



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JOHN WEIS
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

November 3, 2010

Margaret Forgione
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
New York City Department of Transportation
40 Worth Street
New York, New York 10013

Re: Dangerous Intersection

Dear Commissioner Forgione:

Manhattan Community Board 4 (Cb4) commends the Department of Transportation for its study of High Pedestrian Crash Locations – Pedestrian Safety Improvements at the Top 20 Intersections published in March 2010.

For years, we have been alarmed by how dangerous our streets are for pedestrians. Thus we are not surprised that three of the most dangerous intersections in New York City are located in our district (42nd Street and Eight and Ninth Avenues, 23rd Street and Seventh Avenue) and that two of them on 42nd Street are the most dangerous in the City.

The recommendations made for Seventh Avenue and 23rd Street are comprehensive and we are anxious to see them implemented.

However, we are dismayed to find that the recommended corrective actions for the two most dangerous intersections are far less exhaustive than most. While the report prescribes neck downs, lead pedestrian intervals (LPI), pedestrian refuges, and barring vehicular turns for many intersections, none of these proven remedies are proposed for the two most dangerous intersections in the city and within 500 ft of a school.

We ask that the two intersections on 42nd Street be prioritized for refurbishing and that the recommendations be revisited to include at a minimum:

Eighth Avenue and 42nd Street:

- A Barnes' dance seems very appropriate for this intersection, as the volume of commuters coming and going to the Port Authority Bus Terminal is at times overwhelming. The rest of the signal cycle could accommodate many more vehicle movements than today without pedestrian conflicts.
- Alternatively, combined with proposed preferred routes, there would be no need for a turn north on Eighth Avenue coming from the west (northbound traffic would have been routed to 40th Street at the tunnel exit) nor a west turn on 42nd Street coming from the south (westbound traffic would be directed to 41st Street)

- In the short term, eastbound and westbound traffic turning north onto Eighth Avenue should be controlled with lagging left turn signals simultaneously so that pedestrians can cross at the north crossing without any vehicular conflicts
- Neck downs at the northeast and northwest corners, where the sidewalk is narrow would provide much needed space for pedestrian platoons. In the interim, painted stripes and plastic bollards could be installed similar to the original treatment of Times Square
- The report mentions that high visibility markings have been completed. Due to recent construction on these blocks the markings need to be reapplied.
- Either the whole intersection or the pedestrian crossings could be elevated to become a speed table, discouraging drivers from accelerating to beat the light
- Pedestrian Signals should be equipped with Accessible Pedestrian Signals at Ninth Avenue and 42nd Street
- The proposed lagging left turn signal for westbound traffic turning south will bring much needed protection to pedestrian on the south crossing. A simultaneous exclusive phase for eastbound traffic turning south would remove all vehicular conflicts with pedestrians on the south crossing.
- The eastern crossing remains dangerous especially at night. An exclusive turn phase for south bound traffic turning east would be a great help
- High visibility markings have disappeared and the southern corner sidewalks are damaged.
- Accessible Pedestrian Signals should be installed and the pedestrian ramps need to be refurbished
- With many vehicles arriving from the Lincoln Tunnel, there are frequent occurrences of speeding and running red lights. Either the whole intersection or the pedestrian crossings could be elevated to become a speed table, discouraging drivers such dangerous behavior.

At both of these intersections, NYPD agents should be educated on how to direct traffic with the new signals and reminded that protecting pedestrians and enforcing traffic laws is of higher priority than moving the traffic.

Sincerely,



John Weis
Chair

