10 pm on July 14<sup>th</sup> 2013.

A quorum was met.

See attachment for attendees.

## **TOPIC #1**

**NYC Board of Standards and Appeals for Special Permit**

**BSA Cal# 186-13-BZ at 117 Gelston Ave.**

**(Pursuant to Section 73-622, Special Permit Section entitled Enlargements of single and two-family detached and semi-attached residences Special Permit”**

---

Presentation was made by Harold Weinberg PE and Frank Sellito Architect.

The owners and the next-door neighbor to the south, were also present.

### **General Description:**

A two story extension is proposed in the front of the existing two family brick residence, extending above the existing basement/garage. The extension is as-of-right in all aspects except the proposed noncompliance in side yard at the north side of the front extension, which is the subject of the application.

The as-of-right configuration would require the front extension to step-in from the north lot line by about 4'. The special permit is filed to allow the extension to be full across without the “indent.”

It was the opinion of the committee that this Special Permit request was minimal in scope , would not cause negative impact on neighbors, and that the as-of-right configuration was not detriment and perhaps more aesthetically pleasing.

Additionally, the committee requested that the owner/architect attempt to incorporate some of the architectural details of the row of historic brick homes directly to the north.

### **Committee Action:**

Motion was made in favor of granting the Special Permit as written.

Vote = 7 in Favor, 2 recusals.

---

## **TOPIC #2**

**The discussion was related to CB10’s continuing efforts to revise Zoning Text Amendment Section 73-622, entitled “Enlargements of single and two-family detached and semi-attached residences /Special Permit” and related to our recent motion that the City Planning commission make application for a text amendment to Section 73-622, to remove CB10 from part (a) of the section.**

The above-mentioned presentation for 117 Gelston Ave., was a case in point of how applicants for Special Permits consider the granting of such permits to be a guaranteed. Presentations of these applications suppose successful results. Steve Harrison wanted the minutes of this meeting to reflect this attitude on the part of the majority of the Special Permit applicants

# ZONING AND LAND USE COMMITTEE

Community Planning Board #10/Brooklyn

July 24<sup>th</sup> 2013 @7:00 pm

## **Committee Action:**

Motion was made to incorporate the transcript of this committee meeting into the minutes of the meeting.

Vote: All in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

---

Respectfully Submitted:

Ann Falutico

Committee Chair Zoning and Land Use Committee

 7/31/13

## *Meeting Attendees:*

*Josphine Beckman*

*Doris Cruz*

*Ann Falutico*

*Barbara Germack*

*Steve Harrison*

*Susan Pulaski*

*Dean Rasinya*

*Fran Velia Microne*

*Maryann Walsh*

ZONING AND LAND USE COMMITTEE MEETING

JULY 24, 2013 – 7:00 PM

Committee Chair Falutico stated that on the agenda for the meeting was an application for a special permit at 117 Gelston Avenue. It is a BSA Special Permit Application for a 2-story front enlargement of an existing 2 family house. Representing the owners were Mr. Weinberg and Mr. Sellito, architect and engineer. Mr. Weinberg introduced Mr. and Mrs. Goustios and Mr. Sellito to the Committee.

Mr. Sellito passed photographs around to the Committee. He stated that the zoning had recently changed within the last 10 years. In 1961 this was an R6R and this would not have been an issue. Most of houses in this community were built prior to 1950, 1940, 1930 and so on. So they all pre-dated the existing zoning. The R5B is a new zone which makes you have to leave an open space in the side yard; it is 0 and 8. In this particular situation, they have a lot line condition if you are looking at the right hand side. Their existing yard is 4'1" and they are going to need to leave a 3'11" side yard. It really does not make sense. Again it is a 2-story basement extension at the front of the building going straight across. Instead of leaving that little cutout, they are looking for a variance under the special permit provisions to make it a straight line extension as opposed to losing that little bit of square footage. The building fully complies with the building code and all other aspects of the zoning; area, open space, building height. He then went over the plans with the Committee. Committee Chair Falutico asked about the house, even though it is not quite attached, there is a tarp over it; is that the zero lot line side. He replied that it is within 6", so it is within the zero lot line. She asked if the other side is the 4', and he replied that it is. DM Beckmann asked if the front extension is going to be starting from the garage. He replied that it would be squaring off the building. Under the zoning in order to comply they would have to leave 3'11". Committee Chair Falutico said that as-of-right would be 2'. So they are desiring to completely cover the top of the garage; not go forward, but completely cover the top of the garage. This is what the zoning requires, which is to cover  $\frac{3}{4}$  or so.

Committee Member Rasinya asked if he is correct, that as you look at the building, the non-compliant part is to the left side, and was told it is to the right side. Mr. Sellito stated that the left side is fine because there is more than 8' between the buildings. It also does not include the required front yard. It is that little piece. He then showed other plans which he thought would help a lot more. He pointed out the existing condition with a stair, and the proposed condition, going straight across and moving the stair out to the street line. He showed the existing cellar; the garage does not change; the stairs going up do not change. At the first floor they are coming completely across the building and pulling the stairs out. Committee Member Harrison asked if that was the entrance door. Mr. Sellito said at the entrance, pull the stairs out further toward the street.

When asked about the lot line, he replied that it was under 8' toward the street, so everything is within the lot line. Committee Chair Falutico asked if, in the proposed condition from the first step of the stairs going up is still 8' from the property line, and was told that the first step was at the property line. She said that is lucky. He stated you are allowed to encroach 44" onto the sidewalk. There are instances where it is physically impossible to provide enough steps to get to a level or a platform where you can go through steps onto a city property. You have to use a revocable consent, but that has nothing to do with them. Committee Chair Falutico noted that she does not see the proposed elevation. Committee Chair Falutico asked if there was any change in the rear, and Mr. Sellito replied that there is not.

With regard to the special permit for a variance of the side yard, Mr. Sellito said the existing degree of non-compliance will not be increased. He is maintaining the existing side yard of 8", and under the rules of special permit, he can do that. Committee Chair Falutico asked if they will come in at an intermediate level and then rise up within the building, and he replied that that is correct. So it is really a vestibule. She said that right now the full height from the sidewalk to the first floor is accomplished from the outside of the building. That will not be the case with what they propose. They will come up a few steps, maybe half the steps, and then the rest of the rise to the first floor will happen inside. Mr. Sellito stated that at the second floor it will be enclosed by floor area, but the first floor is just a vestibule. Mr. Sellito clarified the rear of the house on the plans. Committee Chair Falutico asked if the material in the front would be brick, and the reply was yes, and that the stairs will be masonry. Committee Chair Falutico asked if there were any questions or comments from the Committee, or if the guests would like to make any comments.

The next door neighbor stated that he does not see a problem with this. It was stated that it would be the side of the encroachment, and he is OK with it. Committee Chair Falutico asked if anyone wanted to make a motion. Committee Member Harrison moved that we accept as written. Discussion followed.

Committee Member Cruz asked if this is the first time we have approved a special permit, and was told no, but not lately. Mr. Sellito noted he was before CB10 about 3 years ago. He said this is as small as it gets as far as a special permit. Usually it is a variance where they are asking for zone lot area, increase an open space, and so on. Committee Member Harrison said that although he is against this special permit it is his understanding that what you have is basically the physical dimensions that in all honesty if they do not meet the physical dimensions the BSA requires. The second thing is when we talk about the character of the community that is considered. In this particular case, unlike many of the other cases, he does not see any harm to essential character in fact may be improvement.

Committee Member Harrison does not want it to be in any way, shape or form construed that because we are saying yes to this under the current circumstances because that is our legal obligation now, that in no way changes the Board's position which we just recently voted on which is to appeal the special permit for Community Board 10. He wants to be very clear on why he is supporting it here but still at the same time opposes the special permit. Mr. Sellito reinforced what Committee Chair Harrison just said. They are allowed 1.35 and they are proposing a .91, well below what normally happens with a special permit for a private dwelling. The other community board they do special permits where it is .5 AR which is allowed by law and they get floor area ratios in all three zones of 1. This is completely innocuous as far as a special permit. Committee Chair Harrison said that twice he heard him say that they are entitled to it by law; it is entitled by law if they get the special permit. He thinks that the problem he has with the special permit is that it is basically being treated as an as-of-right and the very fact that they are expressing it that way disturbs him, not about this case, but in general that it is being viewed that way when it is clearly not something they are entitled to. It is something they are entitled to if the special permit is granted. The grant must come before they can say they are entitled to it.

Committee Member Vella-Marrone understands what Committee Member Harrison is saying, which is true. They come here like it is as-of-right. If it was as-of-right they would not be here. She said they are not against them, they are just making a statement. That is #1 – it is OK if it gets approved. The other aspect is that we have consistently been opposed to this special permit. We just recently passed a resolution as such, and she agrees with that. She thinks the other part of the statement is also true, that we have to deal with what we have now and follow the rules that are there now, and based on that we have to take every application that comes before us as an individual and base it just on the facts of that individual case, which is what we are doing right now.

Mr. Sellito said that a situation like this which is a lot line extension, about 15 years ago we were able to get these as a reconsideration in the borough, and again this is not hurting anyone. The R5B is what makes this come to play now. In 1961 the zoning was changed with the current zoning resolution was an R6R, zero lot line period. It does not apply here. Keep that in mind also. Every situation must be weighed for its merits and this one has merit.

Committee Chair Falutico asked the owners if they were planning on living in the house, and they said they were. She asked Mr. Sellito if he was going to be the architect for the renovation, and he said they are planning the application for the BSA. She wanted to ask that part of what the special permit says is that in keeping with the neighborhood, etc., and her comment is not something that can be legislated, but she wanted to ask if in the final design for the elevation he can take note of the several buildings to the left with brick fronts as you face the building that have some rather nice detailing about them as he develops his design. It is just a

recommendation and it is one of the issues of character. Mr. Sellito said he is going to propose to use the brick and they will look at the buildings across the street and do their best to make it blend.

Committee Chair Falutico asked if there were any other comments. She moved the motion to accept as written, motion made by Committee Member Harrison, second by Committee Member Walsh. Vote: 7 in favor; 2 recusals. Committee Member Rasinya said he recused himself because he knows the applicant. He wanted to add that there is no doubt in his mind that they will look at everything and try to really fit in because he knows what kind of people they are. Committee Chair Falutico recused herself because she has a personal relationship with both the architect and the engineer. Motion carries.

## Heading Forth on Fourth

### A History of a life-line through Brooklyn

Fourth Avenue has been a public thoroughfare, in one form or another, since Brooklyn was founded. Along the roadway, you can find the Vecht-Cortelyou house which was originally built in 1699. Fourth Avenue remains a vital life-line for commerce and travelers between the South Brooklyn communities of Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights and Bensonhurst and Downtown Brooklyn. It is an arterial thoroughfare which stretches over six miles from Times Plaza, a triangle formed by Atlantic Avenue and Flatbush Avenue in Downtown Brooklyn to a southern terminus on Shore Road in Bay Ridge.

Fourth Avenue supports retail establishments, light industry, auto-repair services and multiple dwellings along its six mile route. It is home to numerous churches and schools as well. Directly beneath Fourth Avenue is the R train subway. It provides transportation to the citizens of Gowanus, Park Slope, Sunset Park and Bay Ridge. The R train subway below Fourth Avenue is arguably a more vital link for Brooklyn's citizens than Fourth Avenue itself. The subway opened in 1915 and connected Manhattan with Bay Ridge. A pioneer straphanger could take a train from Chambers Street over the Manhattan Bridge to 65<sup>th</sup> Street and Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge. As Fourth Avenue traverses the borough from North Brooklyn to South Brooklyn, each community on the roadway presents a unique community and a different flavor. Fourth Avenue presents a different face to the world as it stretches through Downtown Brooklyn, Gowanus, Park Slope, Sunset Park and Bay Ridge.

When Fourth Avenue passes under the elevated Gowanus Expressway at 65<sup>th</sup> Street and into Bay Ridge it changes dramatically. The roadway changes in width, number of lanes and character. In Bay Ridge the thoroughfare is 60 feet wide and predominantly bounded by small apartment buildings, houses of worship and schools. Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge is not a truck route. Fourth Avenue from Times Plaza to 65<sup>th</sup> Street is 88 feet wide and carries a heavy volume of trucks and commercial vehicles. In Park Slope and Sunset Park it is bordered by more commercial establishments including manufacturing sites, warehouses high rise cooperative apartment buildings and hotels.

Fourth Avenue serves as an alternative to the Gowanus Expressway for drivers as well as a thoroughfare for local traffic. The traffic along it is controlled by traffic lights whose sequence is generally coordinated so that a vehicle traveling from north to south or south to north at a legal rate of speed would have a progressive cascade of green lights or a "Green Wave" at peak travel times such as rush hour. This "green wave" allows higher traffic volume, reduced noise (honking and idling) and reduced pollution from vehicles.

A married couple from Park Slope posted their experiences of Fourth Avenue through the 1970s and 1980s that succinctly and accurately described the thoroughfare's characteristics in modern times in Park Slope and Sunset Park. They moved to Park Slope from Manhattan in 1976 and

described Fourth Avenue as, "Three lanes wide on each side of a raised divider, zoned for commercial and industrial development and cars and trucks sped down it with lightening speed requiring quick reflexes and a strong constitution. Groups of teenagers ... would periodically play chicken with passing vehicles, sauntering slowly across the street in defiance of lights and traffic rules, daring you to hit them (.) In the 70's the thoroughfare was dominated by tenement style buildings, tire-repair shops, Pentecostal Churches, bodegas, abandoned warehouses, vacant lots, taxi garages, gritty coffee shops and Spanish restaurants. The landscape was working class Brooklyn Americana ... segue to 2012 and Fourth Avenue still has lots of traffic but no one has played chicken with cars in years. The tire-repair shops and Pentecostal Churches are (being) replaced by luxury condo(s) ... (as well as) cafés, bars, pastry stores and upscale diners." This description accurately reflects the grittier nature of Fourth Avenue from Flatbush Avenue to 65<sup>th</sup> Street to current times. However, Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge has been and still is substantively different from the rest of the thoroughfare accurately described by these urban pioneers.

There are no easy answers to questions raised about how to improve safety on this vital thoroughfare. There are limits on what the NYCDOT can do to improve efficiency or safety on Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge due to the size of the roadway and the current configuration of the avenue. During the visioning study portion of the process the greatest attention of the T & T Committee and the board was directed to the desire to increase safety for pedestrians along Fourth Avenue. To that end, every participant in the discussions and debate on proposed changes to the thoroughfare agree that more safety is a good thing. However, no reasonable person would recommend the elimination of vehicle traffic on Fourth Avenue although this would virtually guarantee no pedestrian fatalities in the future. What the Traffic and Transportation Committee and the community board have attempted to do is analyze all the variables of the proposed changes and weigh the good effects that a change would bring with any concomitant detriments. Extreme positions and extreme suggestions do not enhance our efforts to produce a good plan for improvement of Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge.

A recent article in the Daily News lightheartedly characterized Bay Ridge residents as being unwilling to slow down vehicles along Fourth Avenue. The headline, "Hell, no! We won't slow" only serves to trivialize the importance of conducting a thorough analysis of the NYCDOT proposal. Community Board 10 pioneered studies of pedestrian safety and regularly requests and approves safety enhancements for its roads and transportation network. The Community Board 6 in Park Slope and CB 7 in Sunset Park have approved the NYCDOT's proposals to enhance safety on Fourth Avenue including proposals to reduce lanes from three lanes to two as an anti-speeding measure along Fourth Avenue.

The T & T Committee and the board carefully considered the DOT proposals and balanced the benefits and detriments of the proposals while gathering all the information possible to assure we make a good decision. If a proposed change will have an extreme negative impact on the ability of Fourth Avenue to function then that proposed change merits more close scrutiny and the board must weigh the cost to the community against the potential benefit to the community. The

Committee debated and carefully considered whether the potential detriments of any proposed change outweighed the possible benefits. This is too big of an issue to allow mistakes to occur because some people and tabloids want immediate responses or knee jerk reactions.

As Chairman of the T & T Committee I was personally disappointed to see no direct anti-speeding impediments incorporated in the DOT proposal for Bay Ridge. The proposed changes especially the lane reductions are meant to have the side effect of reducing speeding and studies have shown that "road diets" can reduce speeding vehicles without affecting the efficiency of the thoroughfare but I believe we need and deserve actual direct anti-speeding measures for Fourth Avenue right now.

The other communities of Fourth Avenue decided to eliminate one lane out of three through lanes for traffic in both directions. In effect they have given up 33 1/3 % of their traffic capacity on the avenue. In Bay Ridge a reduction of one lane out of two through lanes of traffic is a 50% reduction of our traffic capacity on the avenue. The lane reductions in Park Slope and Sunset Park will have less of an impact on traffic in those communities than the proposed lane reductions in Bay Ridge. The reductions do not guaranty a reduction in speeding and no direct anti-speeding measures were incorporated in the proposals for the avenue for any of the communities.

The issue which was raised again and again throughout the whole process was a concern over speeding drivers and pedestrian safety. The NYCDOT plan for Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge should incorporate direct anti-speeding alterations to the roadway. Anti-speeding measures for Fourth Avenue can include raised speed reducers: speed bumps, speed tables and speed cushions. These were requested by members of CB 10 but left out of the proposed changes for the roadway by the NYCDOT. A raised speed reducer deflects the wheels of a travelling vehicle with the purpose and direct effect of reducing the speed of the vehicle. Some kind of speed reducers could be incorporated into the roadway on Fourth Avenue and/or on identified dangerous side streets. (i.e. 82nd Street).

A speed table is a speed reducer configured as a flat top speed hump raised approximately three inches above the road and it could be as wide as or wider than a normal crosswalk. NYCDOT Street Design Manual states that a community in NYC can request a speed table even a mid-block speed table from the Commissioner. The DOT has installed them in various places in Manhattan to slow down speeding traffic. Speed tables have been shown to reduce vehicle speed by 15% which would certainly improve pedestrian safety. The operational effectiveness of speed reducers to achieve traffic calming has been confirmed by traffic studies. I believe that Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge needs and deserves one or two speed tables to stop the speeding drivers that are killing pedestrians on Fourth Avenue.

The NYCDOT redesign proposal for Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge started with a request by CB 7 in Sunset Park for safety enhancements to the avenue in 2009. Borough President Marty

Markowitz took up the cause and commissioned a visioning report for Fourth Avenue in 2010. The report contained suggestions to redesign the thoroughfare in order to enhance its beauty and improve pedestrian safety. In 2010 the Borough President created a Fourth Avenue Task Force for redesign of the thoroughfare. The T & T Committee discussed safety improvement issues for the avenue throughout 2011. The NYCDOT set up a website (over 240 comments were received), hosted workshops and had an open house at PS 264 to discuss ideas and receive community input on any proposed changes for Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge throughout 2013. The “visioning workshops” were open to the public and held at various locations in the community. Many voices were heard throughout the process including automobile enthusiasts, bicycling advocates, the BRAKES group and Transportation Alternatives.

The NYCDOT proposal for Fourth Avenue included lane reductions between 15<sup>th</sup> Street to 65<sup>th</sup> Street in CB 7. The proposed changes for Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge always incorporated lane reductions. The DOT presented the Bay Ridge Fourth Avenue Corridor Safety Plan with proposed lane reductions for Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge to the T & T Committee on May 13, 2013. CB 10 hosted a Town Hall meeting to get more input on the NYCDOT proposal on June 5, 2013. It was held at St. Anselm’s Parish Hall and more than 200 citizens attended.

On June 10, 2013, the Traffic and Transportation Committee voted to recommend approval of the NYCDOT Bay Ridge Fourth Avenue Corridor Safety Plan although the debate and discussion produced more than the normal amount of division over certain points of the plan. The Committee did not recommend the NYCDOT proposal in its entirety.

The Committee rejected outright some of the proposed changes and voted to include proposals that were not in the plan. The Committee felt comfortable picking and choosing what parts of the overall NYCDOT proposal they felt would best serve the issue of pedestrian safety without eliminating the utility of the thoroughfare to accommodate traffic. The board should feel free to do the same. Any reduction to traffic capacity of the thoroughfare will impinge upon vehicular traffic: cars, buses, taxis, school buses and emergency vehicles. Commuters using the Verrazano Narrows Bridge and travelers on Third and Fifth Avenues will be affected by proposed lane reductions on Fourth Avenue between Ovington Avenue and 86<sup>th</sup> Street.

CB 10 was presented the T & T report at the last meeting of the year on June 17, 2013 and it engendered a healthy debate and exchange of ideas. The discussion on the DOT proposed plan for Fourth Avenue was tabled to a special extraordinary session during the summer. I believe that was the right thing to do at the time. We should proceed only when we are satisfied that the time and the proposal is right. If there was some confusion as to the actual proposal the committee voted on and its content, I apologize for any deficiency in the presentation.

At the June 17, 2013, I presented a report describing the plan section by section in order of the controversy engendered by the proposed changes to each section which was confusing. The report tonight is more straightforward. I want to reiterate that I believe the board should consider

adopting some of the proposals recommended by the Committee because some of them do enhance safety and have very little impact on the traffic capacity of the avenue. The report will be delivered in a geographical order describing the proposed changes for Fourth Avenue from 65<sup>th</sup> Street to Shore Road.

The NYCDOT identified four crash “hotspots” (2006-2010) on Fourth Avenue:

Bay Ridge Avenue (8 pedestrian injuries/37 total injuries), Ovington Avenue (7 pedestrian injuries/22 overall injuries), Bay Ridge Parkway (12 pedestrian injuries/42 total injuries) and 86<sup>th</sup> Street (24 pedestrian injuries/52 total injuries). There have been 5 pedestrian fatalities on Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge over the past eight years including a pedestrian killed on the corner of 82<sup>nd</sup> Street and Fourth Avenue. CB 10 previously recommended and the DOT installed turn restrictions for vehicles at Fourth Avenue and 86<sup>th</sup> Street to enhance pedestrian safety in 2012.

**Here is the NYCDOT Bay Ridge Fourth Avenue Corridor Safety Plan with all proposed changes and what the T & T Committee voted to recommend to the entire board.**

Looking at a map of the thoroughfare from left to right or from north to south, Fourth Avenue in Bay Ridge runs from 65<sup>th</sup> Street by the Gowanus Expressway (North) to Shore Road by the Belt Parkway Entrance ramps (South).

### **SHORE ROAD DRIVE (by the BR Towers) BETWEEN 65<sup>TH</sup> STREET AND SHORE ROAD DRIVE**

The NYCDOT proposes creating a dedicated eastbound lane coming from the Belt Parkway for cars on Shore Road Drive going over Fourth Avenue heading towards Fifth Avenue and removing the parking spots on Fourth Avenue on the eastside of Fourth Avenue so that cars making left turns from Shore Road Drive unto Fourth Avenue would have additional lane on Fourth Avenue to continue north toward Sunset Park. The parking spots would be relocated to the south side of Shore Road Parkway so there would be no loss of parking spots.

The T & T Committee voted to recommend the changes as long as the NYCDOT would install signage for the removed parking spots on the eastside of Fourth Avenue so that parking was only prohibited from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday (when the lane is needed for traffic) and if a left turn signal is installed for the left turn bay for north bound traffic on Fourth Avenue at the 65<sup>th</sup> Street Extension (under the Gowanus Expressway). The Committee felt that the parking should not be prohibited for overnight parking and the left turn signal was needed to alleviate congestion caused by the DOT’s reconfiguration of the lanes here.

Discuss/Vote

## **67<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

The NYCDOT proposes to refurbish crosswalks and stop line markings over the thoroughfare between 67<sup>th</sup> Street and Ovington Avenue. The DOT proposes to paint a stripe nine feet from the curb to narrow the travelling lanes and to designate a nine foot parking lane.

The NYCDOT also proposed some designated commercial areas with specific regulations for commercial vehicle only stopping to load or unload goods. This was added on to the original proposal and contained no specific information.

The T&T Committee voted to recommend approval of the proposed changes to the street markings over this part of the thoroughfare but rejected any proposal for commercial zone designations since the exact sites, times, or terms of such zones were not included in the proposal and could not be properly discussed. The commercial zone proposal was not part of the original NYCDOT proposal and was not discussed at the Town Hall meeting. One member asked why the DOT proposed a nine foot parking lane in this section of Fourth Avenue and a thirteen foot parking lane in the section between Ovington Avenue and 86<sup>th</sup> Street. T & T Member Liz Amato reminded the Committee of the vital importance of having clearly defined commercial zones.

## **OVINGTON AVENUE (near PS/IS 30 and LES) BETWEEN OVINGTON AVENUE AND 86<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

The NYCDOT proposes “reducing from two to one travel lanes in each direction” along this section of Fourth Avenue. In addition the NYCDOT proposes to paint a painted line 13 feet from the curb in both directions so that a parking lane is delineated and the single lane for traffic is narrowed. Painted left turn bays would be located at every intersection so that the one lane of traffic would widen to two lanes at the intersections for one or two (at most) turning vehicles. This would include a painted bay for south bound drivers making a left hand turn unto 86<sup>th</sup> Street from Fourth Avenue.

The Committee discussed this proposed change in great depth and some members discussed possible congestion, traffic redirection to other avenues and danger for pedestrians who may believe new painted medians are safe from vehicular traffic. The Committee voted 6-5 to recommend these changes to the board.

Discuss/Vote

### **BAY RIDGE PARKWAY (75<sup>th</sup> Street)**

The DOT proposes to extend the NE curb into Fourth Avenue to shorten the distance for people crossing Fourth Avenue using the northern cross walk. This would not eliminate any parking spot because the corner to be extended has a fire hydrant on it.

The Committee voted to recommend the proposed change since the intersection was a traffic “hotspot”.

Discuss/Vote

### **82<sup>ND</sup> STREET**

At 82<sup>nd</sup> Street the NYCDOT proposes adding safety enhancements at the intersection of 82<sup>nd</sup> Street and Fourth Avenue since it was the site of a recent pedestrian fatality. The DOT proposed extending the NE curb into Fourth Avenue to shorten the distance for people crossing Fourth Avenue in the northern crosswalk. It would slow cars turning right onto Fourth Avenue from 82<sup>nd</sup> Street and make pedestrians waiting to cross more visible.

The Committee voted to recommend the change since there was a recent pedestrian fatality there and voted to recommend that the SE curb should be extended across Fourth Avenue as well since it would help pedestrians in the southern crosswalk of the intersection get across Fourth Avenue more safely and it would not cost a parking spot since the corner has a fire hydrant on it. The Committee recommended that the board request bollards to be placed on the extensions for greater visibility.

Although this was not part of the original proposed plan it did fit the aim of the Fourth Avenue visioning mission statement and the proposal was very exact and specific so the Committee entertained it with the rest of the proposal.

Discuss/Vote

### **85<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

At 85<sup>th</sup> Street the NYCDOT proposes safety enhancements at the intersection:

They propose a ban for right turns on 85<sup>th</sup> Street for north bound traffic on Fourth Avenue heading to Sunset Park.

On the SE corner of the intersection (across from Sleepy’s) they propose to extend the curb into Fourth Avenue to shorten the crossing for pedestrians using the southern crosswalk at the intersection. This would also make pedestrians crossing 85<sup>th</sup> Street on the eastern side of the avenue more visible to drivers and people in the crosswalk would be protected from north bound cars on Fourth Avenue making sharp right turns onto 85<sup>th</sup> Street. This would eliminate one parking spot at that SE corner.

The DOT proposes to widen the southern crosswalk over Fourth Avenue from the SE corner across the avenue to the western side of the avenue widening like a “fan”. The cross walk on the SW corner would widen to twice the size of the cross walk at the SE corner of the intersection of 85<sup>th</sup> Street and Fourth Avenue. The wider portion of the cross walk would protect pedestrians near the unmanned 85<sup>th</sup> Street entrance to the 86<sup>th</sup> Street R line subway station. This would eliminate two parking spaces on the western side of Fourth Avenue between 85<sup>th</sup> and 86<sup>th</sup> Streets. This would help “even out” the skewed intersection and protect pedestrians who take the most direct route to or from the 85<sup>th</sup> Street subway entrance.

The Committee voted to recommend approval of the proposed changes except for the ban on right turns from Fourth Avenue unto 85<sup>th</sup> Street because possible confusion with other turning restrictions and because it would redirect traffic heading to the municipal garage on 85<sup>th</sup> Street and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Discuss/Vote

### **86<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

The NYCDOT proposes installation of a concrete pedestrian refuge island in the middle of the southern crosswalk at 86<sup>th</sup> Street and Fourth Avenue and an 80 foot long (3-4 foot high) pedestrian fence on the western side of Fourth Avenue running south from the SW corner (by MochaMocha) to the middle of the block (between 86<sup>th</sup> and 87<sup>th</sup> Streets). This would prevent dangerous jaywalking and discourage double parking or standing to shop or discharge passengers in that bus stop area.

The DOT proposes to paint the parking lane along the western side of Fourth Avenue closest to the curb between 86<sup>th</sup> Street and 87<sup>th</sup> Street with a contrasting color and paint “BUS ONLY” signage on the lane.

The NYCDOT proposes to change the S53 bus stop, with the cooperation of the MTA, and move the S53 bus first stop where passengers line up to be picked up from its present location on the western side of Fourth Avenue between 86<sup>th</sup> and 87<sup>th</sup> Street one block south to the western side of Fourth Avenue between 87<sup>th</sup> and 88<sup>th</sup> Streets. The first stop bus stop move would eliminate four parking spots on the block. The S53 last stop where bus passengers are discharged would remain on the western side of Fourth Avenue between 86<sup>th</sup> and 87<sup>th</sup> Street close to the subway entrance. The aim is to reduce bus commuter congestion.

The NYCDOT proposes to extend the curb for pedestrians crossing 86<sup>th</sup> Street on the SW corner of 86<sup>th</sup> Street and Fourth Avenue (by MochaMocha). There is a taxi stand there and one parking spot for a waiting taxi would be lost.

The T & T Committee spent a great deal of time with this proposal as well. Many members brought up good ideas about bus congestion and reconfiguration of bus stops. There were

suggestions that the NYCDOT should add right turn signals for north bound Fourth Avenue traffic turning right unto 86<sup>th</sup> Street and heading to Bensonhurst as well as a left turn signal for westbound traffic on 86<sup>th</sup> Street making a left unto Fourth Avenue from 86<sup>th</sup> Street. An exclusive cycle for this turning traffic in rush hours/peak hours would prevent pedestrian/vehicle conflict in the eastern cross walk over 86<sup>th</sup> Street. Requests were made for mid-block cross walks to replace the current ones at the intersection. None of these ideas were adopted in the NYCDOT plan.

The T & T Committee voted to recommend approval to paint the bus lane a contrasting color (11-0), to move the S53 first stop to pick up passengers one block south (7-3) [T & T members Stelter and Gounardes were concerned that the bus stop move would create danger by increasing volume of traffic crossing 87<sup>th</sup> Street] and to install the curb extension on the SW corner (6-3). The Committee rejected the fence, the pedestrian island and any painted turn bay for left turns unto 86<sup>th</sup> Street for south bound traffic on Fourth Avenue (heading toward the Belt Parkway) proposed changes. The members believed the potential problems for bus passengers being discharged and buses turning militated against the fence and the island. The painted bay was believed to be too confusing with the other signs and signals in the intersection.

Discuss/Vote

### **87<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

The NYCDOT proposes to leave unchanged the thoroughfare from 87<sup>th</sup> Street to 95<sup>th</sup> Street.

### **95<sup>TH</sup> STREET TO 101<sup>ST</sup> STREET**

The NYCDOT proposes to reduce the two lanes for traffic from 95<sup>th</sup> Street to 101<sup>st</sup> Street to one lane in both directions with a dedicated left turn bay for cars travelling south towards the Belt Parkway to turn onto 100<sup>th</sup> Street. The idea is to calm traffic by giving it less lanes to travel over.

The T & T Committee voted to recommend approval (6-4) of lane reduction for traffic calming limited to the north bound traffic heading toward Sunset Park only and that both lanes of south bound traffic are unaltered so drivers can get to the Belt Parkway entrance ramps easily. The north bound lanes would be reduced to one lane along this portion of Fourth Avenue but would widen to two lanes to accommodate a left turn bay for turning cars travelling north making a left turn onto 99<sup>th</sup> Street. The two southbound lanes would increase to three lanes to create a left turn bay for southbound traffic making a left unto 100<sup>th</sup> Street.

Discuss/Vote

## **101<sup>ST</sup> STREET TO SHORE ROAD**

The NYCDOT proposes no changes to the thoroughfare itself between 101<sup>st</sup> Street and the southern terminus of the thoroughfare at Shore Road.

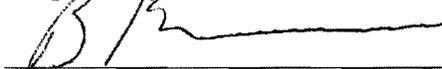
It does propose to change the intersection of Shore Road and Fourth Avenue with safety enhancements including:

A barrier on the ramp for Long Island bound drivers entering onto the Belt Parkway. This would more clearly delineate the traffic flow and better channel the traffic coming from Fourth Avenue and turning right from Shore Road onto the ramp. It should slow drivers turning right from Shore Road and drivers travelling south on Fourth Avenue heading onto the entrance ramp to the parkway for traffic heading to Long Island. The wide entrance ramp in effect would be narrowed and channeled into two lanes which would slow drivers and improve pedestrian safety. The NYCDOT proposes a curb extension on the SW corner of the intersection to shorten the crossing distance across Shore Road. This corner is the one closest to the comfort station and closest to the shore. The extension would discourage speeding to make a right turn from Shore Road onto the parkway. The DOT would repaint the crosswalks to create high visibility crosswalks in the intersection.

The T & T Committee voted to recommend approval of these proposed changes to the intersection to the board.

Discuss/Vote

Respectfully submitted,



Brian Kieran

Chairman Traffic and Transportation Committee

**STATE LIQUOR AUTHORITY – NEW APPLICATIONS & RENEWALS**

<u>Name/Address</u>	<u>Received at CB 10</u>	<u>Status</u>
J&L Asian Food Inc., d/b/a Nouvele Asian Fusion Lounge, 8716 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue	7/15/13	Renewal
Laconian Enterprises Ltd., d/b/a Elia 8611 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue	7/19/13	Renewal
Fred & Amber's Schnitzel Haus Corp., 7319 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	7/29/13	Renewal
9023 Third Avenue Corp., d/b/a Circles Grille, 9023 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue	7/30/13	Renewal
Brooklyn Little Bites Corp., d/b/a Mandato, 7218 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue	8/2/13	Renewal
6510 Food Corp., 6506-6510 11 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	8/5/13	Renewal
JMC Foods Corp., 6522 11 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	8/5/13	Renewal
7221 Someplace Else Ltd., 7221 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue	8/15/13	Renewal
Sams Bakery LLC, 9324 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue	8/16/13	500' Hearing
Bay Ridge Manor Inc., 476 76 <sup>th</sup> Street	8/21/13	Renewal
Jimmy's Place Ltd., 7118 13 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	8/21/13	Renewal
Circles Natural 6901 LLC, d/b/a Circles Café, 6901 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue	8/23/13	*New Application (Liquor, Wine & Beer)
Mo & Yeo Corp., d/b/a Kimchee Korean Cuisine, 9324 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue	8/28/13	Renewal

\* Has been invited to present application at Police & Public Safety Committee Meeting in September 2013.