

October 13, 2004

Manhattan Borough Commissioner Margaret Forgione  
NYC Department of Transportation  
40 Worth Street  
New York, NY 10007

**Re: Mid-block crosswalk recently installed in front of Holy Cross Church. 333 West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street.**

Dear Borough Commissioner Forgione,

In August of 2004 a mid-block crosswalk with stoplight was installed on West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues. This followed multiple complaints from community members and Manhattan Community Board No. 4 regarding unsafe conditions for pedestrians crossing at the intersection of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street.

Unfortunately, there was no consultation with Manhattan Community Board No. 4 or property owners on the block prior to the installation. The crosswalk was installed directly in front of the Church of the Holy Cross, much to the distress of parishioners and staff of the church, who felt that it blocked access to the church for weddings, funerals, and other church occasions. While an informal City policy exists to establish "No Parking" areas in front of houses of worship out of respect for the needs of those institutions, it should also be noted that many churches throughout the City are located on corners with crosswalks and traffic signals, where their frontage is affected in a similar manner.

Since the original installation, the crosswalk's path has been adjusted to avoid landing at the church's front door, but it does still land near the eastern boundary of church property. Approximately 50 feet remain in front of the church, including the space in front of its front door, for pick-ups and drop-offs. Holy Cross contends that this space is insufficient for their operations.

Parishioners and staff of the church attended an informal discussion with some members of the Transportation Planning Committee of Manhattan Community Board No. 4 on September 22, 2004, asking for the board's support in a request to move the crosswalk. After that informal discussion, committee members inspected the site themselves. At their special meeting on October 6, 2004, the committee voted to recommend that Manhattan Community Board No. 4 express its great disappointment that the community was not consulted prior to the crosswalk being sited and installed at this location. With open discussion prior to the installation, a more suitable location might have been selected away from the church. The signals and crosswalk

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represent a significant investment in transportation safety for our neighborhood, and now, unfortunately, it has been placed in a location that does not meet the best interests of a community institution of long standing.

In addition, we request that you and your staff participate in a meeting that CB4 will arrange with Holy Cross Church and Councilmember Christine Quinn.

On October 6, 2004, the full board voted unanimously in support of the committee's recommendation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Joshua David  
Chair  
Transportation Planning Committee