

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES  
  
Of the  
  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

----- X

October 29, 2019  
Start: 1:34 p.m.  
Recess: 1:48 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Room  
16th Floor

B E F O R E: YDANIS RODRIGUEZ  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Mark Levine  
Andrew Cohen  
Fernando Cabrera  
Ruben Diaz, Sr.  
Peter Koo  
I. Daneek Miller  
Donovan J. Richards  
Stephen T. Levin  
Antonio Reynoso  
Rafael L. Espinal Jr.  
Carlos Menchaca  
Chaim M. Deutsch  
Deborah Rose

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a test. The 16th floor Committee room. Committee on Transportation. This is October 29th, 2019 and Owen Katowski [sp?].

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, everyone, for being here. First of all, I'd like to acknowledge and thank the team of the transportation committee. [inaudible 00:01:38], Elio Lin [sp?], Emily Roni, Rick Abello [sp?], Chima Oberoche [sp?], John Bassile [sp?] and my staff, especially who were here for the 250 Broadway, Evelyn Elcorado [sp?] and Tomas [inaudible 00:01:54]. Thank you for the great job that you do and I would like also to thank the staff of the Speaker and all the callings that are here today for coming together in this important day while we are voting on this bill. I am Ydanis Rodriguez, the Chair of the Committee of Transportation. First, let me acknowledge my colleagues who are here today with us. Council member Deutsch, Koo, Rose, Reynoso, Richards, Levin, Levine, and Espinal. In recent years, the city has seen an increase in bike ridership. Unfortunately, we have also seen an increase in cyclist and pedestrian fatality. I have worked-- I would like

to say that I am proud, but, you know, more than being proud, we have been trying to do the best that we can to leave our contribution together with the colleagues here and the administration to make this streets safer. We have worked alongside my colleague and Speaker Johnson on a number of bills that have increased protections for all cyclists and pedestrians. Since being elected and appointed Chair of the Transportation Committee, I have made it a top priority to ensure we keep pedestrians and cyclists safe throughout the redesigning of streets, belting protected by claims, and working on congestion [inaudible 00:03:19]. Speaker Johnson has been a fierce ally and that goal and we will continue to work together to ensure that we put New Yorkers safety first. One thing that everyone should know is that the city of New York has only 1.4 million New Yorkers that vehicles and many that owned vehicles, those who live in Queens and other places and [inaudible 00:03:44] because they have to walk 10--15 blocks from their house or where they live to the train station. Therefore, we need to plan to gather to think having those more than 7 million New Yorkers who rely on buses, trains, ferry, and bicycle to be

the priority. Today, we will be voting on proposing intro 15-- 57 - A. Speaker Johnson [inaudible 00:04:17] plan to go instead of the current approach that the city takes to transportation planning. These bills will require DOT to issue and implement a master plan to our city's streets every five years. These will allow New Yorkers to see how the parts fit into the whole. For example, how a bike lane in Queens is integral in creating an interconnected bike lane network. Or how a bus lane in the Bronx, especially in the South Bronx, that has many area transportation deserts, is vital in giving people access to the job centers not just in their area, but citywide. The bill also lays out search and benchmarks for the first two five-year plans. DOT will be required to install 250 miles of truly protected bike lanes over five years, and increase of 50 miles per year. And, as you know, I have been calling for 100 protected by claims every year, but, yes, getting 50 is a good move. 115 miles of physically or camera protected bus lanes over five years. Transit signal priority on the thousand intersections is something that I know that that also my colleague here, Mark Levine, has been pushing for.

Bus stop upgrade of 500 stops per year. 400 intersection redesigning per year. A million square feet of pedestrian space over two years. A sensibility pedestrian signals and pedestrian ramps, 1000 of new intersections and much more. This bill represents an ambitious and fundamentally different approach to our city's street, prioritizing people over cars. And, of course, I will say that I'm one of those 1.4 million who own a vehicle, but we need to make Sandy is Sandy that should do urban planning around making our streets more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. The street belongs to everyone and those who use it the most are our pedestrians and cyclists. We need to put safety over parking. If we are going to take to the zero in vision zero seriously, while at the same time addressing the climate crisis and keeping New Yorkers economy and liability competitive with other globally leaving cities, this is the approach that we need to take. I now call for the vote on proposed Intro 1557 - A. I recommend a yes vote and I ask the committee clerk to please call the role. [speaking foreign language]. With that, I pass it to the counsel.

COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,  
Committee Clerk. Roll call vote Committee on  
Transportation. Chair Rodriguez?

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Cabrera?

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Deutsch?

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Permission to  
explain my vote? So, I'm proud to say I am not part  
of the 1.4 million people in the city of New York who  
owned vehicles anymore. I gave up my vehicle several  
months ago and I am a proud transit rider. I reduced  
my driving time on the road by more than 50 percent  
and it's not always that easy. Rain, sleet, anything  
else. You know, all types of inclement weather it's  
not always that easy, but we get the job done and my  
message to those who owned vehicles and those who  
must own vehicles, please try to get off your vehicle  
and out of your cars at least once a week, if not  
once a month. This way we could reduce congestion on  
the streets. And if you have 1.4 million New Yorkers  
who owned vehicles, imagine how many vehicles we  
could take off the street if people just take that  
little bit of time off from their cars and using mass

transit. So, I am looking at 1557 and, mind district, in particular, is a district where people rely on their vehicles. So, up until now DOT has been implementing different changes in my district and I just want to say for the record, that one size does not fit all. DOT has implemented dedicated bus lanes and bike lanes in my district and I must say they have been a disaster. When you look at certain areas where they put in bus lanes and pedestrian islands, and forest vehicles to now reroute and reroute from-- A specific location I'll is Nostrum [sp?] Avenue, where they implemented a bus lane and Kings Highway and, because of that have a congestion in that area, those vehicles are now driving a few blocks away to Bedford Avenue and, on Bedford Avenue, you have an unprotected bike lane. And I happen to live on that bike lane. So, when we look at changes, we need to look at each district independently and must to the concerns of the elected officials, because we did have some by claims that were installed most recently and some of them are shared by claims with vehicles. And that just increases accidents. It increases crashes and we need to work together very closely when it comes to making changes



in certain districts. In addition to that, I believe that commercial loading zones should be set at certain hours for all businesses this way we know that those trucks make deliveries during the morning hours and we should learn from other states and how they implemented it and we should bring that to the city, as opposed to having trucks loading and unloading throughout the day. And when we do put out truck loading and unloading zones, we need enforcement. We need to make sure that those signs are clearly noted that these are dedicated spots for trucks loading and unloading. Many signs could be confusing here in the city of New York. Mike on Kings Highway in my district, you have three different signs on one pole and one of those three directs you to a loading and unloading, which is kind of confusing for motorists and they end up parking there. So, with that being said, I think that changes need to be done and I'm looking forward to working with this master plan and we should all work together, elected officials, Department of Transportation, and the City Council, and remember that one size does not fit all. And with that, I will be voting aye on 1557.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Menchaca?

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Espinal?

COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Before I vote aye, I want to just commend my colleague, Chaim Deutsch, on making that switch and taking the train to City Hall. We should all chip in and buy him a bike now. Get him on a bicycle. I think that would be amazing in Brooklyn. But with that said, I vote aye. Thank you.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Koo?

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Levin?

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Levine?

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Reynoso?

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Permission to explain my vote?

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: No. I'm sorry.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: No. I just want to say is just this one bill, the five year plan bill that concerns me not because I don't think it's

a good bill. It's because I don't think it goes far enough. I think that pushing it back to 2021 after we are all gone allowing for the next Council and the next mayor to do this work just doesn't-- you know, I mean, I don't feel like it is coincidence and would have loved for it to be more aggressive, but I won't stop progress. I think it is a good bill, nonetheless. I think we could have done more and I am going to be voting aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Richards?

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: I won't be chipping in. I've got scholarship money has got to save up for my son, but I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Rose?

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Permission to explain my vote?

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

COUNCILMEMBER ROSE: I say ditto to Council member Deutsch's remarks. I really would like each district to be looked at with a critical eye and plans nuanced based on that district and not district's needs. I happen to live in a district that is marked by transportation deserts and so I would like for that to be taken into account when we

are looking at what this plan should look like. I also believe that planning is necessary. I think part of the problems we encounter is because we don't plan. And so, being that planning is necessary and essential, I have vote aye and ask to be added to this legislation.

COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of 11 in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no abstentions, this item has been adopted by the committee.

CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. And, with that, this hearing is adjourned.

[gavel]

[background comments]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date October 31, 2019