

Committee On Transportation

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I am opposed to any further bus rerouting in the Glendale Middle Village Area. The neighborhood is still trying to recuperate from the rerouting of the Q54 bus. Changing the bus routes to accommodate the Atlas Park Mall seems to be an attempt of the Hemmerdingers to bolster their vision of the redevelopment of our residential neighborhood.

The Idea of Hemmerdinger-land is thought to include plans for condos and a transient hotel.

If the MTA has always been interested in a "Trip Generating Terminus" for the Q45 and Q29 buses why didn't they implement these while the Knitting Mills and other businesses were Active in Atlas Terminal.

Hemmerdinger didn't renew leases on the businesses so he could impose his vision of development on our neighborhood. Now as the mall appears to be not as profitable as he'd like it to be, he's rerouting buses to get traffic to the mall.

The Mall is a white elephant too big to maintain with too much invested to quit Why does the community have to be imposed upon further to accommodate a mall which in Damon Hemmerdingers own words is not for the residents of Glendale, his target market is the upscale residents of Forest Hills, A recent radio advertising campaign described the Mall as "Just outside Forest Hills".

Does he know the telephone directory lists the mall as RIDGEWOOD?

Traffic is awful on 80th Street now. Adding buses and bus stops from Eliot Avenue to Cooper Avenue on 80th will make matters even worse

The proposed turn around for the bus from Atlas Park to Cooper Avenue directs the Q45 into the bottleneck that occurs due to the left turn bay (Created FOR the Mall entrance By the Way).

Traffic will back up on Cooper Avenue to Woodhaven Boulevard.

The pavement on Cooper Avenue has been seriously damaged since the beginning of the mall project. There are cracks along the pavement where the water mains enter the homes. 80th Street isn't faring much better; two more bus routes will damage the infrastructure there as well. The buses will pass three schools on the new route increasing the risk to schoolchildren. They plan to remove the "Greenstreet Triangle" located at Furmanville Avenue and 80th Street. Isn't that counterproductive to the "Greening of New York?


The MTA under H. Dale Hemmerdinger is not an agency dedicated to the success of a failing, ill planned business venture. It was my understanding that it's purpose was/is to serve the community.

Apparently the MTA plans to reroute the buses whether or not the community wants the changes or not. At a recent public hearing at community board five not a single voice was heard supporting the rerouting.

The proposals are a disgrace and Glendale is opposed to the changes

Catherine O'Kane

88-20 Cooper Avenue Glendale NY 11385



My name is Michael O'Kane and I'm a member of Community Board 5 in Queens. Recently a Mr. Norman Silverman of the MTA appeared before the CB 5 Transportation Committee. His stated purpose was to work with the community to implement a rerouting of the Q45 to better serve the community. No one who resides in the area wants or asked for the rerouting. Atlas Mall is "A Big Player" said Mr. Silverman. Atlas is the ONLY player. Recently at a board meeting, a public forum was held, several dozen speakers were heard, not one voice was raised in support of the change. In July of last year the Q54 was rerouted to Cooper Avenue from its Arrow straight route along Metropolitan Avenue to the Williamsburg Bridge. The Route now is serpentine having several turns to facilitate access to the Atlas Mall. Since the Rerouting of the Q54 my block has had several trees fall and at least one major water main break due to the additional traffic. In a letter to the MTA and several city officials (Dated May 17, 2007), I asked who is going to suffer when the infrastructure breaks down ? Certainly not the mall operators.

In a time when the MTA is saying it will have to implement Service cuts in order to meet a budget shortfall, does it make sense to reroute a bus that will serve no one, There is already bus service to the mall along 80th Street with the Q29? Why reroute another bus? Where is the oversight of the MTA?

Michael O'Kane
88-20 Cooper Avenue
Glendale, NY 11385

June 17, 2008

Dear Sir/Madam

As a homeowner living on Cooper Avenue for the last 21 years I was I was greatly concerned to hear of another bus being re-routed to Atlas Mall. The streets surrounding this mall have become so congested that sometimes you sit in your driveway waiting to exit for 5 minutes.

This new bus is going to come up 80th Street which is already a nightmare due to the mall already. It already has 1 bus line going there now, to add another just doesn't make much sense. I just wish that someone in higher position would listen to the people who call Glendale Home & would have a heart & listen. Between the cars, trucks, noise pollution, air pollution from the bigger trucks coming down these blocks, and to add another bus doesn't make any sense.

Sincerely
Mrs. L. Pittell.

John Rozankowski, Ph.D.
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City Council Hearing - June 19, 2008

The theme of today's City Council hearing provides a perfect setting to inform you about the efforts of the people of Hunt's Point to persuade the MTA to give them access to Barretto Point Park.

There are relatively few parks in the South Bronx and this park was built to remedy this deficiency. However, Barretto Point Park is surrounded by heavily trafficked highways and streets with no sidewalks so that access is dangerous and practically impossible. What good is a park if no one can get to it?

The MTA has frequently provided special seasonal bus services: some #5 & #12 buses are extended to Orchard Beach in the summer and some buses lines are extended for schools. The people of Hunt's Point have asked the MTA to provide special bus service during the summer to Barretto Point Park by extending some #6 buses by one stop. Unfortunately, their pleas have fallen on deaf ears!

I am fully aware of the MTA's fiscal crisis but running perhaps 2 buses per hour an extra five minutes is not a budget buster. On the contrary, it is a worthy investment: (1) it will benefit children, teenagers and senior citizens who can't go elsewhere and who would otherwise be forced to swelter on the city streets; (2) it will benefit the MTA by demonstrating that the agency does care about the needs of its customers; (3) and, if properly advertised, it will generate enough revenue to pay for itself and more.

Extending some #6 buses to Barretto Point Park is very doable and this committee can make a decisive difference in persuading the MTA to do the right thing.

[For more information, please contact Adam Liebowitz at Action on the Point; Tel. 718-542-4139, ext. 28; actionatthepoint@yahoo.com]

***“Stop the Q45”
Committee comprised of residents of 79th Place
Glendale, NY 11385
917-705-3707***

*Roberta Maureau Alex Maureau Dolores Capace Donald Desmond
Lynn Pope Charles Pope Rodney Otero Mary Otero*

The “Stop the Q45” bus committee was formed by a group of concerned residents, coming together to oppose a proposed bus route change and extension of the existing Q45 bus route. In December of 2007, 6 proposals named Options A1 thru A6 were presented by the MTA Bus Company at a Community Board 5 transportation committee. These options would have this bus route extended by traveling down one of our densely populated, narrow residential streets. Had our committee not alerted the residents of the proposed bus route, we feel that there **would not** have been any community notification until a proposed bus route was finalized.

In January 2008, more than 150 Glendale and Middle Village residents flooded the Community Board 5 monthly meeting to oppose this route extension. Resident after resident spoke at the public forum segment expressing their concerns and fears over what the future might hold. Issues that were raised at the meeting were, and are not limited to an increase in air pollution, noise pollution and litter, a higher concern for traffic and pedestrian safety and elimination of parking in order to accommodate buses traveling down and turning on narrow streets and intensified traffic congestion on already crowded local streets. Many individuals charged that any additional buses in the area would compromise the community’s quality of life. If you were to visit our community, you would see that on street parking has become difficult with the overdevelopment of multi family homes and a shopping mall.

What we find curious is that no resident or community entity has requested extended service of the Q45. As much as the MTA initially tried to have everyone believe that this is a benefit for the community, they have now stated that the bus extension is solely for the purpose of bringing shoppers to the new and still expanding "Shops at Atlas Park". Since the January meeting, the MTA has now presented the "B" and "C" Options. All options will still congest our streets as this extension does not serve any purpose for our community.

The committee in attempting to oppose this change was confronted with several MTA obstacles which contributed to minimizing and negating the concerns and views of those directly affected by a bus route change. Some of these obstructions were and still are:

1. The MTA failed to inform the community of any MTA policies, guidelines, protocol, etc., with respect to bus route changes; if they even exist at all.
2. The MTA made it abundantly clear that it will act irrespective or even in contravention to the will of the community or their elected representatives. At the January meeting, Vincent Arcuri, Chairperson CB5 stated that that any proposed change to the Q45 route would be discussed at a public hearing to be scheduled by the board once a plan has been received from the MTA. Even so, the chairperson cautioned that the MTA, as a public authority, can make changes to bus routes without consulting the community board.
3. The MTA did not provide adequate public notice of a previously proposed bus route change, especially to those residents directly affected. In July of 2007, unbeknownst to the homeowners, the Q54 bus was rerouted to travel along Cooper Avenue from 80th Street to Metropolitan Avenue. From what we understand, the only public notice was posted on the bus.

4. The MTA failed to perform any Transportation Industry Standard Studies:

- No Rider Ship Study was conducted
- No Parking Study was conducted
- No Turning Study was conducted
- No Environmental Impact Study was conducted
- No Cost Benefit Analysis Study to Justify All associated expenses was conducted
- No Community Notification Before Route Change has been made

In short, the MTA acted like a public authority, accountable to no one or thing. No one in the affected communities requested this service and we view this extension of the Q45 as tax dollars being used solely to bolster private business.

As concerned citizens, we would like to propose some procedures that we would like the MTA to follow with respect to route changes in NYC.

1. Public hearings must be held before changes to bus routes can occur. The hearings will be conducted by the NYC community board most affected by these changes. The hearing is to be held by the community board within 120 days of notification by the MTA.
2. The MTA must notify all owners of residences and any business that would be directly impacted by the route change by regular mail of the public hearing. This notice will be mailed not less than 14 days or more than 30 days from the date of the scheduled hearing. The notice shall include the date, time and location of the public hearing. It shall also note the proposed change in bus route. As an alternative, the MTA may place a public notice in two weekly publications which circulate to residents in the proposed bus route change area. The notice shall also include the proposed change along with the location, date and time of the public hearing.

3. The community board conducting the hearing shall vote on the matter within 45 days of the public hearing. An affirmative vote by a majority of all community board members in favor of the proposed route change is required for authorization to proceed with the bus change.

4. In the event of a negative vote by the community board, the MTA may appeal for authorization approval from the NYC Council. If the Council decides to schedule the matter for a hearing or vote, the Council must notify the MTA and the Community Board at least 30 days before the proceeding.

We, the "Stop the Q45" Committee ask for you to take the time and review this bus change from our position. For most of us, Glendale has been our community for many years. We have invested our life savings into our homes. These homes will someday be our children's inheritance. If a similar situation were happen in your community, we are certain that you would want to protect your investment and preserve the peace and enjoyment of your home. We ask you to consider these changes, hoping that they will provide a framework for real community participation with regard to MTA bus route changes. The current circumstance of the MTA's complete unaccountability is abusive and unacceptable.

Respectfully,

The "Stop the Q45" Committee

Dalores Capace

Alex Mancusa

TESTIMONY OF

PETER G. CAFIERO, CHIEF OF OPERATIONS PLANNING

MTA NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT

TO THE

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

ON

HOW THE MTA CREATES OR MODIFIES ITS BUS ROUTES

THURSDAY JUNE 19, 2008

How the MTA Creates or Modifies Its Bus Routes

Good morning, Chairman Liu and members of the Committee. My name is Peter Cafiero, and I am the Chief of Operations Planning at MTA NYC Transit. I am joined by Norman Silverman, Vice President of Operations Planning for MTA Bus. NYC Transit and MTA Bus provide virtually all bus service within New York City. We are here today to discuss, as the Committee requested, the process of creating and modifying bus routes. I will address NYC Transit's bus route planning and scheduling process, and then Norm will discuss how MTA Bus handles these issues.

I'll start with a description of the bus service currently provided by NYC Transit. We operate 244 bus routes, 208 local and 36 express bus routes. Limited-stop bus service is provided on 38 local bus routes. Our bus services carry almost 2.4 million passengers per day on 46,000 daily bus trips with a fleet of over 4,500 buses.

Any discussion of how bus routes are created and modified begins with consideration of three background points. The first point is that NYC Transit implements service according to MTA Board approved guidelines. These guidelines provide the structure for a consistent and fair evaluation of existing and proposed services by determining where bus service should be provided, what type (be it local, limited, or express), when it should be provided, and how frequently it should be provided.

One of these guidelines, the local bus route spacing guideline, determines the appropriate spacing between bus routes. As a general rule, the guideline strives to place a local bus route within $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of the riding public. In areas with low density and high automobile ownership, the guideline specifies that no one should be more than $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from a bus route. In all other areas, the guideline specifies that the riding public should be within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of a local bus route. With our extensive bus network, 98% of NYC residents are within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of a local bus route, and 99% are within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

Let me give one recent example of how this guideline led to an extension of a local bus route. In 2006 we analyzed NYC Transit's local bus service in relation to the route spacing guideline. The analysis showed that there was one large gap in the local bus network, on the South Shore of Staten Island. To fill this gap, in 2007 the S55 route was extended to operate along Bloomingdale Road from Amboy Road to Arthur Kill Road.

The second background point to consider is that we didn't start our bus network with a clean slate. Many bus routes have operated along the same path for decades, formerly as streetcar lines and now with buses. The long history of a dense network of surface routes is one of the reasons that such a high proportion of the City's residents have good access to bus service. NYC Transit began its route planning efforts in the mid-1980s. It took many years to eliminate or revise routes that had long since outlived their usefulness. To cite one example, we ran a bus route in Brooklyn from Ebbets Field to the Hamilton Avenue Ferry pier until 1991 even though both destinations were gone by the end of the 1950s. We have been modifying bus routes for over 20 years, but I'm sure you understand that while everyone is always clamoring for more and new routes (many of which we would agree are necessary), there is never any support for modifying routes which no longer make sense because of demographic changes.

The third background point may be the most important, and it's that we are operating in an era of constrained resources. We would like to be able to implement a number of bus route extensions and new bus routes. As the Committee is probably aware, the MTA Board will decide next week whether our current financial situation allows us to implement a proposed series of extensions and some new routes to address emerging markets and improve the connectivity of the bus network. But our financial situation has changed dramatically as the economy (and particularly the real estate sector) has worsened, reducing our subsidies. Our financial problems encompass not only our Operating Budget but our Capital Budget as well. With the State Legislature's recent defeat of congestion pricing, the MTA has a significant funding gap and is seeking new sources of funding to continue its Capital Program. That Program provides the funds for purchasing additional buses for new or extended bus services as well as funding for facilities to park, store and service buses. The combined operating and capital funding challenges constitute significant challenges and constraints in providing new or additional bus service.

With that as background, I'd like to speak a little about how we revise and modify local bus service.

In order to identify potential new markets, NYC Transit works closely with city agencies and community-based organizations to learn of planned developments. The location, size, and nature of the development are analyzed to assess potential passenger demand. This is then compared to current service in the area to determine whether the potential demand could be accommodated on existing routes, or if route paths need to be revised or extended or a new route implemented to provide more direct service to the development site.

Discussions are held with affected communities (such as representatives of community boards, local elected officials, and community groups) to ensure that, as much as possible, any proposed service revisions are in accordance with community needs and desires. After an extensive community outreach process, service revisions are proposed (subject to available funding) and are then implemented. Monitoring studies are conducted to determine the success of the service revision in meeting the needs of customers traveling to and from the new development.

One recent example exemplifies our approach to bus route planning. Gateway Mall, in the Spring Creek section of Brooklyn, opened in 2003. We spoke with the developer long before the mall opened about providing bus service to the mall when it opened, but it was made very clear that they didn't want bus service to the mall. After the mall opened, the tenants were equally clear that they wanted us to provide bus service to the mall. We began operating one route, the B13, from Ridgewood to the mall in 2003. As the mall grew in popularity, we were asked by a number of elected officials to provide additional service to the mall so that people could travel there from different neighborhoods. In response to these requests, we introduced B83 service from East New York and Starrett City to the mall in late 2007. In addition, the MTA Bus Company plans to introduce service from Jamaica to Gateway, the Q8, later this month. And in a reversal of its earlier position, the mall not only supported the extension of the B83, but also plans to build a bus stop and turnaround on the mall property to provide improved access for transit customers.

Shopping centers are not the only new markets we serve. Several other service revisions in the last ten years to serve significant developments include:

- In Brooklyn, extending bus service to the new Brooklyn General Post Office in Spring Creek in 2006;
- In the Bronx, rerouting the Bx17 to the burgeoning St. Ann's Avenue residential district in 2005;
- In Queens, rerouting the Q27 to Queensborough Community College in 2003 and extending the route from Queens Village to Laurelton in 2004 to give students in Southeast Queens a direct ride to the college;
- In Staten Island, adding the new S93 from Brooklyn to the College of Staten Island in 2001;
- And in Manhattan, extending the M72 to serve the new residential developments along Riverside Boulevard in 2000.

Given the mature and comprehensive nature of our bus network, the overwhelming amount of service changes involve short re-routes or route extensions rather than entirely new routes.

Unlike local bus service, express bus service is primarily focused on providing one-seat service to Manhattan and back from areas of the city beyond the reach of the subway system. Due to the long non-stop segments of express bus service there is less customer turnover on express buses than on local buses, resulting in express bus service being significantly more expensive to operate than local bus service on a per passenger basis.

As set forth in our adopted Express Bus Guidelines, development of express bus service is, by design, undertaken sparingly, primarily because of its high cost of operation compared to local bus and subway service. They are primarily targeted to serve areas without subway service, which explains why 24 of NYC Transit's 36 express bus routes travel between Manhattan and Staten Island.

And while the Guidelines indicate when it might be appropriate to create a "new" express bus route, our ability to do so at any given time is constrained not only by budget but also by the number of express buses and bus operators we have, and in particular by our depot limitations since our depots are currently at, or over capacity.

Finally, I'd like to speak briefly about how we schedule all bus service, the amount of service that we provide.

Local and express bus service is also scheduled to meet MTA Board adopted passenger loading guidelines. To ensure that bus schedules accurately meet these guidelines and reflect operating conditions (such as traffic speeds), schedules are regularly reviewed, evaluated and revised in order to provide passengers with the most efficient and effective service possible. Schedules for bus service are subject to change four times a year, although individual routes are typically adjusted approximately every two years for weekday service (annually for express routes).

We routinely change service to reflect changes in demand. Both increases and decreases to existing schedules are based on current ridership counts. The number of riders is compared to the loading guidelines; bus service is added if the passengers counted exceed the guideline, and service is decreased if ridership declines. These changes also address the need for running time adjustments to more accurately reflect observed traffic conditions.

That concludes my statement on how NYC Transit plans and schedules bus service. My colleague, Norm Silverman, will now discuss MTA Bus Company services. We'll both be happy to then address your questions.

TESTIMONY BEFORE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

By Norman C. Silverman

June 19, 2008

Good morning Chairman Liu and members of the Transportation Committee of the New York City Council. My name is Norman C. Silverman and I am Vice President of Operations Planning for the MTA Bus Company (MTA Bus). I am here to clarify the steps that MTA Bus takes to modify or revise bus service.

For reference, it would be helpful to present a brief background of MTA Bus. The MTA Bus Company was created in September 2004 as a subsidiary of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to assume the operation of the local and express bus services in areas formerly provided by the seven (7) private bus companies that operated under franchises granted by the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT). The creation of MTA Bus resulted from the mutual desire of the City and the MTA to improve the quality and efficiency of bus service in these areas.

This transition occurred on a staged basis, beginning in January 2005 through February 2006. With the completion of the transition, MTA Bus is now the tenth largest fleet in the United States and the fastest growing element of the MTA family of public transportation providers. MTA Bus currently serves over 360,000 daily weekday passengers and operates 46 local routes serving the counties of the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan.

A key to a vibrant and responsive transit system is the need to be receptive to changes in customer demand and to be perceptive with respect to operating constraints.

By definition, bus transit systems can be more flexible than fixed guideway systems allowing for a ready means to adjust service to address changes in customer volume and travel patterns, changes in operating conditions and other changes in external conditions. MTA Bus has been

particularly responsive to these factors since the former seven (4) private bus companies made very few service adjustments over the past decade, despite increased demand, MetroCard fare initiatives, worsening traffic conditions, and the development of new land uses creating changing transportation needs.

In its simplest terms, a bus route can be described by three (3) aspects – path, span and frequency. The path of a bus route is basically the roads that the bus travels from its starting point to its end terminal. The span of a bus route is the duration of time of when bus route operates and provides services. The frequency of a bus route is the time interval between consecutive buses within a particular time period. MTA Bus attempts to follow the same service guidelines as NYCT in determining the structure and levels of service of a bus route.

Let me discuss each aspect as it relates to modifying or creating a new bus route. The frequency of a bus route is the initial input to the scheduling process. A basic foundation of schedule making is maximum loading guidelines. Sufficient vehicles must be scheduled to provide adequate capacity at the maximum load points of each bus route.

For local service, these guidelines vary by time of day, with greater usage and crowding tolerated during peak periods, and seated loads provided for during off-peak periods. Conversely, constrained resources (limited number of buses and/or operators available) exclude the scheduling of excessive numbers of vehicles. The schedule guidelines have a sliding scale, with lighter loads permitted at lower frequencies (wide intervals). This provides an attractive service on lower density route segments. The scheduled frequency is determined by the application of loading guidelines to counted levels of ridership.

The schedule guidelines show the frequency of service, given that there should be service, as well as a minimum number of passengers necessary to justify any service.

As I previously stated the span of a bus route is when the bus route operates and provides service. The schedule guidelines play an important role in determining the span of operation. If passenger volumes during some periods of the day are insufficient to justify service in a

particular time period, usually overnight and/or weekends, the span of a bus route will not include those period(s). Conversely, if passenger volumes during some periods of the day appear high and growing, that provides the impetus, along with other market factors unique to each route, to consider expanding the hours of service.

The path of a bus route follows certain roads on a regular basis from start terminal to end terminal with virtually no deviation normally. The path of a bus route may change due to construction, addition/deletion of a bus stop, or the extension/truncation of a bus route to serve a changed transportation market condition.

Since the completion of the transition to MTA Bus, over 85% of the bus routes have had schedule adjustments, almost 25% of the bus routes have had span of operation changes, and over 25% of the bus routes have route path changes.

With regard to the modification or creation of a bus route, the frequency and span of a bus route are the most changeable. The path change for a bus route are generally more complicated in that they involve trade-offs between existing and new customer service patterns and often involve work with external agencies and therefore occur less frequently.