NYC TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING
held on Thursday, April 12, 2007
40 Rector Street
5th Floor
New York, New York
Public Meeting convened at 9:50 a.m:

PRESENT:

MATTHEW W. DAUS, COMMISSIONER/CHAIR
NOACH DEAR, COMMISSIONER
HARRY GIANNOULIS, COMMISSIONER
IRIS WEINSHALL, COMMISSIONER
HOWARD R. VARGAS, COMMISSIONER
EDWARD GONZALES, COMMISSIONER
LAUVIENSKA POLANCO, COMMISSIONER
CHARLES FRASER, GENERAL COUNSEL
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Good morning, everyone. Sorry for the delay, we are having difficulty getting our Commissioners here, there is some bad traffic out there. Hopefully, they will be filing in so we can get a quorum and actually vote on some items. Could everybody please be seated and let's get started.

First, I would like to wish everybody a happy Taxi Week. For those of you who haven't been aware of it, this is the hundredth anniversary of the motorized gasoline-powered taxicab. Thanks to Mayor Bloomberg who has designated April 6th through the 15th as Taxi Week, we have a lot of events going on in the city, you can see it on the screens actually. One of the nights last week, the Empire State Building was lit up in the color yellow. Unfortunately, there was some fog that night so it was hard to see it. But there has been a lot going on.

One of the biggest events that has been enticing people during Taxi Week is the Taxi '07 display, along with the Design Trust, at the Jacob Javits Center. The New York
International Auto Show has sponsored and hosted a display, an exhibit of future taxicabs that are reimagining what a cab should be like in the future, taking into consideration not just the designing in terms of where a cab fits in terms of the city space, but also certain functional aspects. New designs or proposed designs for roof lights, accessibility, some little nifty things like mirrors on the side doors so that as a passenger you can see if there is a bicycle coming towards you so you don't open the door into the bicyclist. A lot of really interesting ideas.

What is important to note is that they are just ideas at this point. The TLC hasn't endorsed any ideas, we are just kind of looking at them. The only idea that we did endorse in some way is giving the cabs a makeover, a new look. One of the people who is involved with the project helped design some proposed markings that the Commission will be considering for the industry to have on every yellow cab, a new uniform look for every yellow cab where certain passenger
information would be located uniformly in certain areas to make the cab look sleeker, more modern and to have a better communication of information to passengers whether they are on the street hailing a cab or opening a door and getting inside of it. So these are things that by all mean are just proposals.

I would like to thank a few people that have worked on it. First of all, Smart Design is the company that came up with some of the original designs that are actually now on display at the Auto Show. Also, I would like to thank George Fatita, the CEO of New York City & Company, the city's marketing office, as well as Willy Wong, who is a designer who worked very closely on tweaking the design.

I would also like to thank Deputy Mayor Doctoroff, who is very much excited about this, as well as Carol Post, who works for the Mayor's Office of Operations. They have worked very hard on the project. And last, but not least, Andy Salkin, our First Deputy Commissioner, who has been very involved with this idea and this concept from
its inception until now.

It is by no means final. What we would like to do is have the Commissioners at our next meeting take a look at it, have a presentation. And if we do ultimately adopt it in its current form or with some tweaks and modifications, there would have to be some rule making. So it could be a couple of months before it is accomplished, but it's about a new look, it is about a new design. It is about making the cabs in the next century look different and to think ahead, both policy-wise and design-wise. And I am very, very pleased way the way this has turned out.

Now, if you haven't been there, I would encourage all of our Commissioners -- some Commissioners have been there already -- to spend some time between now and Sunday, before the exhibit closes. I think it is actually free and it is open to everyone. The hours of the exhibit are Monday through Saturday, 11:00 a.m. through 10:30 p.m., and on Sunday, 10:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m. We are very, very pleased with it and we hope
that you will enjoy celebrating with some of
the events of Taxi Week.

I would also like to thank and
acknowledge that we have had some
international visitors from around the world
actually joining us in the last week and also
today. We've had visitors in the last week,
and this also coincides with the 100 year
anniversary and the Auto exhibit, from San
Francisco, Miami Dade County was here from
Florida, we had some people from Puerto Rico
the other day. We actually have, and they
should be joining us at this meeting at some
point, the Commissioner of the Chicago Taxi
and Limousine Commission, Norms Reyes. And
all these people have been visiting our
inspection facilities to see how we do
business in the city.

Walking in is Paul Gillespie, the
chairman of the San Francisco Taxi and
Limousine Commission. Welcome, perfect
timing. We are just talking about you.

We also have a Canadian delegation.

I don't know if they are here yet, but the
president of the International Association of
Transportation Regulators will be joining us today, James Bison (ph). That's a group of TLCs from around the world that trade ideas and educate one another on best practices. So they will be here shortly with the Canadian delegation, including some folks from Mississauga and Ottawa in Canada. When everybody gets here, we would like to call you all up and acknowledge you.

Actually, I think we have some spaces set aside for you if you want to come up.

The next item is the driver recognition ceremony. On March 29th at the Rooftop Gardens.

COMM. DEAR: Excuse me. Will someone please escort the guests. We have seats up front for them.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: If you could escort the regulators into the front row when they come in, so that we can acknowledge them.

Good morning, Paul. We were just at an accessibility conference the other day with FTA administrator Jim Simpson, which was very well attended. It was excellent. Certainly, San Francisco and Chicago are doing great work
in terms of accessibility, and I have to say it, but we want to follow your lead on some of the stuff you have been doing. The driver recognition ceremony went very well on March 29th. It was at Top of the Rock. And here is the ITR President. Good morning, James. Welcome. Do you have your counterparts with you?

MR. BISON: I do.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: I would like to acknowledge them. We have Elaine Buxstein (ph), the director of enforcement from the City of Mississauga. We have Dolores MacAdam (ph), manager of law and regulatory services from the City of Ottawa. And we also have Linda Anderson, the manager of enforcement and inspections of Ottawa as well.

Welcome. I hope you had a good trip and thanks for coming. We would like to engage in a dialogue with you, obviously, afterwards. Some of the Commissioner would like to meet you and I know we have a whole itinerary of events and things for you to do while you are here, so we are looking forward to spending some time with you.
We are just talking about the 100-year anniversary of the cab and the Taxi '07 Exhibit, which we encourage everybody to go to. But we also two weeks ago had a driver recognition ceremony which was very, very well attended, where we honored outstanding drivers that have gone above and beyond the call of duty at Top of the Rock at the top of Rockefeller Center. We had some Commissioners joining us there. Commissioner Gonzalez was there and a representative from the Mayor's office. We gave a proclamation and we gave some awards to some drivers.

I want to thank Tishman Speyer and all the people who contributed to the effort. It was just a fantastic event. And it's very, very important that we recognize the people that do good work in the industry and give them that incentive and that recognition.

The next item is the City Council testimony. There are copies in the back of some testimony. I was asked to testify on the TLC's budget on March 9th, and I also was asked to testify on March 26th regarding a Taxi Stand Bill, which the Administration has
opposed. If you care to read it, it is on our
website and it is also in the back of the
room.

We also had some personnel changes at
the TLC. There is somebody who is leaving us
who has been with us for I think 18 years. I
would like to ask her to stand up and be
acknowledged. Barbara Shechter.

Where are you, Barbara?

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Barbara is moving
on, much to our chagrin, to the Housing and
Preservation Development Agency, which is
another city agency. She is getting a
promotion and additional responsibilities.
She has been with us 18 years, like I said,
and is one of the few people that has actually
worked in every department in the TLC at one
point or another. Whether it is licensing,
consumer relations in various capacities.

I think two of the most important
things she has done in all of her years of
work here, which have made a profound impact
on the industry, is certainly the drug testing
program that we now have in place, which is
something that she implemented or put into
place after the 1998 reforms.

Also, she was the first -- the
drafter of the first ever taxi exam for yellow
cab drivers when we started testing taxi
drivers years ago, and has been closely
working with the schools over the years. And
much to her credit, has done good work in that
area.

We will miss you, Barbara. I am sure
we will have a more formal farewell, but this
is your last Commission meeting with us, so we
want to thank you for your service to our
agency. Good luck.

Also, we have somebody who is leaving
but not leaving, who just joined us,
Commissioner Weinshall. Tomorrow is her last
official day on the payroll for DOT as a DOT
Commissioner. She does an outstanding job.
And even though it is DOT and the city's loss
that she is going over to CUNY to be a Deputy
Chancellor, a Vice Chancellor over there, but
we over here are not going to miss her because
she is going to stay with us. So we are very
grateful that you are sticking with us, and we
certainly need you tremendously.

COMM. WEINSHALL: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: And we wish you all
the best as you go on to your next adventure.

Congratulations.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN DAUS: I have sad news. I
don't know if all of you have heard this yet,
but the producer and the writer of the sitcom
Taxi passed away yesterday at 72 years old,
Stan Daniels. Also, we found out much after
the fact, unfortunately, and some of the
Commission members may remember Eli Resnick.
I know Harry might have been on the Commission
at the time.

Eli Resnick, we all know him as the
Candy Man. We gave him several awards over
the years including a Lifetime Achievement
Award. He used to attend every single
Commission meeting with all sorts of badges
and awards and uniforms that he used to come
here. And he always used to bring hard candy
up to the Commissioners and give them candy
right before they voted. So he always put a
smile on our face. He always had some
interesting public comment. And he hadn't been at Commission meeting for a couple of years and he has been very ill.

We are just grateful that we are able to acknowledge him at one of our driver ceremonies and give him and his family the due that he deserved. He had been a driver for over 50 years. They know him as the Candy Man. He has been a driver activist, and we are certainly going to miss him. And we want to, of course, convey our condolences to his family. It is a big loss, not only for the entire industry and the Commission, but also for LOMTA, the League of Mutual Taxi Owners, where he was a member in good standing for many, many years.

A couple of other items. The next two Commission meetings are tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 10th, we are going to be considering technology rules. Hopefully, this will be the last set of technology rules that we will be proposing that will be covering some of the issues that were addressed at our last meeting that hadn't been resolved, as well as setting some firm
dates for compliance and deadlines so that we can get this project off the ground once and for all.

And the next meeting after that will be Thursday, June 14th, where we will be possibly exploring changes to our paratransit or ambulette rules. We hope to have also revisions to the Medallion auction rules for our next Medallion sale of 150 accessible taxicabs. We have also been working with the lending industry on changes to Medallion transfer and escrow procedures to streamline the process, make it easier to understand and follow, and to have uniform procedures that survive for years to come as opposed to changes in administration dictating different forms.

We would like to put all that on paper, and that is something that we are hoping to get on for a public hearing in June. Last but not least, the taxicab markings that I spoke about. We are going to try to have a presentation at the May meeting from the marketing office to talk about the design and the concept. And then, hopefully,
we will have rules proposed for a vote in June, with the Commissioners' input taken into consideration at that time.
That concludes my report to the Commission. Does anybody have any questions or comments?
(No response.)
CHAIRMAN DAUS: I will move to item 2 on the agenda, adoption of the minutes of the March 8, 2007 Commission meeting. Does anybody have any corrections, modifications, comments on the minutes?
(No response.)
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Okay, do I have a motion to adopt?
COMM. GONZALEZ: So moved.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Do I have a second?
COMM. GIANNOULIS: Second.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: All in favor?
(Chorus of "Ayes.")
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Okay, item 3 on the agenda, base licensing application review. I would like to ask Sara Meyers or Gary to join us. Gary, I understand thanks to your
hard work and efforts and your staff, you have some good news to report about where we are with license applications. We are up to sped now for the first time?

GARY: In terms of the March volume?

CHAIRMAN DAUS: No, in terms of base licensing.

GARY: Oh, yes. We actually do have people up to speed. I think this is the first month that everybody has submitted their renewal applications on time.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Congratulations.

GARY: Thank you.

Good morning. First, I would like to give a quick update on the four bases that were denied at the last Commission meeting. Two of the bases, Pack Eagle Incorporated and Mega Car Service, both submitted the requirements. Pack Eagle is actually on today's agenda to be approved, and Mega is being reviewed and Mega Car Service actually will be on May's agenda.

Bakos Trading Incorporated d/b/a Staten Island Premium Car and Limousine Service was the base that was denied as they
were operating using a cell phone. They had
closed their commercial location. While they
did submit a lease to us, a visit by USP
indicated that the base actually was not set
up to operate as a base, so the renewal
application has been denied.
   CIA Car and Limousine Service
submitted a change of ownership application.
As of the last Commission meeting, they had
not yet provided a new owner. The original
owner to whom they were hoping to sell the
base was denied by the licensing and standards
division. We have not yet received a new
owner from them. And unless the Commission
deems otherwise, we are going to consider the
change of ownership application closed and
nothing new will be allowed to be submitted
under that application.
   CHAIRMAN DAUS: Okay. So we have
some recommendations for approval?
   GARY: Correct, there are 28 bases
that were submitted today on the agenda, 26 of
which were submitted for approval, two of
which were submitted to be denied based upon
base licensing's review of their applications.
For the two that were denied, we are recommending that, as the Commission has done in the past, they allow for a 30-day extension for the bases to submit the material that they need to, at which point if have not, the applications will be closed.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Does anybody have any questions on the agenda items for the base license review?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Could I have a motion to adopt the staff's recommendations.

COMM. DEAR: I will make a motion.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Second?

COMM. GIANNOLIS: Second.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: All in favor?

(Chorus of "Ayes.")

CHAIRMAN DAUS: For purposes of clarity, agenda item 3, all of those bases noted that are recommended for approval are hereby approved. The two bases that have been recommended for denial are denied, including Montague and New York King Transportation.

I believe that that motion ordinarily entails, just for clarity purposes, that if
they do get their paperwork in within the next 30 days, that we can resuscitate their application?

GARY: That is correct.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: And everybody is okay with that? We have been consistently doing that.

COMM. DEAR: Just on the base stations, I note that quite a few issues have come up before the Commission and we have been talking about them. One of the things that someone had mentioned to me, which I think is a great idea, we are concerned about street hails, and only if we catch them, that's one way we know they are doing street hails. And then, of course, they deny they are working for their base. And we know all that is nonsense.

So one of the things that we can do when we get up to speed with checking our bases, now I know we are going to visit each one, but if we could get to expand a little bit on it, if we could check their logs to check if they are -- if the drivers are averaging ten trips a day, you know that they
are not doing street hails. But if they are not, then you know something is going on, that base is condoning street hails. And I think we should start focusing on. This has been the Commission's big issue about street hails. And a lot of times enforcement, sometimes you have to get to the root of the problem in trying to resolve problem, trying to see how we can go beyond just enforcement. Checking the logs and telling the bases that we are watching you.

That's important, and if we can start doing that, I think that that will be a great idea that will put a dent in street hails.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Yes. Pansy is here, our Deputy Commissioner of Enforcement. I think it is a great idea. Much to her credit, since she has been working with us, she has actually visited every base throughout their licensing term, and it has really never been done before. Resources have been deployed in a way that not only are they issuing appropriate violations and keeping the bases on their toes in this industry that is badly in need of reform. But also in large
part, I think credit is due to them for
getting them as well to comply with licensing.
   It is my understanding that they
would actually visit bases before their
licenses were up and prod them and tell them,
"Please put your license applications in on
time." So it is a combination of that, and I
think of the Commission really being
aggressive and looking at these applications
in an appropriate way, case-by-case review,
that has led to them getting where we are
today. And now it's time to go to the next
level.
   So I would agree with you,
Commissioner Dear, and that's something we
will look into. We can very well tell by
looking at their dispatch logs what is going
on.
   And before you go, Gary, I think, as
usual, there are several bases that cry out
for a business plan that have one or more
convictions for dispatching unlicensed cars.
And I just want to read them for the record so
that you can follow up.
   That's Acapulco, AMM Management,

Any questions?
(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Commissioner Polanco has now joined us. Good morning.

GARY: Before I leave, I would like to introduce Ms. Georgia Steel Radway (ph), who is the up here with me today.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Good morning and welcome aboard. You certainly have your work cut out for you with this business.

Item 4 on the agenda is the pilot programs. Is the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities here?

Matt is here, okay. Because Matt has a tight schedule and he has been able to come here and join us for some issues pertaining to his office, I would like to go out of order on the agenda and move item 5 up and do that before the pilot programs.

I would now like to invite Jen
Palmer up to give us a staff presentation on hearing enhancement technology. And Matt Sapolin, the Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities is here with his staff. Good morning, Matt.

Also I want to acknowledge and thank Janice Shachter who is here, who has also submitted comments to the Commission. It is not a public hearing, but we will certainly continue to work with you. And it is much because of you that we are here today talking about this issue of hearing enhancement technology.

And I believe Lieutenant Governor Paterson's office is represented here today. The State Division on Human Rights and Borough President Stringer's office and some others. So welcome and we thank you for you interest in this issue.

Good morning, Jen.

MS. PALMER: Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Jennifer Palmer and I am here today to speak to you about TLC vehicles, specifically improving service by enhancing audio communication.
Over the past several months, staff has been approached by passengers who are interested in seeing different technologies in taxicabs. Specifically we have been approached by individuals who have ideas surrounding how technology might be implemented to assist the hard of hearing. As we have had these discussions, staff has realized that we know very little about such evolving technology and that without a better understanding, it is difficult, if not impossible, for us to respond.

In order to do so, staff is recommending that we take the time to learn more about these methods and technologies in terms of their benefits, functionality and their cost. The approach that we are recommending and the feedback that we are interested in receiving today surrounds issuing an RFI so that we may better evaluate these technologies.

To give the Commission an idea of the technology that we are interested in exploring through the RFI process, I wanted to highlight one specific technology that has been brought
to our attention, that of looping technology.
Looping technology is essentially a way of transmitting sound through a wire loop to a receiver. Simplified, there is a microphone. Attached to the microphone is a loop and a receiver. Together the loop and the receiver amplify an audio signal and transmit it to a source. And the source would be a hearing aid that is equipped with T-coil technology.

Currently there are several places that are using this technology such as ticket sales counters, public announcements at airports, drivethroughs, elevators, museums, trains and buses. We believe the RFI will give us more information on the exact technology as well as others that might serve the same purpose.

Now I quickly wanted to highlight for you some of the components of the RFI that we are proposing:

Technological solutions: In the previous slide I highlighted looping technology, but staff is interested in learning about all possible solutions.

Infrastructure and integration: We
are looking to learn how this technology works, how it can be integrated into our vehicles and how it interfaces with the current technology that we have.

Monitoring and benchmarking as well as cost: We would like to get a better understanding of the costs associated with installation, user fees and any recurring maintenance that might be associated with the technology.

Now, briefly I want to turn to the RFI process. Staff would issue the RFI and designate a staff member to collect responses. We would have an evaluation and review process, at the conclusion of which staff would update the Commission as to our findings.

That concludes the information that I have today for you regarding hearing loop technology and enhancing audio communication in taxicabs. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Any questions?

COMM. WEINSHALL: How long do you think the RFI will take?
MS. PALMER: We started a draft of it right now. I assume it would be out for about a month in time period, but we haven't discussed it.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Any other questions?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Well, certainly this is something that we need to educate ourselves on more. The RFI is a great way to do that, and if this is something that the Commission believes is appropriate to do, we need to make sure that the people that actually manufacture and install these systems have the opportunity fairly to compete to be able to bring their products and their information to us. So I think it's important that we move on this and that we get a tight time frame and we try to get information as soon as we can.

This is an important issue that has been brought to our attention recently and we are taking it seriously. And we certainly thank Ms. Shachter, who has been an advocate for this issue and has really been knocking on doors to get everyone to learn more about it. We are encouraged by your fortitude in this
area, and the Mayor's Office and the TLC are
going to work together on looking at the best
possible solutions. So thank you very much.

Staff, please, prepare the RFI. I
will review it and then we will put it out.
Thank you. And thanks, Commissioner Sapolin,
for joining us with your counsel, Jason.

I will now go back to what was item 4
and now is item 5 on the agenda, the pilot
program proposals. It has now become item
5(a). First is Autovan. This is a proposal
regarding a Toyota Sienna accessible minivan.
I would like to call Assistant Commissioner
Peter Schenkman and a representative from
Autovan up to the podium to make the
presentation.

This is a pilot program that I
forwarded to the Commission under our rules
for consideration.

MR. SCHENKMAN: Good morning,
Commissioners, distinguished guests. Today is
a really exciting day for the staff at the
TLC. As part of our ongoing efforts to
improve taxi accessibility and mobility for
all, staff has traveled around the country and
met with mobility vehicle and device manufacturers as well as advocacy and regulatory groups to find not one, but two very exciting mobility products. The first is a company called Autovan. Autovan is the latest wheelchair accessible vehicle manufacturer to approach the Safety and Emissions Division for approval for their vehicles. When completed and eventually approved, this accessible vehicle will give current and future Medallion owners three accessible vehicle choices: A Chevrolet Uplander, a Dodge Caravan or this Toyota Sienna. The Autovan modified Sienna provides a level of accessibility unparalleled to the current wheelchair accessible taxis on the road as their unique construction will allow for even the biggest wheelchairs and scooters to ride comfortably and safely in a New York City taxi and to, hopefully, be able to experience what has been called the quintessential New York act of hailing a Medallion taxi. I believe the Autovan modified Toyota
Sienna, which itself is already a proven taxi vehicle, will complement the fleet of wheelchair accessible vehicles very well. I am pleased to recommend this pilot and I turn it over to Jim Mayfield of Autovan.

MR. MAYFIELD: Thank you, Peter.

My name is Jim Mayfield, I am the vice president of Autovan. With me also today is the President/CEO Jim Bishop.

Chairman and Commissioners, esteemed guests, thank you very much for the time today. Just briefly, it will only take a minute to go over it, we are pleased to present a very accessible Toyota Sienna minivan.

A brief overview, we are a Michigan-based company, we provide nationwide service and delivery. We are the first successful minivan that is going to provide an electrical wiring package. This we are very excited about. It is going to be able to allow the fleet owners easy access to be able to add on their meters, lights, and also our wiring package will support the new technology enhancement program that you are also looking
Autovan has an exclusive lower floor cot van in the nation. This is a design that is done on one of our Dodge models, it allows transportation in a non-emergent medical environment for people that are needing to be transported by a stretcher or a gurney. This eleviates the need to run a full-size ambulance and it is also supported by Medicare and Medical.

Autovan employees combine an experience average of over 75 years in the mobility industry. This is something we are very proud of, from top to bottom our employees have the passion for the people and for this industry. We currently have over hundreds of vans on the road today.

The pilot vehicles are rear entry accessibility. It has a flexible design which accommodates wheelchairs and scooters. We have a comfortable OAM seating package. This design allows us to be able to use the OAM seating that is available with the vehicle unmodified. This is kind of a first in some of the adaptations of vehicles currently on
the market today.

We will have a user-friendly wheelchair securement system. I will talk a little bit more about that in a minute. We have an effortless ramp deployment system, a little different than what is currently on the road today, and accessible modifications are literally maintenance free.

This slide is just a quick graphic for review. It shows the accessibility area on the vehicle. The top picture shows a side view of the vehicle, which clearly states it has easy accessibility for street ambulatory passengers, i.e., being able to get in and out of the vehicle on either side of the vehicle and the vehicle is ADA compliant.

We maintain the factory mid-row seating, which I stated. This is a big plus. The mid-row passenger side and driver side, easy ambulatory entry. Based on the streets of New York, under my studies and the several visits we have been here, you never know what side of the street you are going to get out of taxi on. With this, compared to the other vehicles, there is nothing that you have to
step over, climb over, put up, stow or put away to be able to go in and out of that vehicle. There is unparalleled accessibility and feasibility for the citizens of New York. What that means is that this vehicle has both the accessibility for wheelchair passengers and to be used as a standard hail taxi. This taxi does not have to sit, wait or look for, it can be used all the time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our conversions meet both the NMEDA and MITZA guidelines.

The next slide shows the accessibility from the rear of the vehicle again. It is going to have an exclusive, easy to use and more reliable wheelchair restrain system. Common in our industry is that wheelchair passengers need to be secured in a safe manner. The rear accessibility ensures that the client or the customer is going to be riding in the most safest position in the vehicle, which is facing forward, and will be properly secured.

With the easy to use restraint system, it makes it more driver friendly and makes it so that he will be more comfortable
in using those tie-downs and will use them.

Benefits of the program: We are looking for renewed compliance of the Wheelchair Accessibility Guidelines. The pilot program will demonstrate the ability of the fully accessible modified vehicle. It will be used in the standardized Toyota Sienna, which is good because the Toyota Sienna is already on the road today and it is doing well as a standard taxi. The liability of both the Sienna and our conversion as a combination will be a benefit.

And obviously the features and accessibility, which I have already touched on, meaning that the vehicle has an overall usage on a day-to-day basis.

Success of the pilot program. There is going to be a lot of people that will be involved with that. We are going to be looking to the fleet owners and drivers for recommendations, mileage and extended use capacities, driver feedback, and, obviously, their comments and inputs on the restraint system.

Last but not least, the TLC safety
emissions recommendations and approvals. We will be using -- what's here is just a sample of the opinion surveys. We like to use those. We are going to have these available in the vehicles. We will work with staff to come up with the proper checkpoints that makes it easy and flexible so that the passengers and the drivers will use those. We will ask that those be turned in at the end of their trips.

Last but not least, we would like to see two pilot vehicles approved for the evaluation. We have selected a large fleet owner selected for the pilot program based on his familiarity and using of the accessible vehicles currently on the road today. We would to see a six to 12-month evaluation period, giving us enough time to study the vehicles in use here in New York. Obviously, we are going to be striving for a very open communication with all parties involved. I feel that's probably the best way to make sure that we are getting the right vehicle available to be used and that has been designed and engineered specifically for the City of New York.
You guys are tough on vehicles here.

We know that. We have taken the input of a lot of people. It has been a long six-month project and we are happy to say that our engineers have listened to all parties involved.

That pretty much the wrap up.

Again, I want to thank the Commission for the time and review of this proposal. I am available for any questions if there is any.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Thank you. Any questions?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Peter, our rules require that we go over some criteria setting forth the parameters of the pilot program. Since you are recommending approval, can we go quickly through those factors for the record, on the advice of counsel?

MR. SCHENKMAN: Sure. As Mr. Mayfield stated, we envision a duration of six to 12 months, and we would set a deadline for the final report by the end of the 13th month. I am recommending a minimum of one, maximum of two vehicles at this point. And as part of
the pilot proposal, an RFI would be published inviting any other manufacturers of similar vehicles to participate. My staff would then evaluate these additional vehicles based on the safety and type of modifications on the vehicles. We would do monthly inspections of the vehicles to insure that they are holding up well. And staff would also review any surveys that were collected. And that would be done by Safety and Emissions.

The next process is a Memorandum of Understanding between Autovan and the Taxi and Limousine Commission. And the criteria would be ease of accessibility, reliability of the vehicle, and continued safety and emissions passing of our inspections. And any comments that were taken by passengers or staff or fleet owners would be taken into account also.

MR. FRASER: Commissioner Schenkman, there was just one point that you missed which we have to cover in the resolution. You mentioned one to two vehicles per participant. Are you recommending a minimum and a maximum number of participants?
MR. SCHENKMAN: No. It is my understanding that there are no other manufacturers of the Toyota Sienna modified minivan. If there should be, it would be limited to two vehicles per participant.

MR. FRASER: So you are not recommending a maximum number of participants?

MR. SCHENKMAN: Correct.

MR. FRASER: Okay.

COMM. WEINSHALL: So if other vehicles -- I guess my question is: Are we going to treat this like we treated the hybrid program where we would test a number of vehicles?

MR. SCHENKMAN: We have. We have been approached by at least six different companies, and Autovan has showed the most dedication and the most unique modification of not touching the frame rails and setting the bucket right in between.

Having traveled to national conventions of mobility equipment, we have not found a vehicle similar. But should a vehicle appear, we would absolutely include it. In this case, it would be a rear entry accessible
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Commissioner Gonzalez?

COMM. GONZALES: Peter, relative to the Freestar, as far as when we went out to Woodside and you showed us the retrofitting of the ramp, how does this design compare to that?

MR. SCHENKMAN: It is a completely different design and a completely different vehicle. The Freestar was not the most reliable vehicle out of the factory. The Toyota Sienna, with over a thousand of them on the road as New York City taxis, some with almost 300,000 miles, has proven itself as a great base platform.

And I have worked with Autovan for the better part of a year, giving them my staff and myself's recommendations on how to improve that vehicle. And they have listened and responded 100 percent, so we are comfortable. And they have provided us with federal motor vehicle safety standards certification which is registered with the National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration, which was a key component of our requirements.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Any other comments?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Do we have a motion to adopt?

COMM. WEINSHALL: So moved.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Do we have a second?

COMM. POLANCO: Second.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: All in favor?

(Chorus of "Ayes.")

CHAIRMAN DAUS: It's unanimous.

Thank you, Peter. If you could just stay there because you are also item 5(b), Bruno's proposal to have a Turning Automotive Seat and Joey Lift installed as part of a pilot program.

MR. SCHENKMAN: Good morning again.

The second of the two exciting mobility products that our staff has found is a turning seat which is manufactured by Bruno Mobility. This device is already a proven success around the world and will show once again that New York City is a proven leader in innovation and in the quest for increased taxi
mobility and accessibility in the United States.

The Bruno seat will provide a level of mobility previously unavailable to upwards of 60 percent of those less able New Yorkers and visitors who are able to transfer from their wheelchairs or scooters, are getting up there in age, or just need a little help navigating getting in and out of taxis, which sometimes can be a challenge for even the most able-bodied passengers.

I am happy to recommend this pilot and now would like to turn the podium over to the folks from Bruno, who are also going to talk about their Joey Lift, which allows the driver to effortlessly load the wheelchair or mobility device into the back of the vehicle.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Thank you. Good morning.

MR. BRUNO: Good morning. I am Mike Bruno, President and CEO of Bruno Independent Living Aids. I want to thank the Commission for their time to hear our proposal.

Bruno Independent Living Aids has basically been in business for over 20 years.
We have been supporting those with disabilities. Our four main product categories are: Vehicles lifts, we help people store their mobility device in their vehicles; turning automotive seating, which we call TAS, helps people get in and out of vehicles; we also sell stair lifts and vertical platform lifts. We have been in business, again, for over 20 years.

We created the market in vehicle lifts and turning automotive seating in North America. We are leaders here and in Europe. The largest manufacturer of stair lifts in North America, and we have the fastest growing vertical platform lift in the industry. Our mission is to be a leading provider of independent solutions. We have over 400 employees in both North America and Europe.

Last year we were awarded a five-year Veterans Administration contract for supplying them with vehicle lifts that is valued at over $80 million. And over the past two years we have won four Wisconsin Governor's New Product Awards, including the Joey Interior Platform Lift.
We are affiliated with all of the major associations, both within our industry, the adaptive vehicle, and within the taxi and commuter transportation. We also have alliances with all the major vehicle manufacturers, including Ford, GM, Chrysler, Toyota and Kia. Our proposal is to provide a turning automotive seat and Joey interior platform lift in a Toyota Sienna taxi. So what is that? One, it is a Toyota Sienna taxi that you see on the roads today in New York City, and including our turning automotive seat, with the push of a button, the seat actually rotates, extends out of the vehicle and comes down to the appropriate level for a person to transfer in. It's very easy to operate with one button. This requires no structural modification to the vehicle, no drilling. It just bolts in and it is integrated into the vehicle's electrical system. Then the Joey Interior Platform Lift, again, this product is in a platform that sits in the back of the vehicle. It does not obstruct any of the cargo area. With the push
of a button, it extends a platform out of the vehicle and down to the ground. This requires no drilling to the vehicle, no structural modifications. It is just bolted in and tied into the electrical system of the vehicle. When it's on the grounds, the mobility device is driven onto the platform and then taken back into the vehicle for storage.

Why is this a good solution?
Well it serves passengers with disabilities, the less abled, and it does not inhibit the use of the taxi for any other passengers. 54 million Americans have disabilities, 8 million of those use assisted mobility devices. 84 percent of those people with mobility devices can transfer. And so, we are really serving a large part of the population.

Additionally, by the year 2020 a third of the U. Population will be age 65 or older. This is a safe solution. We meet all federal motor vehicle safety standards. These products have been around for over ten years. They have a record of both safety and reliable service and the safest place be in a vehicle.
is sitting in your seat with your seatbelt on.

There is no structural modification
to the vehicle. The taxi retains all of its
normal functions. It is compatible with the
existing fleet of Siennas that are on the road
today. It is cost effective and currently
available. We are shipping these products
every day.

And, also, the turning automotive
seating does work with other taxis that are on
the road today, including the hybrids that are on
the road. We have had success stories, as
Peter said, in other parts of the world. In
London, London Transport, 60 percent of their
fleet is equipped with our Turning Automotive
Seating Systems. To quote from one of the
riders, "This vehicle is now intimate instead
of intimidating." Even the Mayor of London
has recognized the value that this brings to
the constituents of London.

Also in Paris, Taxi G Summit is a
dominant player in the taxi in Paris.
Currently they have a ten percent goal for
accessible taxis, and we have 50 units in
phase one of installation in their fleet.
In Sweden, they have a goal, again, of creating accessible taxis. We have taxis in service with our products and we will have over 150 units in by the end of next year. Finally, in Seoul, South Korea, we have 100 units currently installed, and the goal is to have 500 by the end of next year. So we have a lot of experience dealing with taxis throughout the world.

Where is the value?

Well, the value for the passengers, it works for many with disabilities and the less able. It also works for the able-bodied passenger. It is cost-effective, flexible transportation and it removes transportation barriers and provides equal access. For the licensee, it broadens their customer base including people that normally wouldn't feel comfortable hailing a taxi or calling a taxi. It's easy to use. It installs in existing vehicles. It is cost effective. Requires no vehicle modifications. And, again, it doesn't affect the function of the taxi.

For the city, it certainly answers the constituent concerns about accessible
taxis. It is readily available. These products can be reinstalled. It is a sustainable solution, and, again, it will make New York City a leader in innovation. And so, our pilot program, again, is to equip three vehicles with a Turning Automotive Seat and a Joey Lift, a six-month duration, and we will follow-up with evaluation throughout the process with the ridership and with the drivers and licensees to make sure it's a successful program. Again, I just want to emphasize that Bruno is recognized as a leader in our industry. Here in New York City we are recognized on the Today Show. Also we teamed up with Toyota on the Dr. Phil Show. And again, I want to invite you down to the Taxi '07 display. We are a sponsor and we have our products in action down there and you can see them down there. If you have any questions, I would be great to answer them.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Any questions?

COMM. WEINSHALL: What's the cost per unit to install these?
MR. BRUNO: The package with the lift and the seat would be under $10,000.

COMM. GIANNOULIS: I have some questions for Peter I guess.

Peter, how many vehicles are there on the street now that provide access to people with disabilities?

MR. SCHENKMAN: 54.

COMM. GIANNOULIS: And there are a certain amount of Medallions out there?

MR. SCHENKMAN: We have 27 that have yet to close, that should be closed by the end of April, beginning of May. And then we have a potential auction of 150 accessible vehicles later in the year.

COMM. GIANNOULIS: And currently, what are the kind of mechanics behind the current -- How different are these from the current?

MR. SCHENKMAN: This is not a full wheelchair accessible vehicle. This is for the 60 to 80 percent that can transfer from a wheelchair.

The vehicles that are on the road for the purpose of the Medallion sale are chopped,
lower floor vehicles, with quite a lot of
after modifications done. They are completely
different vehicles. You could literally go in
and buy an Escape Hybrid or a Toyota Sienna
today and have one of these seats installed.
And it's my understanding that the
participating manufacturers provide $1,000
rebate on the cost of these seats.
COMM. GIANNOULIS: So what you are
saying is that the requirement that we have
for the Medallions are specifically designed
for handicapped vehicles. These technologies
will not satisfy that requirement?
MR. SCHENKMAN: Will not. This is an
added level of mobility.
COMM. GIANNOULIS: So who would
purchase this, in theory?
MR. SCHENKMAN: In theory, should
the pilot be successful both from a passenger
and a driver standpoint, the vision is that
there could 500 to 1,000 minivans out there
that could provide a level of mobility for
someone who may have just broken their leg, is
just elderly and has arthritis on a rainy day.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Are we here also
today because there is a fleet owner who is willing to install this?

MR. SCHENKMAN: There is an agent, and we believe that in addition to putting it into a fleet or an agent service, a driver-owned vehicle, a vehicle owner would take more ownership of this and show it off and it much more frequently, than, say, a fleet driver who may not be familiar.

COMM. GIANNOLIS: That's good. You did a good job, Peter. We should do more of this kind of stuff.

MR. SCHENKMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: If there are no questions -- I'm sorry, Commissioner Gonzalez?

COMM. GONZALEZ: I just have a quick question. With these modifications, does that have any impact on the vehicle warranty?

MR. SCHENKMAN: None at all. They are all factory supported. There are currently four bolts or nuts that hold any seat in a car down. Undo those four, this snaps in. No modifications.

COMM. GONZALEZ: Also on the TAS, is there a maximum weight?
MR. BRUNO: 330 pounds for the seat and 350 pounds for the Joey Lift.

MR. SCHENKMAN: One of the neat things about the Joey Lift, should that also be implemented, is at an airport, some people I have seen get off the plane with trunks. You can slide the trunk right on and Joey Lift it right up and the driver doesn't have to fight with heavy luggage.

COMM. GONZALEZ: Thank you.

MR. SCHENKMAN: As far as the pilot specifics, we envision, again, a six to twelve-month pilot program with a DOV and possibly two fleet vehicles. The deadline for the final report would be the end of the 13th month. There are a few other manufacturers of these type of seats out there, so I would say we would probably not set a maximum number of participants, but limit, depending on the number of participants, to three vehicles. And, again, the RFI process would take place with a public notice, and the selection process in this case would be based on federal motor vehicle safety standards, because there are specific standards for seats
in vehicles in this country. The safety
evaluation, we will leave that up to the
federal government, provided they don't rip
out. But these seats have been crash tested.

Again, the Memorandum of
Understanding would be entered between Bruno
and the Taxi and Limousine Commission, and our
criteria for evaluation would be ease of use
for both passengers, driver, and the number of
times that the unit is deployed. And that
would be part of the reporting requirements
and we would also envision a survey in the
back of these vehicles also.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Does anybody want to
make a motion?

COMM. GIANNOLIS: So moved.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: A second?

COMM. GONZALES: Second.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: All in favor?

(Chorus of "Ayes.")

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Passes. Thank you
very much, Peter, and Bruno and Autovan. We
look forward to working with you.

COMM. GIANNOLIS: Can I can ask a
question?
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Sure.
COMM. GIANNOULIS: Can we go back to the looping technology?
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Sure.
COMM. GIANNOULIS: Did we do anything here? What happened exactly?
CHAIRMAN DAUS: We are going to issue a Request For Information, which is a document that will be put out to the world basically asking them to give us information about the technology so we can, number one, learn more about it. And, number two, see who is interested in possible doing this.
COMM. GIANNOULIS: See who is interested in doing a pilot program?
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Yes.
COMM. GIANNOULIS: So it's a modified pilot program. My question is, I am just trying to --
CHAIRMAN DAUS: It could lead to a pilot program or other action.
MR. SCHENKMAN: The key is, Commissioner, that no formal pilot program was issued so we can't necessarily do a pilot program. What we want to do it learn more
about it, come back to the Commission. We anticipate there being some next steps. We don't know exactly what they might be, and, hopefully, testing some equipment as a pilot. If that's the case, we will follow the process that we just did for Autovan and Bruno. So we are kind of one step before.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Ordinarily the best way to go about this is to have somebody who is interested bring a pilot program proposal. But we haven't had someone who has actually filed it with us, but it is an important enough issue and we have seen enough interest out there that we want to take our own initiative.

Ms. Shachter is there.

MS. SHACHTER: That's not absolutely accurate on the pilot program issue. May I speak? I actually have testimony here.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: I know. We have handed it out to the Commissioners.

MS. SHACHTER: I understand. On the pilot program, I was working with Alan Fromberg. If you flip to the back of this, Alan Fromberg asked me for 40 free induction
loops back in July, which I was little
surprised I was being asked as a private
citizen. I am now the executive director of
the Deafness Research Foundation. At the time
I am the Chair of the Hearing Access Program,
and I am also the mother of a 12 year old
daughter with hearing loss.
So he asked me for 40 free system. I
obtained for him 12 free systems. If you
follow the e-mail thread, you will see that it
was supposed to be piloted on October 31st. I
was concerned that he elected not to pilot it
and was going to present it to the vendors. I
said I don't think they are going to
understand it, I think we should install it.
He actually has two induction loops
in his office. And I said, they are going to
think it is like voodoo, they are not going to
get it and understand how this induction loop
works, how a driver can speak and someone can
hear it in their hearing aid.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: I think you are
talking about Ira Goldstein, not Alan
Fromberg.
MS. SHACHTER: Yes, I am sorry.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: He is actually away on vacation so he is not here today.

MS. SHACHTER: I have his e-mails right here. And he said, don't worry, we understand it. He then decided he wasn't going to do it. So we thought we were in the middle of a pilot program.

COMM. GIANNIOLIS: You may not understand the process. Both Ira and Alan are great Americans, but they don't have the ability to authorize a pilot program. We do. Just so you understand.

MS. SHACHTER: I have since learned that and did not know that. But I have the e-mails here.

COMM. GIANNIOLIS: Honestly, from reading the e-mails, I think they were very helpful to you. And the fact that we are even discussing this today, obviously meant that somebody was interested enough to put this forward.

MS. SHACHTER: Yes, the Mayor.

COMM. GIANNIOLIS: I don't care if it is the Mayor or whoever it is.

MS. SHACHTER: Well, it's
frustrating to me because I thought for the last six months we were implementing a pilot program and then found out no, now we are back to square one.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Ms. Shachter, we are really not back to square one. Whatever confusion, I think now is cleared up. We are going to move forward on our own initiative, without any member of the public, with a very short, abbreviated time frame to get an RFI out there, working very closely with the industries and technology people.

We are taking action to get information to make decisions. You are able to, tomorrow, submit, in accordance with the pilot program rules, like you saw the other participants from Bruno and Autovan did, we will be happy to give you a copy of it, sit down with you and explain it to you. It's your call if you or others are interested in doing that. We will consider it at the next meeting if you can get it to us.

MS. SHACHTER: I can turn it around in 24 hours.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Great. We will clear
up some of the confusion. We will give you
the documents that you need and we thank you
for joining us, but in the interest of time
and procedure, this is not a public hearing.
This was just a staff presentation.
    MS. SHACHTER: That's fine, I was
just clarifying.
    CHAIRMAN DAUS: We thank you for
your information. The Commissioners are going
to read it and will be in touch with you.
Thank you.
    Okay, what is now item 5(c), it was
item 4(c) Cavallaro Media Services, it is a
Livery Phone System pilot program proposal.
And I believe Jen Palmer from our staff has a
recommendation on that one.
    MS. PALMER: Good morning again.
    Today I am going to be talking with
you about another pilot program proposal that
you have before you. You should have a copy
in front of you of the proposal from Cavallaro
Media Systems. I am quickly going to
highlight the components of the proposal, the
staff's review and recommendation.
    The proposal outline is the creation
of a central telephone number for passengers
of livery vehicles to call for a ride. Bases
would be mandated to sign up, pay an
affiliation fee to the owner of the central
number and then be placed in a
borough-specific call queue. Passengers
looking for a ride, call the central number --
COMM. GIANNOU LIS: Hold on a second.
I actually don't have a copy of that, so it's
a little hard for me to follow along.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: We had sent it to
you previously.
COMM. GIANNOU LIS: It would be
helpful if someone could make a copy.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: We will get it for
you right away. This was sent in hard copy to
the Commissioner and e-mailed prior to the
meeting.
COMM. GIANNOU LIS: Noach speed reads
so he gave me his.
MS. PALMER: Would you like me to
hold on while we make copies?
CHAIRMAN DAUS: You can go forward.
MS. PALMER: Passengers looking to
arrange a ride would call the central number,
select the borough that they are located in, and they are connected with a base that is next in queue for their specific borough. While waiting to be connected to the base, the passengers might here a public service announcement, 311 information, et cetera.

In the system, the centralized number would not dispatch the ride, but, rather, rides would still be dispatched by the local base station. After the passenger has arranged the ride, they have the ability to disconnect the call or do audio shopping where the passenger would hear selected advertisements and be able to receive text messages, discounts, et cetera.

Upon receiving this proposal, staff reviewed it, spoke with Mr. Cavallaro and had numerous internal discussions regarding the merits of the proposal, cost, and the potential benefits. Through these discussions, it became clear that Mr. Cavallaro can, and actually is already working with some base stations to establish a system. Additionally, there are no rules that preclude him from pursuing this with bases who are
interested in doing this voluntarily.

Based on that information, staff is recommending that the Commission deny the pilot program proposal that is submitted by Cavallaro Media Systems. If you have any questions, I am happy to answer them.

COMM. GIANNOULIS: You are recommending that we deny it because he can do it anyway?

MS. PALMER: Yes, there are no rules that preclude him.

COMM. GIANNOULIS: Okay, I thought that was strange myself.

COMM. DEAR: Why did he come here for?

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Our procedures that we passed require that, instead of me denying this on my own so I don't waste anyone's time, that you wanted and insisted when we passed these rules to hear these things.

COMM. DEAR: But when it was submitted to the agency, why did you not say you can do it on your own.

MR. SALKIN: I think, ultimately,

Commissioner, he was looking for a mandate
that all vehicles do this. We think it's
possible now that he can do it on his own. If
to do it, we will see it happen.
COMM. GIANNOURIS: I don't think the
Chair is supposed to be rejecting pilot
programs.
   CHAIRMAN DAUS: That's right. That's
what you had requested.
COMM. GIANNOURIS: We wish Mr.
Cavallaro well in his endeavor, but we reject
it.
   COMM. DEAR: Before we reject it, you
are a great American, but...
   CHAIRMAN DAUS: I would hope you
would say the same thing about the Design
Trust report.
   COMM. DEAR: We are all a great
Americans.
   CHAIRMAN DAUS: Everyone is a great
American in this room, but I certainly
appreciate Mr. Cavallaro's -- we have
Canadians here, by the way, so they are also
great Americans, great North Americans.
   It's an interesting idea, I just
don't think it is the right time for us to even consider passing a rule mandating that some person that comes out of the woods by himself, automatically all bases have to have their number routed through them. It just seems over the top and a little bit anticompetitive in some respects. But it's a free market, if they can find 10 or 20 bases and do it on their own and prove that it is something worthwhile, then maybe they can come back.

The only reason I brought it here is because our procedures require me to share it with you and give you the benefit of the doubt. With that in mind, I would like to make a motion to reject that pilot.

Do we have a second?

COMM. GIANNOULIS: Second.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: All in favor?

(Chorus of "Ayes.")

CHAIRMAN DAUS: So rejected. Thank you, Jen, Mr. Cavallaro.

Now we proceed to item 6(a) on the agenda, proposed rules for public hearing and Commission action, proposed possible
Commission action. Item 6(a) is changes to our petition and in-vehicle camera specifications. I would like to turn it over to our general counsel Chuck Fraser who is going to describe and summarize the rules and talk about some potential changes staff is recommending to them.

MR. FRASER: This proposed rule would enhance the requirements for security equipment in taxicabs and liveries. Existing rules require that each taxicab and livery be equipped either with a partition or some other approved security device. The only other device that has ever been approved is an in-vehicle camera system. Therefore, this proposed rule would explicitly provide that for a vehicle not required to have a partition, the acceptable alternative to a partition is an in-vehicle camera system.

The proposed rule also updates the specifications for partitions in several respects. For instance, the proposed rules would require that a partition be constructed with a mar-resistant polycarbonate ballistic steel plate. The proposed rule also requires
an L-shaped partition model that accommodates curtain airbags that the Commission approved on December 14, 2006. The proposed rule would also update the requirements for in-vehicle camera systems. Some existing camera systems already comply with the proposed specifications, but others may need to be replaced or upgraded with expanded memory capacity. The new partition and camera system specifications would be phased in beginning May 1, 2007. The proposed rules would retain the exemptions from partition requirement for owner-driven taxicabs and for hybrid electric taxicabs. The proposed rules would also retain the partition exemption for vehicles affiliated only with black car and luxury limousine base stations. All liveries would retain the option to be equipped either with partitions or in-vehicle camera systems. Also for liveries, the proposed rules would permit a cell phone with an emergency dialing feature as an alternative to a two-way radio. The proposed rules also require that the taxicabs and for-hire vehicles equipped
with in-vehicle camera systems have decals placed on the rear passengers windows advising that the vehicle is equipped with camera security and that passengers will be photographed.

The proposed rules were published for comment on March 9th. Five written comments were received and copies have been distributed to the Commissioners. Based on those comments, staff is recommending that the proposed rules be revised in one respect.

Several commentators objected to the provision in the proposed rule that would require that in-vehicle camera systems be installed and repaired only by TLC licensed taxi meter businesses. Therefore, staff recommends that the proposed rule be revised to limit installation and repair of in-vehicle camera systems to businesses that are either licensed by TLC as taxi meter businesses or licensed as businesses by the city's Department of Consumer Affairs. This revision retains the purpose of the proposed rule, which is to combat the installation of stolen or inoperable camera systems by less established
businesses.

Copies of the proposed revision have been distributed to the Commissioners and are available to the public in the back of the room.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Okay, the first speaker we have is Mr. Joe Giannetto from MTBOT. We have five speakers signed up and you will each have three minutes.

MR. GIANNETTO: Good morning, Commissioners. Several months ago this Commission relaxed the rules as it relates to the partition requirements, specifically for vehicles with side curtain airbags and for hybrid vehicles.

And at that time, the MTBOT testified that it had concerns over the driver safety implications of such a move. And the TLC responded that it would work hard to redesign the partitions and reinstitute the partition requirements, at least for the side curtain airbag vehicles. And so, we just want to commend the Commission for the work that they have done in designing new partition options and for reinstituting the requirement that
partitions be in vehicles with side curtain airbags. So we just want to say thank you for that work.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Thank you, Mr. Giannetto. Next speaker is a Diego Yepes.

MR. YEPES: Good morning. My name is Diego Yepes and I work at Taxi Camera Corporation. You received my comments. We talked about the licensed taxi meter businesses being the only authorized installers. And I thank you for that. Because we are a small family business and much of our income comes from servicing the for-hire vehicles and the taxi cameras.

Another proposed rule I would like to comment on is 117 VNW for the affidavit, stating that upon installation, repair or modification, a notarized affidavit signed by a manufacturer's authorized installer attesting to the proper functionality of the IVCS shall be provided to the Commission by the authorized installer.

I just want to say that we are behind any and all proposals to battle the problems of theft and unauthorized installations by
untrained individuals installing mock-ups, installing units. Not only do these random installers affect us financially, but it negates the sheer concept of the IVCS was meant for, an effective and respected in-vehicle crime deterrent. So we believe the affidavit implemented by the TLC will be a positive step in combatting the improper installation that this industry is currently experiencing, although I believe it should not be notarized. This will only increase cost and time into an ever-demanding industry.

The TLC should inspect or keep track of the sales, installation and service of the IVC on a yearly basis. On a further note, we recommend that each IVCS be checked at least twice a year for proper function and recording of the affidavit for IVCS history maintenance sheet by an authorized installer. This affidavit or IVCS history maintenance sheet should be present in the vehicle at all times, standing for a certificate of ownership and authenticity.

Again, I thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Thank you.
Jeff Steinman?

MR. STEINMAN: Hello, great Americans and Commissioners. Thank you for the time. I also would like to speak on behalf of another family-run business, All Borough Auto Sound and Security. We have been in business since 1993, and have really catered to the TLC community in mirror guards, security systems, wheel locks and grille locks. And since the Commission I guess enacted the security cameras, since 2001, I believe, we have been installing those ever since, really, with our mission as security.

So, obviously, we are pleased to hear that staff recommended to amend the Section 3, Subsection 8(u) to at least allow the small business owners to compete with the security systems. I would also like to further comment on the notary. Just to possibly throw out a possible interface that could be set up that once licensed or authorized installers of these systems can maybe even go on line and put in a VIN number, match to a plate, where they might be able to just have installers have a data entry system on line that the city
may be able to set up, where you can better keep track of these systems without having to go through the paperwork of notary public. It may actually, moving forward, be a better way to set up that practice. But I do thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Thank you.
Where are you located, by the way?

MR. STEINMAN: On McGinnis Boulevard in Brooklyn.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Okay, thank you.

Next speaker who signed up is Ms. Janice Shachter, but I think she left.

Bill Lindauer?

MR. LINDAUER: In case anybody doesn't know, I am Bill Lindauer. I am with the New York Taxi Workers Alliance. We are now an international group. We have brothers from Canada in our group and we are a global force in this industry for good.

Driver safety should be the number one priority. Partitions, I think, you will find if you survey drivers, are the preferred method by far. By far. Incidentally, the trouble light is just trouble because you
can't find it, and then the police ignore it. And any system similar to that will be ignored by the authorities. And the camera system, if I can understand the notes, the proposal without falling asleep, because it was written by lawyers, God knows, the world needs them, right, so they say.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Yes, they do.

MR. LINDAUER: It says that it will only be in operation for two and a half minutes, so if you get robbed in ten minutes into the ride, the guy won't be on camera. And if you have seen news reports on TV, pictures taken in robberies at banks or shops or 7-Elevens, the pictures very often are very fuzzy. You can't make out anything. Just may determine whether somebody is white or black or whatever. But it's very poor.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: So are you for or against these rules, or do you have any changes to offer?

MR. LINDAUER: I just think that the camera has to be on constantly. Constantly. And you somehow have to make sure it meets
And the drivers prefer partitions. Driver-owners, of course, may prefer the camera.

Incidentally, you should also make attacks on drivers a felony, like there are stickers on buses and in the subways that say an attack on a bus or subway employee is a felony, blah, blah, blah. You should be spearheading the effort to make that change in Albany so that an attack on a driver is considered an attack just as it is on a motorman or a bus driver.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: There actually was something that was done and Governor Pataki passed it a few years ago. There are enhanced penalties for people. We will happy to share it with you.

MR. LINDAUER: And as for the technology, the technology is all well and good and I applaud it, but there should be exploration of state, federal or city funds under maybe the Americans with Disability Act to help pay for these systems. These are costly systems. Not even owners should have to pay for this. And, of course, if they have
to pay, these charges are passed on to drivers in any form. You may say no lease cap increases, but they will call it a technology fee. Or what they are doing now, some people are making drivers pay for their tax stamp or for car insurance I heard in one case.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Could you sum up, please, because your time is expired.

MR. LINDAUER: I just think you should really carefully study this, and the cameras have to be on constantly. And I think partitions are the best method. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Thank you very much. That concludes our preregistered speakers. I see somebody raising their hand.

Mr. Grover, come on up.

MR. GROVER: My name is Artie Grover, I am an officer of the Livery Owners Coalition, which represents fleet-owned vehicles throughout the five boroughs. Once the rule law was set for cameras to be put in cars, which is going back I guess about maybe 10 or 15 years ago, we have been installing and repairing our own. They are checked regularly by our garage, which is
where our base is. We find no purpose for us
to go to a, quote, authorized dealer to spend
all kind of money and waste all kinds of time
to have something done that we can do right in
our own base. If you feel that it should be
designated for independently owned vehicles, I
can understand that. But as far as
fleet-owned vehicles, I feel it's a waste of
time and another cost that is laid onto a base
owner who owns his own vehicles.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Thanks. Two other
speakers, could you please come up and
identify yourself, please?

MR. YURO: My name is Benny Yuro
(ph). I have been in the industry for more
than 30 years. Unfortunately, two years ago I
have to give my license up because of the lack
of business. Now, since we have the camera,
we have been installing camera for regular,
and all this time I have the license from the
Taxi and Limousine Commission. I always do my
job properly. I never have a problem with any
illegal matter. Now I serve the Spanish
people over there in Brooklyn. These people
really need my service. They don't want to go
to Manhattan. So I believe if you do can do
it, have a small form for the camera, a simple
affidavit that we don't have to do more
paperwork. It is just a waste of time of the
taxi driver. Thank you.

    CHAIRMAN DAUS: Okay, thank you.
    Last speaker?
    MR. WALKER: I just talked to Peter,
I don't think I need to speak. I was just
going to --

    CHAIRMAN DAUS: You are speaking so
please identify yourself?
    MR. WALKER: My name is Terry
Walker, I represent Verified Technologies.
Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for giving
me this opportunity.
    I just wanted clarify something one
of the earlier people said. Bill I think his
name was. The new specification requires far
more than just two and a half minute before
and after an event. For an average fare, we
estimate that the cameras will take about 17
pictures, and they are high resolution
pictures as well, as required by the spec.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Okay.
Yes, sir, you are the last speaker.
MR. FITZSIMMONS: Thank you very much. My name is Barry Fitzsimmons and I am a member of the Taxi Workers Alliance and I am one of the first drivers of the wheelchair cabs. I have to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that on the wheelchair accessible cabs, especially the Ford Freestar, I have to pass up a lot of elderly passengers because those vehicles are too high. So if you can get them to adjust them to a hydraulic system just like the buses where they go up and down so the elderly passengers can also climb in the cabs easily.
Thank you.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Thank you, sir.
That concludes our public hearing.
Peter, do you wish to address any of the questions that came up, or do any Commissioners have questions?
COMM. DEAR: One issue about the one that Artie Grover raised. I didn't realize it because it probably affects fleet owners as well, if they do the repairs or installation
on premises, according to the new regulations, they won't be able to unless they go to an authorized shop; is that correct?

MR. FRASER: Yes. The way the rule is written the installation and repair must be done by someone who is either licensed by the Department of Consumer Affairs or licensed by us as a taxi meter business and also is a factory authorized installer. That's the way the rule reads.

COMM. DEAR: Then I would like to amend or make a recommendation that we add that those people who are operators, both on the livery vehicles as well as taxicabs, that they should be allowed, if they have their own shop to do repairs, that they can be authorized to do repairs and installation and sales as well.

MR. SCHENKMAN: If I may, Medallion fleet owners, many of them are licensed meter shops. And for I believe $25, any fleet can become a DCA licensee. They don't necessarily have to go outside to another facility if they are themselves licensed.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Peter, I just want
to make sure that myself and everybody understands the reason why we are requiring the accountability. Is it in order to hold them accountable in case the person engages in any type of fraud, or is there some other reason?

MR. SCHENKMAN: The theft of these cameras is excessive and this is one of the ways that, A,. We will ensure theft will go down and we ensure that the cameras are operating as the manufacture states. The worst thing I can envision is improper installation, a criminal activity occurs and the camera was out of focus, misaligned or not connected properly and we lose that.

COMM. DEAR: Peter, according to some people who testified, he has been doing this all this time and we have no problems.

MR. SCHENKMAN: Then there should be no issue getting licensed.

COMM. DEAR: You are making a statement. I don't know if it's true or not. We have the former counsel -- our enforcement person, used to be a DCA Deputy Commissioner, so there is my answer.
MS. MULLIN: Good morning.

COMM. DEAR: Is that correct what he said, that one could just apply for a license?

MS. MULLIN: They could apply for a license. All it's going to require is that they submit a lease and there is some other paperwork they have to submit, which they should have already since they submit to us proof of paying taxes, corporation papers.

COMM. DEAR: They don't have to show that they are experts in anything else?

MS. MULLIN: No.

COMM. DEAR: And it's only $25?

MS. MULLIN: It's a little more than $25.

COMM. DEAR: What's the number?

MS. MULLIN: I think it is like 125. Don't hold me to it, but it is not an excessive amount.

And the reason we want people licensed is so that we can hold them accountable. If they are not licensed, we can't bring violations against them, we don't have jurisdiction.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: If it's a licensed
base, wouldn't we be able to write summons
against them as a licensee if we allow them to
do the work, or are there not rules for that?

   MS. MULLIN:  It wouldn't cover them

under the base rules.
   CHAIRMAN DAUS:  We would have to

amend the base rules.
   MS. MULLIN:  We are working out the
joint enforcement powers with Consumer Affairs
so that those places that are licensed by
Consumer Affairs, either we will write the
violations or we will testify or we will work
with them to do the violations.
   CHAIRMAN DAUS:  And you actually
have already spoken to Consumer Affairs about
this?
   MS. MULLIN:  I have spoken to
Consumer Affairs.
   COMM. DEAR:  She is Consumer
Affairs.
   MS. MULLIN:  They are more than
happy to join us on this project.
   CHAIRMAN DAUS:  All right, if they
are willing to do it, does anybody have
objections to it?
COMM. DEAR: So it is your opinion that is the way we should pursue it?

MS. MULLIN: Definitely. It is the only way to hold everybody accountable.

COMM. DEAR: Okay.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Any other questions?

COMM. VARGAS: A question for you, Chuck. As it relates to the time frame for the affidavit that needs to be submitted to TLC, the rule is silent as to how long, once the installation occurs, do they need to send it to us. Maybe we should arbitrarily pick ten days, two weeks after installation, something like that. This way it gives the installer the time to get documents notarized.

MR. FRASER: We didn't specify time. It says "upon installation," so obviously it implies contemporaneously. You're right, that's not precise.

Commissioner Schenkman, did you have something specific in mind?

MR. SCHENKMAN: Two weeks seems reasonable to put it in the mail, do the paperwork at the end of the day and send it off.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: So 14 calendars days.

COMM. POLANCO: I have a question.

Since my understanding is we are making a lot of changes to the rules, so unless these proposed rules are going to be included, why are we basically -- why are these proposed rule before us today, because we are making so many changes?

CHAIRMAN DAUS: That's a good question. We can actually make some amendments, if we wish, as part of a motion. So if you would like to add the 14 days, we can do that now.

COMM. POLANCO: No. My question is: Since we are making so many changes to the rules, unless these proposals we are discussing today are going to be included in the new rule book that is going to come out whenever, then why are we having basically these proposals now and not wait until we have the whole -- we are going to have public hearings for these proposals, so why not wait?

MR. SALKIN: I believe you are referring to the rules RFP that is out on the street. The deadline for that to close, I
believe it is about to close and TLC will be evaluating it. That process will take quite sometime and what you are going to see is as that process rolls out, the Commission will still -- we plan to still bring rules to the Commission because there is still business that needs to be taken care of.

In this case, we are talking rules that involve safety, driver safety and public safety. So to wait, you know, who knows how long for that to happen, is, we don't think, necessary or appropriate.

The other piece is the main goal of the rules and the first part of the rules is not necessarily to change the rules and reevaluate them, it is to make them clear, easier to understand. So the concept of this rule as it is discussed today, this rule may not change at all. But the idea is to say that there is a partition spec, that there is a camera spec. So we are hoping that not every single rule has to change, but the idea is to look at the rule and make sure that it is clear to understand.

COMM. POLANCO: So basically we are
not going to be revisiting this?

MR. SALKIN: No, I didn't say that. I said the rules will be revisited. How the rules get interpreted and what the new format is for the rules may get changed, but the idea that the camera specs would change isn't necessarily something that would happen. But how the rule would read might be something that changes.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: That's a good point. We can revisit anything at any time. I think it is important to note that we can't stop the daily business when it comes to getting things done, public safety and so forth. The rules project is going to take a while. The good news is that we received bids the other day, the bidding deadline has passed.

Andy and I talked about involving, as per your request, the Commissioners at a very stage. So at some point, once the contractors are hired, what we would like to do is have individual one-on-one meetings with all the Commissioners where you tell us, based upon your knowledge and expertise of the rules and what you believe should be the policy
priorities, that we have the Commissioners set
the priorities. And then this way we have
guidelines that the consultants can work on.

It is going to be a long process, it
is going to take a while to get all of this
done, but we still have to get the work of the
Commission done. So these rules are mostly
technical. They are not changing anything
substantive in terms of the safety component
for the drivers. Basically, that all remains
the same, and I think Chuck’s memo have bore
that out to all of you.

The history behind this is the state
law, passed years and years ago, required that
all taxicabs have partitions, and then at the
end of 2000, there were, unfortunately, in the
livery industry, a rash of incidents where
there were robberies and several, several
drivers, unfortunately, murdered. As a result
of that, the city, and somebody brought up who
is going to have to pay for these, the city
paid for most of them. There was a five
million dollar fund that was set up by the
Economic Development Corporation at the time
that paid for practically every camera to be
installed in the livery industry. So the way the rule works is that basically if you are an individual owner and driver of a car, you have an option how to protect yourself. If you are a fleet owner and you are a corporate owner, you have to put a partition in because the driver doesn't have a choice.

Those rules are not changing in any way, shape or form. What we are basically doing for the most part, with some other technical, administrative items that Peter has added, is we are taking what was previously in the Memoranda of Understanding or contracts between the city and the TLC and private vendors, and putting them in our rules so that we can clean that up and have it out there for all to see. So this is not changing or rolling back any type of safety issues. And, in fact, the city did pay for most of these vehicles. And, thankfully, there has not been, I think it's been now -- what is it, Alan, like 9 years now, that there has not been a murder in a yellow cab?

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Since 1997, ten years. And lo and behold, thanks to the work of the Police Department and the work of this Commission, all of those murders stopped after we did this. So that is not going to change. Just so people understand, it is highly technical. We are talking about things such as entities that are stealing cameras from one another and stuff like that. It's more integrity in that respect. And I think the system of accountability that they have worked out, I think, is an excellent one and I am prepared to vote for it.

COMM. GIANNOULIS: Can I ask a quick question as a point of reference?

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Yes.

COMM. GIANNOULIS: What RFP is everybody talking about?

COMM. WEINSHALL: We haven't determined yet, we are first going out for an RFP.

MR. SALKIN: That is a project to rewrite the rules, make it in plain language, make them make more sense. And that is something we have been working on for about a
year now.

COMM. WEINSHALL: Andy, could remind
the Commission how many rules there are?

MR. SALKIN: Right now there are
3,300 rules. There is a book of 600 rules.
It's interesting, I was looking, we have a
hundred pages worth of more rules than the
Department of Transportation. And what the
idea is, ever since 1971, as the industry has
grown and as the Commission has changed, the
rules have taken on different thoughts in
different times. And the idea is to look at
them, look at the rules all at once, and kind
of think about it again.

COMM. GIANNOLIS: What is this RFP?

MR. SALKIN: The RFP was to hire
people with expertise in understanding rules
to be able to help us rewrite the rules,
understanding how other places have written
rules with the idea being that they will
provide an expertise and a skill set that goes
beyond the agency's current staff to help us
begin to outline how the rule structure should
be.

So the idea is right now there are
five different definitions of drivers, and
maybe there should be one, maybe there should
be five.

COMM. GIANNOLIS: An RFP has gone
out?

MR. SALKIN: An RFP has gone out and
the time has closed on that.
COMM. WEINSHALL: The second RFP.
MR. SALKIN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: I think I gave a
copy to you folks, and if not I can give you
another copy.
COMM. WEINSHALL: We had a
presentation.
COMM. GIANNOLIS: This is totally
unfamiliar to me. I think I missed that
meeting.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: At meeting you had
missed, I think Commissioner Vargas and some
others wanted to get more involved in the
process at an early stage, which I think is a
good idea, because, really, the vision of what
is going to be these new rules needs to come
from us as a body. That's clear. We don't
needs consultants to tell us what their vision
is. We need to tell them what we want to do
and they will make it happen, okay.
I am prepared -- because we are going
to start losing Commissioners, I am prepared
to vote on these rules with that one
modification about the affidavit, that we give
them 14 calendar days. So I would like to
make a motion to adopt the rules as
distributed with that one amendment.
Do I have a second?
COMM. WEINSHALL: Second.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: All in favor?
(Chorus of "Ayes.")
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Okay, it's
unanimous. Thank you.
Thank you, Andy, Peter.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: Item 6(b), we now
have a public hearing on clean air accessible
vehicle markings. I would like to turn it
over to our general counsel again, Chuck
Fraser.
MR. FRASER: This proposed rule
would implement Local Laws 54 and 55 of 2006,
which require that TLC licensed accessible and
clean air vehicles be marked with insignia
identifying them as accessible or clean air vehicles. The proposed rules would provide that a clean air vehicle insignia design and an accessible vehicle insignia design will be made available on the Commission’s website or by other means set forth on its website. The insignia would be posted on the exterior of both sides of the vehicle, visible to passengers entering the vehicle.

In addition, pursuant to Local Law 54, the proposed laws would require that the owner of a clean air taxicab must display in a rear passenger compartment visible to all passengers in the back seat, passenger information to be provided by the Commission. That information must include identification of the clean air taxicab as a clean air vehicle, the Commission’s web page address, the estimated air quality benefits associated with use of such a vehicle and the type of fuel used to power such a vehicle.

The proposed rules were published for comment on March 6th and no formal comments were received. However, based on informal discussions with members of the industry,
staff is recommending one change to the proposed rule. The proposed rule would require a blue roof light on any accessible vehicle or clean air vehicle. Upon fourth consideration, however, staff has concluded that the use of blue roof lights for both accessible and clean air vehicles might be confusing to the riding public even with a separate accessible and clean air vehicle insignia. Therefore, staff is recommending that the proposed rule be revised to require blue roof lights only for accessible vehicles and that roof lights for clean air vehicles remain as they are now.

Copies of the revised proposed rule have been distributed to the Commissioners and are available to the public in the back of the room.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: We have no speakers -- oh, we do have one.

MR. MAZZIA: John Mazzia from A Ride For All, we are the wheelchair accessible base with several wheelchair accessible vans. I just have one question.

Would we have to install roof lights
on our wheelchair accessible livery vans?

MR. FRASER: No. The rule on roof lights applies only to vehicles that have roof lights. Taxicabs, obviously, are required to and liveries in Staten Island are permitted to.

MR. MAZZIA: So we would just be required to put the decals on the sides?

MR. FRASER: Correct.

MR. MAZZIA: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: And my understanding is that there is a diminimus amount of money involved for changing the color of the light as well.

MR. SCHENKMAN: Just the transparency.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I think blue lights are only for state police. You should look into that.

MR. SCHENKMAN: New York State is red. The federal law enforcement is blue, but it is very light blue. With the wheelchair logo all over the vehicle.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: And it is something that we thought of. Counsel has checked that
out. There was some confusion that we foresaw about having a green light for the green cabs because it might interfere with people looking to see the green traffic lights, so that was taken out. And I believe that this is a good compromise. And what does it cost, about a dollar, Peter?

MR. SCHENKMAN: A couple of dollars, depending if you just lay the transparency or you replace the whole piece.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Okay. Does anybody have any questions, objections, issues? Did you like to speak?

MR. GERBER: Yes, I have a question.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: What is your name?

MR. GERBER: My name is Ethan Gerber, I am an attorney for the industry. How would the blue light affect the rooftop advertising?

CHAIRMAN DAUS: I am not sure how it would. They have lights now.

MR. SCHENKMAN: There is a couple of ways it could be addressed. You could put a blue LED behind the Medallion number or a blue
1 bulb behind the Medallion number, or you could
2 put a film transparency, kind of like they use
3 in the theaters, a gel.
4 MR. GERBER: Has anyone consulted
5 any of the rooftop advertisers?
6 MR. SCHENKMAN: I have not
7 personally. I can't speak for the rest of the
8 staff.
9 CHAIRMAN DAUS: This is not a
10 proposal to change the color of the light on
11 the rooftop advertising.
12 MR. SCHENKMAN: Only the Medallion
13 number.
14 CHAIRMAN DAUS: Just the number, the
15 on duty light and the number.
16 MR. GERBER: On the number itself
17 only?
18 CHAIRMAN DAUS: Yes. I assume we
19 have some advertisers here. Do they have any
20 concerns? Clear Channel is here, Nick
21 Wikowich, do you have any issues?
22 MR. WIKOWICH: This is the first we
23 are hearing about it, and almost all the
24 handicap vehicles have hard tops on it. We
25 haven't had a chance to see if the blue will
match your specs. We haven't had any samples.
This is the first I am hearing about this. I
don't know if your shade and the LED might not
match. I would like some time to get me a
sample and see if we can do it.

MR. SCHENKMAN: I think we are just
looking for a blue light. I don't think we
are specifying dark blue, light blue. Just
that the Medallion number is lit in blue.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Peter, have you met
with any members of the industry I on this?

MR. SCHENKMAN: No, I have not.

COMM. DEAR: I would like to table
this then.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Okay. The only
concern that I have is that the City Council
is requiring us to get these rules passed.
Can we get that done by the next meeting,
Chuck, and be on time?

MR. FRASER: The deadline in the
statute is June 17th, so if we pass this at
out next meeting we will just barely be on
time.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Is there a chance we
can actually get the designs for the sticker
by then too so that we can look at it and approve it, Andy?

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Because we do need to come up with some designs as well. Okay, so I have no problem tabling this. Mr. Ratner, you have something to say?

MR. RATNER: I wanted Nick to say it.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: You wanted Nick Wikowich to say something else?

MR. WIKOWICH: Just that in New York State, blue is reserved for fire department. It may be a code. And in Jersey they do give out summonses.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: We believe double check that. I don't believe it is based on the research counsel has done.

MR. SCHENKMAN: And the fact that it is a minivan taxi.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: But there is nothing, based on your research, that indicates that we would be violating any state laws; correct?

MR. FRASER: Not that I am aware.

We will double-check it obviously.
CHAIRMAN DAUS: There is this other question of people being confused. That's why we changed the color. And I would bring the other items to a vote, but apparently the Law Department won't approve rules piecemeal anymore, so we have to bring the whole thing back. That is a new ruling from Corporation Counsel's office. Otherwise, we have to go out and do another public hearing on just the color of the lights, so in the interest of complying with the Council's mandate, which I believe requires us to have rules and a plan in place for this by June of this year, I would like to table this, unless anybody has any objections to tabling it to the next meeting, bring it back for a vote.

And in the interim, Peter will meet with the industry, and Samara and Andy will meet with the industry, and make sure if there any issues, whether they are legal, operational or otherwise, that we address them.

I think it's a pretty good idea to have these, especially these accessible cabs stand out, as we move forward with projects in
that regard, so that people can identify them from the street. I think that is better for the disabled community. Right now they are hard enough to spot because there aren't as many of them, but let's make sure they are better able to be spotted. Any questions? (No response.)

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Also, just going back for two seconds, Peter, one of the gentleman from the prior public hearing had an interesting idea about developing some type of technology to interface between their companies and us in lieu of an affidavit. I don't think everybody is technically sophisticated to do that now, but down the road if there is something that we can look at:

MR. SCHENKMAN: We track that information on the Medallions, their cameras, and we expect to track the serial numbers of the vehicles as well.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: I just thought it was an interesting thoughtful idea. And I think as a Commission we have taken so many
steps in so many different ways to go towards technology in data and away from paper, so, ultimately, down the road, I think it is a good suggestion. And I am sure my First Deputy will support me on that since we have been doing so much with technology.

I think that's it. Our international visitors, we are so happy that you are here.

Many of you may have been following locally in the news that the longest taxicab trip in the history of the City of New York is currently en route. David Pollak was quoted from Committee on Taxi Safety. There is a couple that are afraid that their cats are going to be cold if they fly in a plane from New York City to Sedona, and basically they have desired to hire and negotiate a rate of fare to go in a taxicab. And they have left. I understands the Daily News is following them and taking pictures and blogging all the way. So basically they are on their way, and it kind of raises the interesting notion that we have international visitors here. Maybe we should be working reciprocity rules so that if he have a trend of people moving to
Canada or other parts of the country, that they are able to receive our licensees. I think in some cities they would be a little shocked to see a yellow cab pull up and wonder what the heck is it doing there. But, anyway, for those of you who haven't heard of it, it is happening now and it is very interesting, very cute, and we wish them a good trip. And thank you, David.

Do you want to say something on it?

MR. POLLAK: I just want to give you an update, as of this morning, they were leaving Tennessee.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: And they negotiated the tip as well?

Oh, well. God speed to them.

Do I have a motion to close the meeting?

COMM. GIANNOULIS: Moved.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: Second?

COMM. POLANCO: Second.

CHAIRMAN DAUS: All in favor.

(Chorus of "Ayes.")

CHAIRMAN DAUS: So closed.

(Time noted: 11:30 a.m.)
CERTIFICATION

I, MARGARET EUSTACE, a Shorthand Reporter and a Notary Public, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcription of my stenographic notes. I further certify that I am not employed by nor related to any party to this action.

MARGARET EUSTACE,
Shorthand Reporter