

Amsterdam Avenue - A Reaffirmation and Call to Action

Whereas, Citi Bike is coming soon to the Upper West Side, resulting in an imminent and significant increase in bicycle usage on the streets of the CB7 District,

Whereas, DOT has not yet acted upon our CB7 resolution of December 3, 2013 which included the study of a protected northbound bicycle lane, as well as a variety of other safety improvements for Amsterdam Avenue for pedestrians, the mobility-challenged, and all manner of street users, and

Whereas, CB7 remains committed to protecting the safety of all street users,

Therefore, CB7 calls upon the DOT immediately to act on and implement the safety improvements called for in our December 2013 resolution, including without limitation pedestrian refuges, curb extensions, signal timing, and a protected northbound bike lane on Amsterdam Avenue and, if DOT deems a northbound bike lane not feasible on Amsterdam Avenue, then on another northbound avenue in the CB7 District together with the other safety improvements sought for Amsterdam Avenue.

Please see December 2013 Reso below.

RESOLUTION

Date: December 3, 2013

Committee of Origin: Transportation

Re: Amsterdam Avenue Safe Street

Full Board Vote: 35 In Favor 0 Against 5 Abstentions 0 Present

WHEREAS, the Upper West Side is a high-density, age-diverse, and mixed-use district with a variety of street conditions and complex vehicular/pedestrian interactions, resulting in numerous and sometimes deadly accidents, particularly on Amsterdam Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation has supplied statistics showing that Amsterdam Avenue's four traffic lanes are heavily used, largely because Amsterdam Avenue is one of the Upper West Side's designated northbound truck and bus routes.

WHEREAS, many of the intersections along this avenue present dangerous conditions for pedestrians, including the intersection of Amsterdam Avenue and West 73rd Street.

WHEREAS, a safer and more pleasant Amsterdam Avenue must efficiently accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, cars, and local and regional motor vehicles.

WHEREAS, Complete Streets can improve safety by creating a car-free path for emergency response vehicles, slowing vehicles as they approach turns, and reserving space for pedestrian islands.

WHEREAS, many of the vehicular speeding as well as pedestrian safety improvements on Amsterdam Avenue could be addressed immediately with changes in the traffic light timing, installation of pedestrian countdown timers at all corners, and quickly be followed with temporary bulb-outs at the corners to shorten pedestrian crossings, all resulting in a safer avenue.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT for quick action, Community Board 7/Manhattan requests the NYC Department of Transportation to immediately re-signal the timing of the traffic lights on Amsterdam Avenue, add pedestrian countdown timers at all intersections along Amsterdam Avenue in Manhattan Community District 7, and formulate a plan to shorten pedestrian crossing distances across Amsterdam Avenue using temporary bulb-outs along the avenue at as many corners as possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7 asks the New York City Department of Transportation to study District 7's avenues with an eye toward formulating a plan for increased safety on all avenues. Community Board 7 also asks the Department of Transportation to study and propose a possible redesign of Amsterdam Avenue, with the potential inclusion of a protected bike lane or, if not feasible, a better alternative northbound choice, such that the redesigned avenue would meet DOT standards and the CB7 community's needs for pedestrian and vehicular safety, ease of movement of people as pedestrians and as mass transit users, as well as by private vehicles, accessibility for the mobility-challenged at the curb, sufficient parking for those who depend on vehicles, and effective performance of the N.Y.P.D., the NYC Fire Department, the Department of Sanitation, and local businesses with respect to their access to and use of the street based on their direct input into the redesign process.

WHEREAS, prior measurement and observation of the use, effectiveness, safety, and accessibility of the Columbus Avenue redesign have yielded uncertainty regarding its overall success in any of those areas.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7 asks the New York City Department of Transportation to continue to measure and evaluate the usage by all vehicles, traffic impact, and overall safety of the Columbus Avenue redesign as to its overall degree of use, effectiveness, safety, accessibility for the mobility-challenged, and access for emergency vehicles.

WHEREAS, future safety for all will depend on improved successful enforcement of moving vehicle regulations for all vehicles.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan reaffirms its earlier resolution from April of 2013 asking for pedestrian safety efforts with increased enforcement of moving vehicle violations and red light cameras.