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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Transportation Committee
Wednesday, July 1, 2026 - 6:30 PM
Conducted Remotely on Zoom

Please note: The resolutions contained in the committee minutes are recommendations submitted by the committee co-chairs to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolution is discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.

Resolutions to be voted on:
Item 1A: (T234/R112) Nightingale-Bamford School Open Street
Item 1B: (T235/R113) Birch Wathen Lenox School Open Street (Unanimous)
Item 2: (T236/114) E-Bike Battery Swapping Charging Stations

Minutes:

Present: Michele Birnbaum, Lori Bores, DJ Falkson, Miles Fink, Ed Hartzog, Paul Krikler, Craig Lader, Gopi Malathi, Lavinia Mancuso, John McClement, and Charles Warren.

Absent (unexcused): Sebastian Hallum Clarke

Absent: Valerie Mason, John Phillips, Judy Schneider, and Todd Stein

Approximate Number of Public Attendees: 20

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM.

Item 1: PUBLIC HEARING: 2026 Open Street DOT Application:

T234: Nightingale-Bamford School: East 92nd Street from Fifth and Madison Avenues (Start Date: 8/17/2026 - End Date: 6/30/2027)

Abed Muriel, Director of Safety and Security, presented on behalf of Nightingale-Bamford School an application for an Open Street – school closure on East 92nd Street between Fifth Avenue and Madison Avenue between 8:30AM and 2:30PM. Mr. Muriel emphasized that there would only be occasional street closures during school hours for student recess and special events, and that the application's "8:30 AM to 2:30 PM" designation represents the window during which closures may occur, not continuous daily closure. During his first year at the

school this past year, he said that street closures have been used only three times. He noted that the school has a small rooftop play area that cannot accommodate all K-3 students simultaneously. During actual street closures, Mr. Muriel said that emergency vehicles are permitted through and residents are allowed to pass.

There were concerns about the disparity between the application's blanket 8:30 AM-2:30 PM authorization language and the school's actual minimal use -worrying that the broad language could create an entitlement to closure. Questions were raised about whether non-instructional events like senior graduations should instead follow the street fair application process used by other schools like Marymount. However, board members largely supported the application, emphasizing the value of outdoor space for student safety and development, and suggested that a stipulation requiring advance neighbor notification could balance concerns. Mr. Muriel agreed to provide advance notice and offered to clarify in writing that usage would remain occasional and for recess/special events only, addressing concerns about the application language.

> **WHEREAS,** the Nightingale-Bamford School is requesting authorization for an Open Street – school closure on East 92nd Street between Fifth Avenue and Madison Avenues to provide outdoor recess and special event space during school hours; and
>
> **WHEREAS,** the requested 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM closure request represents the range of school hours during which occasional closures may occur, not continuous closure, and the school has committed to using the authorization only for recess and special events; and
>
> **WHEREAS,** the school has demonstrated that actual usage will be minimal and occasional, with only three closures during the school's first year of operation, each brief in duration; and
>
> **WHEREAS,** Nightingale-Bamford School has committed to providing advance notice to neighboring residents before any planned street closure and to allowing residents and emergency vehicles to pass through as needed;
>
> **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that Community Board 8 Manhattan approves the Open Street application for Nightingale-Bamford School on East 92nd Street between Park and Madison Avenues for Monday-Friday between 8:30 AM and 2:30 PM from August 17, 2026 through June 30, 2027, with the condition that the school shall provide advance notice to residents as early as possible before any street closure.

Yes (9): Bores, Falkson, Fink, Malathi, Krikler, Lader, Mancuso, McClement, Warren

No (1): Birnbaum

T235: The Birch Wathen Lenox School: East 77th Street between Second and Third Avenues (Start Date: 8/31/2026 - End Date: 7/26/2027)

Bill Kuhn, Head of School at Birch Watkins Lenox Open Street – school closure covering six hours per week - Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM). This is a renewal

request for the Open Street program that operated successfully during the 2025-2026 school year. Lower School students use the space for outdoor play and movement, and the school is not aware of any neighbor complaints from last year's operation. The school has a small rooftop play space that cannot accommodate all lower school students simultaneously, and Mr. Kuhn indicated the program operated smoothly last year and has been a significant benefit to students with typical usage approximately 20-30 students at any given time. The school emphasized its cooperative relationship with neighbors, keeping the street open for necessary deliveries and resident access when needed.

While there was no objection from the public on this application during the Transportation Committee meeting, this is due to the timing in which the application was add the agenda. The item was added to the agenda the same day as the meeting and there is a possibility that we may hear from public at the upcoming Full Board meeting

There was limited discussion, as the board consensus was that no further deliberation was necessary given the positive prior experiences that were described, and no public comments or objections were raised.

> **WHEREAS,** Birch Wathen Lenox School is requesting an Open Street – school closure on East 77th Street between Second and Third Avenues on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays between 11AM and 1PM; and
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> **WHEREAS,** the school successfully operated an Open Street program during the 2025-2026 school year without complaints from neighbors and in good faith with the community, maintaining access for deliveries and resident needs; and
>
> **WHEREAS,** Birch Wathen Lenox Lower School students have benefited significantly from access to outdoor play space and movement opportunities during school hours; and
>
> **WHEREAS,** the school has demonstrated responsible stewardship of the Open Street authorization and has committed to continuing the same operating practices;
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> **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that Community Board 8 Manhattan approves the renewal of the Open Street application for Birch Wathen Lenox School on East 77th Street between Second and Third Avenues for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM from September 1, 2026 through August 31, 2027.

Yes (10): Birnbaum, Bores, Falkson, Fink, Malathi, Krikler, Lader, Mancuso, McClement, Warren

No (0): None

Item 2: T236: Presentation from the DOT on the proposed e-bike charging stations to be installed in the Community Board 8 District:

a. Site 20, 1524 Second Ave, New York, NY 10075 (On Second Ave at E 79th St, Northeast corner)

b. Site 21, 1359 First Ave, New York, NY 10021 (On First Ave at E 73rd St, Southwest corner)

Elaine Hseis, Program Manager for Public e-bike Charging at NYCDOT, presented a proposal to install 25 e-bike battery swapping charging stations citywide, with two proposed locations in Community Board 8. Ms. Hseis described the background that led to this initiative, as over 900 lithium-ion battery fires have occurred citywide in recent years, caused primarily by uncertified batteries and unsafe indoor charging practices. Tens of thousands of delivery workers use e-bikes on city streets, most with uncertified batteries, creating significant fire risks.

The New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) piloted battery swapping cabinet technology back in 2024 with over 100 delivery workers. The workers reported high satisfaction to the new battery swap stations because it helps eliminated the need for dangerous indoor charging, provided reliable battery access, and was quick to use (less than 60 seconds). Workers indicated a willingness to pay for the service if it improved efficiency and safety.

A $3 million New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) grant has since been awarded to build electrical infrastructure on NYCDOT right-of-way supporting certified battery swapping cabinets. The system operates as a rental—users scan a QR code, exchange empty batteries for fully charged ones, with all batteries UL-certified and owned by the vendor. Cabinets include fire containment design (fire contained within cabinet if it occurs), automatic defect detection (bad batteries removed from circulation proactively), and 24/7 DOT/Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) notification capability.

There are two proposed CB8 locations that are being proposed initially: (1) Second Avenue at East 79th Street (northeast corner) and (2) First Avenue at East 73rd Street (southwest corner), both in areas with high delivery worker concentration. Sites meet DOT's clearance criteria: 10 feet from fire hydrants, 3 feet from trees, not in front of entrances, 10 feet from crosswalks. Cabinets will be maximum 4×4 feet. NYCDOT noted that feasible locations within the district are limited due to stringent clearance and infrastructure requirements; the combination of criteria quickly narrows options despite many potential sites.

User fees (pricing to be determined via RFP) will support operations and maintenance. NYCDOT indicated longer-term goals involve delivery companies bearing cost responsibility, working with city council on this policy. Vendor selection via RFP will occur later this year, with design and engineering beginning late 2026 and cabinet installation targeted for late 2027/early 2028. Maintenance and site cleanliness are required vendor responsibilities per RFP.

NYCDOT is encouraging the public to provide feedback on proposed locations and to suggest any other locations that may be good candidates for this program.

Feedback was largely supportive, with commenters emphasizing that uncertified battery fires kill residents and damage buildings—an acute safety crisis requiring immediate action before comprehensive e-bike regulation materializes. The marginal sidewalk space required (4×4 feet) was noted as justified by the life-safety benefit. There were some concerns raised, including a high cost burden on severely underpaid delivery workers, with board members and public commenters urging faster action to shift battery rental costs to delivery companies. The long

procurement timeline, with installation not until late 2027/early 2028) was also a concern, with some noting this delays fire prevention despite the technology already existing elsewhere. There was feedback from a resident concerning the proposed First Avenue/East 73rd Street site, which fronts the Westville restaurant with outdoor dining; as an alternative, it was suggested that the quieter east side of East 73rd Street should be considered, as it could also be sited to adhere to CB8M's prior daylighting resolutions. DOT acknowledged the suggestion and indicated openness to alternative locations if feasible.

One dissenting board member objected that the city should not build e-bike supporting infrastructure without comprehensive e-bike regulation in place, and that delivery companies should maintain their own charging solutions on private property rather than the city subsidizing their business model with street space.

NYCDOT committed to working with City Council on cost-shifting to delivery companies and indicated they welcome alternative site suggestions if feasible before final site selection.

WHEREAS, the New York City Department of Transportation has proposed installing 25 e-bike battery swapping charging stations citywide as part of a $3 million state-funded initiative; and

WHEREAS, over 900 lithium-ion battery fires have occurred citywide in recent years, caused primarily by uncertified batteries and improper indoor charging practices, resulting in deaths, injuries, and building damage; and

WHEREAS, NYCDOT 2024 pilot program with over 100 delivery workers demonstrated strong adoption of certified battery swapping technology because it eliminates dangerous indoor charging, provides reliable battery access, and improves work efficiency; and

WHEREAS, the two proposed locations in Community District 8 Manhattan (Second Avenue at East 79th Street and First Avenue at East 73rd Street) serve areas with high delivery worker concentration and meet DOT's stringent clearance criteria for safe placement; and

WHEREAS, cabinets will feature UL-certified batteries, fire containment design, automatic defect detection, and 24/7 DOT/FDNY notification, significantly improving battery safety compared to current practices;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 Manhattan supports the Department of Transportation's proposal to install e-bike battery swapping charging stations at Second Avenue at East 79th Street and First Avenue at East 73rd Street, and the Committee welcomes DOT's consideration of alternative feasible locations if identified; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Committee encourages DOT to work with the city council toward arrangements where delivery companies contribute to battery rental costs to reduce burden on workers.

Yes (10): Bores, Falkson, Fink, Malathi, Hartzog, Krikler, Lader, Mancuso, McClement, Warren

No (1): Birnbaum

Item 3: NYCDOT Updates

Rafael Escano, NYCDOT Liaison to Community Board 8 Manhattan, provided the following updates:

- The NYCDOT project to modify the entrance and exit ramps on the Northbound FDR Drive at East 96th Street is scheduled to be initiated and completed in July 2026 this month, weather permitting. The changes were presented to the Committee in October 2025 and involves creating a dedicated exit only lane leading to the exit ramp and an entrance ramp that will allow vehicles to enter the FDR drive without having to merge into a moving lane of traffic.
- The York Avenue Traffic Study is now ready to begin data collection, as the Department of Design and Construction (DDC) has completed the water main project that has been ongoing in the lower East 60s. Data collection will occur in early fall (between September-October 2026) to capture post-summer conditions. The study is expected to take approximately 12 months to complete.
- In response to a concern raised at prior Committee meetings regarding towing of vehicles earlier than signs indicated would occur the day before NYCDOT's Summer Streets event in 2025. Mr. Escano confirmed that relevant DOT units, including the Summer Streets coordinator, are aware of these concerns and have been directed to prevent recurrence.

Items 4 & 5: Old and New Business

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Charles Warren & Craig Lader, Co-Chairs