

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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July 22, 2019
Start: 2:17 p.m.
Recess: 2:32 p.m.

HELD AT: COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
250 BROADWAY-COMMITTEE ROOM, 16TH
FLOOR

B E F O R E: YDANIS A. RODRIGUEZ
Chairperson

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

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

2 [sound check] [pause]

3 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Today, the
4 Committee will be voting on four pieces of
5 legislation related to parking regulations, cycling
6 and sidewalk hazards (sic). The first is Proposed
7 Intro 84-A is sponsored by Council Member
8 Chin...Deutsch, sorry, would bring much needed
9 transparency to the parking regulations around city
10 schools especially during the summer months. Some
11 parking regulations are only in effect while the
12 school is in session, but motorists are not always
13 clear when this is the case. The proposed
14 Introduction will require the Department of Education
15 and Department of Transportation to post on their
16 website information on when public and charter
17 schools are in session. The second bill Proposed
18 Intro 570-A is sponsored by Council Member Mark
19 Treyger will help frustrated New Yorkers who get
20 ticketed for parking on streets that have illegal
21 parking signs. The bill will create affirmative
22 defend for parking violations issued to motorists who
23 inadvertently park their cars in a spot with illegal
24 parking signs as long as there are not other legible
25 signs that apply to the parking space on the same

2 block. The third bill Proposed Intro 886-A is
3 sponsored by Council Member Rafael Espinal will
4 establish a pilot program in Brooklyn for the
5 installation of pet harbors on sidewalks adjacent to
6 commercial establishments. This legislation will
7 allow the owners of a small pet to leave in an
8 unattended state and close quarters for a short
9 period of...of time while they enter the commercial
10 establishment to shop. Finally, Proposed Intro 1457-
11 A is sponsored by Council Member Carlos Menchaca will
12 establish a cyclist crossing an intersection must
13 follow pedestrian control signals, except where
14 prohibited by traffic control device and as long as
15 the cyclist yields to pedestrians in the cross-walk.
16 I would like to thank the Administration and all the
17 stakeholders for their work to help improve the
18 language of these bills. At this time I would call
19 on the sponsors to make statements. On their bills,
20 and my colleagues would like to say anything, and if
21 not, anyone? Council Member Menchaca.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: What?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Yes, go for it.

25 Let's go back there. [background comments/pause]

2 Good afternoon. I'm Council Member Mark Treyger. I
3 want to thank Chair Rodriguez and the committee and
4 the staff for your work to support my bill Intro 570
5 in relation to illegible parking signs. This
6 legislation will resolve a frustration for residents
7 that receive a parking ticket when there's illegible
8 signage. When a parking sign is illegible, people
9 don't have notice that a restriction is in effect,
10 but can still receive a ticket. It is within the—the
11 Department of Finance's discretion to dismiss these
12 tickets, but they're not required to do so, and many
13 people don't know that they might be able to get
14 their ticket dismissed for illegible signs and the
15 standards for dismissal can be unclear. There should
16 be more pressure on the New York City Department of
17 Transportation to maintain the parking signs
18 citywide, and the onus should not be on taxpayers and
19 residents for the basic responsibilities of
20 government. But this issue speaks to greater
21 problems within DOT. For too long there have been
22 unnecessary long wait times for signs to be updated
23 ore even installed or replaced, and quite frankly, we
24 deserve legible signs. That sound basic, but basic
25 things sometimes do not happen. We heard from a

2 number of people that signs are faded, and completely
3 illegible. Residents don't know what the parking
4 regulation is and get hit with a ticket due to the
5 city's lack of maintenance. This legislation holds
6 DOT accountable for replacing signage that is illeg--
7 illegible and allows residents an option to contest a
8 ticket by displaying with a photo that the sign is
9 indeciph-indecipherable. It allows one-it allows
10 people to fight a ticket by showing that both signs
11 or the sign were illegible, parking signs are double-
12 sided, and that there are no other signs on the same
13 side of the block that apply to the same violation
14 and the same spot. Drivers absolutely have to do
15 their part and the biggest part to be safe,
16 responsible and follow all traffic laws including
17 parking only in appropriate places. This bill does
18 not excuse unacceptable behavior. However, DOT must
19 maintain its infrastructure and making sure parking
20 signage is available and clear. It is a common sense
21 solution to holding DOE responsible for upholding the
22 infrastructure of our city, and I thank the Chair for
23 his time.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you,
25 Chair and thank you all for being here today. Um,

2 it's been I want to say almost four years since the
3 idea came to us from the community of bicyclists in
4 the neighborhoods that we represent with the idea to
5 use pedestrian leading intervals as part of our
6 infrastructure for safe bicycling in New York City.
7 Um, many, many conversations with advocates, many
8 conversations with the Department of Transportation
9 and the NYPD finally led to a final version that was
10 a result of a study that was conducted over the last
11 year. That study has been positive. The question
12 that the city answered was: Is it safe for people to
13 be—a bicyclist to use a leading pedestrian interval
14 that allows for seven seconds for pedestrians to
15 cross an intersection, um, and allow for bicyclists
16 to use that. What we found was that bicyclists were
17 already using this, and so this law actually is
18 catching up to cultural norms right now in our
19 city that are all about safety, and so for me right
20 now I want to say thank to the advocates, and I want
21 to read some of their comments that they've been
22 Tweeting about this bill. The bill, the LPI bill
23 here is will make New York City intersections safer
24 for all cyclists at no cost to pedestrian safety as
25 shown by the DOT. Cyclists will be allowed to

2 proceed with pedestrian signals before turning multi-
3 ton vehicles. It's common sense. Thank you to the
4 City Council, and it's true. This will not require
5 any new additional signage. This will just be law.
6 The pilot did put signage up, and cost a little bit
7 of money, but now every LPI will be with this bill,
8 and it passes—if it passes the City Council tomorrow,
9 will be available to everyone. I want to read from
10 Makes—Make Queens Safer. We paid this ticket a few
11 times, which means that there was enforcement on this
12 from the NYPD, but they say, Teach our children the
13 importance of getting ahead of traffic, behind us as
14 it is a deadly merge. The LPI bill allows riders to
15 be seen, to avoid turns in the conflict, turn
16 conflict and safely take a position in a travel lane.
17 We recommend that everyone rides this way. This is
18 all part of our participatory Democratic process, and
19 I want to say thank you to the people of our
20 communities that bring great ideas to us as Council
21 members, their legislators, and that we work with
22 city agencies together as one. This is—the is a good
23 example of what we're going to keep doing in the
24 future, and I welcome more ideas as we bring good

2 sensible common sense and low cost safety measures to
3 our city. Thank you, chair.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you and
5 before—before for the vote, I also would like to take
6 this opportunity to invite all New Yorkers and my
7 colleagues here in order to join us in our Third
8 Transit Rider Tour that will happen over 7 in ages,
9 which is going to be a 24-hours tour from first 7:00
10 to 7:00 in the morning to 7:00 to 7:00 p.m. and the
11 day 7:00 to 7:00 p.m. As we have done it before, our
12 colleagues is—will be allowed to—will have this
13 opportunity to highlight any transit stations that we
14 feel are important to bring to their attention. So,
15 again, all New Yorkers and are invited to be part of
16 this great initiative that together with the
17 advocates and our committee this is—we're going to be
18 doing for the third year. With that, I recommend a
19 yes vote on all the bills, and before let me also
20 acknowledge—yes sir. [pause] You would like to say...

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: I Have a
22 question?

23 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you, Mr.
25 Chair, and, um, so, my colleague just mentioned in

2 his statement he was talking about safety, and
3 certainly that is paramount to the Council's concern
4 in any legislation at the table, um, but also the
5 fact that there will be no costs associated with it.
6 I-I honestly didn't come to safety knowing you can't
7 quantify that with costs, but I would like to see
8 certainly it would be education because it created an
9 entirely new paradigm not just for the cyclists but
10 for pedestrians and as well as drivers, and-and for
11 folks not to be aware. Quite frankly, most folks
12 that use the road other than the daily cyclists
13 aren't familiar with LPI, and so forth. I-I-I would
14 really like to see that happen that we have a, um, a
15 concerted effort to educate the-the folks that share
16 the road when that happens. Um, and, you know, as we
17 move forward. So, that was--

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: --not necessarily
20 a question, but a statement on that. Alright.

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, and--
22 and in the fall we're going to be addressing many
23 other initiatives related to expanding the
24 opportunities not only to protect the cyclists, but
25 also to making, um, Citi Bike and other cycling in

2 New York City affordable. One of the things that
3 we're going to be exploring and—and we're looking
4 both at Council Member Levin and I to hold a hearing
5 very soon on the Fair Fares, and we definitely would
6 like to expand Fair Fare also to include to Citi Bike
7 to make it affordable because what the previous study
8 has said is true, most Black and Latino has not been
9 included with that opportunity, and we feel that we
10 have a fair opportunity and we're going to be working
11 on it. So, I would like to acknowledge that the
12 Council Members that's been here—who have been here
13 Council Member Cabrera, Deutsch, Espinal, Koo, Levin,
14 Menchaca, Miller, Reynoso and Diaz, and with that, I
15 recommend a yes vote. [background comments]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: And Rose.

17 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And Rose. Sorry.

18 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk.

19 Roll call vote Committee on Transportation. All
20 items are coupled. Chair Rodriguez

21 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

22 CLERK: Cabrera.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Aye.

24 CLERK: Deutsch.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Aye.

2 CLERK: Espinal.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Aye.

4 CLERK: Koo.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

6 CLERK: Levin.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye.

8 CLERK: Menchaca.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Aye, and I want
10 to add thank you to Council Member Miller who brought
11 up the education piece, and part of the conversations
12 that we're having are about saving lives, and there
13 have been over a dozen people that have died in the
14 streets of New York City, and so my, um, my
15 commitment continues to be for a true Vision Zero. I
16 want to read another really quick Tweet. Someone is
17 saying, um, Peter Kaufman saying: Treating bikes a
18 equivalent to cars as has been standard practice for
19 decades has been proven to be wrong, dangerous and
20 too often fatal. Um, this bill recognizes our
21 bicyclists are not motorists, and so, this is the
22 kind of education that we want to do to really
23 understand how we can be safe on our streets, and
24 really, um, ownership to the past, and changing that.

2 For the future and for that reason, I vote aye on all
3 the—all the bills today.

4 CLERK: Miller.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: I'm...I'm going to
6 be abstaining.

7 CLERK: Reynoso.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Permission to
9 explain my vote.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Permission
11 granted.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I just want to
13 say data is real. The LPIs work, and I want to
14 congrat--congratulate cyclists because we--today we
15 made the a little safer, and I want to congratulate
16 Carlos Menchaca for the work that he did. I do have
17 a concern in 886-A, which speaks to pet--allow pet
18 harbors to be placed on sidewalks adjacent to
19 commercial establishments. While I am supportive of
20 this legislation and will be voting on it, I want to
21 make sure that I speak regarding sidewalk space being
22 used and oversight on the street furniture and
23 objects in sidewalks. We all know that pedestrian
24 space is limited. What we should be doing is
25 considering using streets and spaces that are now

2 used for private personal parking to accommodate any
3 needs that we have in the City of New York like these
4 pet harbors, and not use pedestrian space, but we've
5 seen this heat wave. We've seen what it means, and
6 allowing for animals that are extremely vulnerable
7 and can't speak for themselves having a safe space is
8 something that I don't want to vote against. So, I
9 want to vote aye on all. Thank you.

10 CLERK: Rose.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye.

12 CLERK: Diaz.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: Aye even though I—
14 I'm always the first one that is here, I'm always the
15 last one to be called. I'm voting yes.

16 CLERK: By a vote of 10 in the
17 affirmative, 0 in the negative and 1 abstention, all
18 items have been adopted and today's agenda.

19 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: With that, this
20 hearing is adjourned. [gavel]

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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 July 26, 2019