Valerie S. Mason
Chair

Will Brightbill
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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan

July 21, 2025

Jennifer Sta. Ines
Manhattan Deputy Borough Commissioner
Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 37th Floor
New York, NY 10038

RE: Birch Wathen Lenox School Open Street DOT Application

Dear Deputy Commissioner Sta. Ines,

At the Full Board meeting of Community Board 8 Manhattan held on July 16, 2025, the board unanimously approved the following resolution by a vote of 42 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 not voting for cause.

WHEREAS; the Birch Wathen Lenox School has submitted an application to NYCDOT for an open street on East 77th Street between Second Avenue and Third Avenue; and

WHEREAS; a prior Birch Wathen Lenox School open street application was opposed by Community Board 8 Manhattan in November 2024 due to insufficient public outreach, and concerns that an open street for 4 hours a day 5 days a week would be too disruptive to residents and businesses on the block; and

WHEREAS; the Birth Wathen Lenox School has acknowledged their failure to conduct adequate public outreach and their insufficient effort at addressing community concerns that resulted in their original application being rejected by CB8M; and

WHEREAS; the revised Birch Wathen Lenox School Application is for an open street 3 days per week for 2 hours per day; and

WHEREAS; it is anticipated that the open street will only be needed in an area covering approximately half of the block; and

WHEREAS; the proposed open street will maintain an emergency lane at all times, in accordance with NYCDOT regulations; and

WHEREAS; the Birch Wathen Lenox School has committed to adhering to NYCDOT requirements that barriers at each side of the open street be staffed at all times to ensure access for any vehicle requiring entry or exit from the open street, including Access a Ride vans, ambulettes, vehicles conducting passenger pick-up and drop off and deliveries; and

WHEREAS; Birch Lenox Wathen School officials have promised to keep an open dialogue with its neighbors on the block to address any concerns that arise; and

WHEREAS; the open street permit is good for one year and then must be reviewed in order to be renewed;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 Manhattan approves as presented the Birch Wathen Lenox School Open Street Application on East 77th Street between Second Avenue and Third Avenue.

Please advise our office of any action taken on this matter.

Sincerely,

Valerie S. Mason *Craig Lader and Charles Warren*

Valerie S. Mason
Chair

Craig Lader and Charles Warren
Co-Chairs, Transportation Committee

cc: Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of New York
Honorable Eric Adams, Mayor of the City of New York
Honorable Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Honorable Jerrold Nadler, 12th Congressional District Representative
Honorable Liz Krueger, NYS Senator, 28th Senatorial District
Honorable José M. Serrano, NYS Senator, 29th Senatorial District
Honorable Edward Gibbs, NYS Assembly Member 68th Assembly District
Honorable Alex Bores, NYS Assembly Member, 73rd Assembly District
Honorable Rebecca Seawright, NYS Assembly Member 76th Assembly District
Honorable Keith Powers, NYC Council Member, 4th Council District
Honorable Julie Menin, NYC Council Member, 5th Council District
Honorable Diana Ayala, NYC Council Member, 8th Council District