



Meeting Summary

Client: NYCDOT
Project Name: ESA-Transportation Planning
Location: Chinatown, NY
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TO: Willa Ng & Suchi Sanagavarapu, NYCDOT

FROM: Kaitlyn Pezik, Zetlin Strategic Communications

RE: Community Workshop #1

Project: Chinatown Curbside Management Study
NYCDOT – ESA: Transportation Planning, Transportation Engineering, Urban Design and Related Services, Citywide. PIN: 84107MBTR187

Executive Summary

On June 25, 2011, the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) held the first Community Workshop for the Chinatown Curbside Management Study at P.S. 130 Hernando de Soto in Chinatown. A morning and afternoon session was offered, each lasting two hours, for community members to attend at their convenience. During the formal workshop 18 community members took part and approximately 75 participants took part in the activities in Sarah D. Roosevelt Park.

The purpose of the workshop was to identify where the community saw issues pertaining to parking, pedestrian safety, and curbside obstructions within the study area. The original plan was to hold two sessions of formal workshops, in the cafeteria of P.S. 130. This format has proved successful in past events to get the community involved, and was expected to draw a large crowd of community members to both workshop sessions. In this specific community, supplemental outreach was necessary to reach community members and the decision was made to hold a simultaneous workshop, in addition to the formal workshop, on-location in Sara D. Roosevelt Park. This more informal workshop provided passersby a brief introduction to the study and provided a study map and representative stickers to identify curbside management issues within the community that they would like to see addressed. Also, a small group of facilitators traveled to local community centers to target the Fukienese community, conducting the workshop where members of that community were gathered. Bringing the workshop to the people of Chinatown established a rapport and fostered a partnership between the public and NYCDOT. The informality of the workshop in the park encouraged individuals to talk more candidly and provide feedback in a more casual setting, at their leisure.

During the formal workshop 18 community members took part and approximately 75 participants took part in the activities in Sarah D. Roosevelt Park. In addition to those who took part in the park, the presence of NYCDOT in the community gave increased exposure to the project to scores of people.

The formal workshop was structured into small groups and was offered in English or any of the three primary Chinese dialects: Cantonese, Mandarin and Fukienese. Each group was given an overview presentation by its facilitator that outlined study goals and defined expectations for the life of the project. Following the presentation, there was an opportunity for participants to engage in a series of identification exercises that would promote discussion and illustrate where specific problems lie within the community. Like the informal workshop, participants were provided a study map and stickers to

represent each issue. After participants identified blockfaces that posed problems for them, a comparison was made between the original blockfaces identified by NYCDOT and the blockfaces identified by participants. The issues identified by the community in both workshops closely mirror those issues previously identified by NYCDOT's analysis.

A Toolbox of solutions was given to all participants summarizing some of the potential Short-Term improvements tools NYCDOT has available to address these issues.

A compilation of the issues and locations discussed at the workshop are presented in this summary, and also referenced on the workshop #1 summary map (available at <http://nyc.gov/dot/projects/chinatown-curbside-management>).

Parking Issues

- Chrystie Street - Cars parked in bike lanes
- Pike Street & Division Street
- East Broadway - Bus queuing on both sides of street
- Along Allen Street, between Kenmare Street and Madison Street - Commuter/Tour buses take up spaces for parking and bus stops, causing MTA buses to bypass stops or stopping in the traffic lane, preventing elderly and disabled from accessing the bus.
- Centre Street & Lafayette Street
- Pell Street
- Madison Street & Henry Street
- Mott Street between Canal Street & Grand Street
- Bayard Street & Mott Street
- Canal Street & Forsyth Street
- Bowery & Grand Street
- Catherine Street
- Walker Street & Lafayette Street - Agency Parking
- Market Street - Commuter vans take up parking

Pedestrian Congestion

- Bayard Street - high volume of pedestrian traffic
- Mulberry Street & Mott Street - Narrow sidewalks, difficult to walk
- Bowery & Canal Street - Dangerous pedestrian crossing, potentially introduce countdown pedestrian timers, timing needs to be longer
- Grand Street & Chrystie Street - Congestion by subway entrance
- East Broadway between Catherine Street & Pike Street
- Hester Street & Elizabeth Street
- Catherine Street between Bowery & Henry Street
- Canal Street & Walker Street - Pedestrian walkways are narrow
- Lafayette Street - Limited capacity on sidewalk
- Broome Street & Mulberry Street - Crowded because of street closure in Little Italy
- Intersection of Canal Street by Manhattan Bridge - Difficult for pedestrians to cross
- Hester Street & Allen Street - Confusing signals because of separation of pedestrian mall in middle of Allen Street
- Kenmare Street & Essex Street - Light is too fast and make it hard to cross, pedestrian congestion

- Chrystie Street – Need for a safer crossing on Chrystie Street

Sidewalk Obstructions

- Grand Street & Chrystie Street
- Bayard Street - Vendors
- Division Street & Allen Street - Grocery vendors congest sidewalks
- Forsyth Street - Vendors
- Mott Street - Vegetable Stands congest sidewalks
- East Broadway between Catherine Street & Pike Street - Vendors
- East Broadway & Henry Street - Vendors
- Walker Street between Mott Street & Baxter Street - Vendors
- Eldridge Street & Hester Street - Garbage on sidewalks
- Allen Street & Hester Street - Garbage left by wholesalers
- Bowery & Broome Street to Broome Street & Allen Street - Garbage on sidewalk
- East Broadway - sidewalks are littered, pick-up needs to be enforced

Miscellaneous

- New traffic signal at Market Street & Division Street not timed correctly
- Light changes too fast at Essex Street & Kenmare intersection and Allen Street & Kenmare Street intersection
- Placard Parking - Elizabeth Street, Lafayette Street
- Grand Street between Chrystie Street & Mott Street - Bike Lanes create many problems for cars and pedestrians
- Manhattan Bridge - getting off bridge there is congestion and traffic backs up into Brooklyn. Specific issues include the turn at westbound Canal Street there is no left turn, and the turn at Hester Street is difficult to manage.
- Bayard Street & Mulberry Street between Bowery/Baxter Street/Canal Street - cars travel at high speeds with limited sight distance
- Safety issues on Canal Street - There is so much traffic it makes it difficult for people to cross
- Chatham Square is very congested and crossing signals are very confusing for cars and pedestrians.
- Potholes on Division Street cause traffic to slow down.
- Elizabeth Street - Buses get stuck
- Canal Street & Grand Street - Bus layover, too many buses. People waiting for the buses also cause congestion on the sidewalk of Canal Street
- Mulberry Street - street construction
- Vehicle traffic congestion along Canal Street, East Broadway and Kenmare Street
- Allen Street & Hester Street - confusing light

Common Issues/Suggestions

- A pedestrian overpass on Bowery & Canal Street
- It is important to keep the “character” of Chinatown
- Municipal Garage at Police Precinct should be opened to the public again due to lack of off-street parking.
- Area around the Manhattan Bridge has major parking and congestion issues

- Charge for parking on Sundays: some want metered parking, others want to keep “free community parking”.
- Commercial vehicle delivery zones should be implemented.
- Parking signs and wayfinding signs are confusing to understand. Arrows are hard to follow and the wording should also be translated into Chinese, specifically, Pell Street
- Garbage/Recycling pick-up needs to be more frequent. Better garbage management should be implemented.
- Howard Street is good for additional parking
- Kenmare Street & Orchard Street - traffic turn signal was recently changed, making it hard for drivers to make a left turn onto Kenmare from Orchard, which backs up traffic down the street causing congestion.
- Forsyth Street & Allen Street - Traffic light is needed
- Manhattan Bridge - cars come off bridge too fast, need a better traffic signal

Questions

What are the rules for stores on sidewalks? What agency or agencies govern them?