



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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COREY JOHNSON
Chair

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

August 6, 2013

Borough Commissioner Margaret Forgione
Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 35th Floor
New York, NY 10038

Re: Gotham Organization request for parking regulation changes

Dear Commissioner Forgione:

Manhattan Community Board #4 appreciates the outreach of the Gotham Organization in devising a proposal for parking regulations along the north side of West 44th Street, the south side of West 45th Street, and the east side of Eleventh Avenue - the streets that border "Gotham West," their recently completed development project that includes 1,248 apartments, 200 below ground parking spaces, and 17,000 square feet of retail space as well as the return of PS51 to an enlarged 95,000 square feet. There is no doubt that the character of the block has changed substantially as a result of these new developments and that these changes warrant re-examining parking regulations. More specifically, it warrants parking regulations that will support the increased residential uses, particularly on the South Side of West 45th Street where three entrances to larger buildings will be, and along West 44th Street, to support the residential uses and the school and to reduce street parking turnover to promote safety.

Based on consultation with a local task force and with the Transportation Planning Committee of CB4, Gotham West and its Traffic Consultant Sam Schwartz Engineering drafted proposed parking regulations that we support. We are also making additional recommendations to promote pedestrian, including student, safety on these blocks.

The first – and primary recommendation - of Gotham is to have, with one 50 foot exception, alternate side of the street parking for both the south side of West 45th Street and the north side of West 44th Street. This change would create a lower turnover, more residential, feel to the block. The one exception is the 50' on the north side of West 44th Street just east of Eleventh Avenue, where the Gotham proposes a "No Standing Except Trucks Loading and Unloading, 7am – 7pm M-F" to accommodate the loading for the larger residential building (550 W. 45th Street) and ground floor retail. We support both of these changes.

In addition, Gotham proposes overlays of other parking regulations in segments of the block.

- **A total of 400’ in front of the new PS51 on West 44th Street:** Create a “Board Education Employees Only, School Days, 7am to 4pm” eight parking space area - four parking spaces (100 feet each) on either side of an additional 200 foot drop off area at the curb in front of the school entrance. CB4 has already supported this request, which is supported by PS51 staff and parents, earlier this year and reiterate that support in this letter.

CB4 requests additional measures to ensure a safe school environment. We request DOT install Street Humps (similar to street bumps, but with more gradual and lower level bumps) at both the western and the eastern ends of the street; a high visibility crosswalk on the north side West 44th across Tenth Avenue; and a Leading Pedestrian Interval to create a time for pedestrians to begin crossing Tenth Avenue before cars begin turning from West 44th onto Tenth Avenue. In separate, but related requests, we are also asking the Hess gas station to eliminate one of its two current curb cuts next to the school along West 44th Street and to, in any case, gate and close those entrances during student commuting, school and after school program hours. We also are requested that Hess put trees and other plantings along West 44th Street that will both serve to improve the ambiance of the sidewalk and prevent cars, (including taxi’s utilizing the businesses on the south side of the block) to park on the sidewalk. We are also asking the police to post crossing guards at Tenth Avenues and West 44th and West 45th Streets and, given the number of students coming from West 42nd Street between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues, at West 43rd Street and Eleventh Avenue.

- **Two 50 feet “No Standing Anytime – Access-A-Ride”** areas in front of the residential building entrances for 530 West 45th Street and 550 West 45th Street. Given the typical need for Access-A-Ride access for larger buildings, we support this proposal.
- **Two Hour Maximum Metered Parking along Eleventh Avenue, 10am to 10pm:** Given the need for resident visitor parking and other local parking needs, we support this request.
- **Bicycle Lane Along the north side of West 44th Street:** Since there is a bicycle lane further east on West 44th Street, a bicycle lane makes sense in this location. We should mention that there should be a sign mid-block on West 44th Street (to the west of the school) for both bicyclists and drivers “Careful – School Ahead.” We also note that Gotham also proposes a bicycle lane on West 45th Street that we don’t support. We feel it would be inappropriate to have a one block bicycle lane (there is no bicycle lane further east (or west) on W. 45th Street), West 45th Street does not have a pedestrian/bicycle crossing onto the Hudson River Park and there is a bicycle lane on West 43rd Street (that does lead to the Hudson River Park).

We also note that there will be an approximate 25 foot curb cut on West 45th Street for the parking garage entrance in the cellar of 550 West 45th Street. We request that Gotham install a speed bump and stop sign for exiting cars and a pedestrian warning signal on both sides of the garage entrance signaling when a car is exiting.

Again, we greatly appreciate Gotham's extensive community outreach in devising the proposed parking and curb regulations for these streets and look forward to continuing to work with them to promote pedestrian, vehicular and bicycle safety measures for these changing blocks. We also appreciate the assistance and consideration of DOT in expeditiously implementing the above recommendations.

Sincerely yours,



Corey Johnson
Chair



Christine Berthet, Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee



Jay Marcus, Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee