

Submitted via email from Mary Habstritt to Jeffrey LeFrancois, August 31, 2020

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The Safety Committee met via conference call on Wed., Aug. 26th. Erica Bates, Linda Bookbinder, Allen Oster and Mary Habstritt were present.

Allen and Mary reported on communications with City Council and Manhattan Boro President. Although not much has been learned so far regarding any data collection, Council efforts to establish oversight of bicycle traffic (there was legislation proposed last year for an "Office of Active Transportation"), or success of policing models in other parts of the Manhattan Waterfront Greenway, we will continue to try to get answers. Nancy, per her recent emails, did find out from contacts at NYC Parks, which has maintenance responsibility for much of the remainder of the Manhattan Waterfront Greenway (the Hudson River Greenway is only the portion along HRP) that they use PEP to enforce park regulations on the bikeway. Matthew Washington has said he would try to learn about the success of this. It's likely that no one entity has data on bikeway crimes, accidents or even traffic, so although we should keep looking, we should not get hung up on this.

The amount of time already taken by AC and Community Boards shows there is very strong concern even without data and there are certainly several examples of accidents with significant injuries as embodied by Nancy's own. The jurisdictional problem comes down to no one having explicit assignment for traffic enforcement on the Hudson River Greenway. NYPD can, but doesn't. Electeds are important in getting NYPD to act. PEP has done temporary spot efforts to stop electric bikes but HRPT does not have the wherewithal to extend the staffing full time to the bikeway for which they only have maintenance responsibility.

Erica brought up her previous recommendation to contractually obligate tenants/permittees to contribute security to safe passage across bikeways for park users at key entrances such as the Intrepid, Pier 66 Maritime, the heliport. and Chelsea Piers. Tenants have often done some level on their own because they recognize the need to protect customers crossing the bikeway, and sometimes HRPT has requested traffic policing, such as for vehicles entering the heliport. Erica will work on language characterizing tenants (for-profit/non-profit, size by footprint or revenue, length of contract term, proximity to access point, etc.) that should have this provision written into their contracts. Language should be flexible so that tenants can add staff at busy times that might not be needed at slack times according to their activities. This might move quickly to a resolution for the AC to send to HRPT board.

There was strong feeling on the committee that we should invite Dennis McCartney, HRPT's new Public Safety Officer, to meet with us outside of the full Advisory Council. Mary is to invite him to a future committee meeting. We will work on questions to provide to him in advance.