

CB 6 Waits On DOT in Traffic Plan

By Craig McGuire

Community Board 6 is withholding the approval of a Department of Transportation project, designed to test traffic calming devices in Red Hook, until they receive additional information from the DOT.

In the infant stages of design, the proposal would test methods to improve traffic safety enhancement/calming measures for the Van Brunt Street corridor.

At a public hearing of the CB 6 Transportation Committee in early March, representatives of the DOT's Pedestrian Group presented their proposal.

"We are now in the preliminary conceptual design stage of the project," said DOT spokesman Michael Santoro. He ensured the committee, "Once we obtain the approval, we will proceed to the pre-construction design stage, updating the board on all designs."

While the purpose of the March hearing was to invite community input on the proposal, no residents attended to testify.

Aware that residents may have been intimidated by the 15th major snow storm to pound the area, which had fallen the night before, the committee rescheduled the public hearing for next month.

Board member Roy Sloane suggested perhaps the project should be revisited to find out whether there is any community support.

Santoro informed the board that this project was in fact a response to voiced concern over the public perception of speeding in the area.

"The statistics we have gathered show a level of danger for pedestrians in certain areas," explained DOT spokesman Robert Thompson.

While they may not have given their support, the committee received the major conceptual designs outlined by the DOT representatives.

CB 6 board member Celia Cacace requested an estimate on the cost of the project.

According to Santoro, the preliminary estimate cost for the project is approximately \$150,000 to \$200,000.

"We've obtained federal funding to test traffic calming measures. We are not testing you, we are testing the devices," clarified Santoro.

While they may have been impressed by the presentation, many board members stated they would be reluctant to support the

proposal without further information.

"You have some very nice drawings, but I have yet to see the methodology that will be used in the evaluation," said CB 6 member Jerry Armer. "As it stands now, I would have to vote against to the proposal, because I do not know how it would be evaluated."

Thompson said, "In evaluating, we look at speeds, pedestrian flow and the general perception of the community."

While they have not yet ironed out a specific evaluation, Santoro noted, "We do have a list of criteria that will be used. We can get it to board as soon as possible, and are more than willing to sit down with you."

Sloane said he would also be hesitant to support, but for a different reason than Armer.

"It makes it difficult for me to support any expenditures of public funds unless they are addressing the enormous traffic problem in this area," said Sloane.

Specifically, the project would create:

A- Specially paved parking lanes on Van Brunt Street between Wolcott and Visitation Place.

B- A specially paved intersection at Van Brunt Street and Pioneer Street.

C- Neckdowns at the northeast corner of Wolcott and Richards Street, and at the northwest corner of Wolcott Street and Dwigth Street, and Angle parking on Wolcott Street.

D- A specially paved intersection at Richard Street and Wolcott Street.

E- A channelized area on the east side of Richard Street

Community Board 6 encourages residents to be come involved with the process. Copies of the proposals are available at CB 6's office at 250 Baltimore Street; telephone 643-3027

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