

# Coalition for a Livable West Side

<http://www.livablenewyork.org> email: [livablenewyork@erols.com](mailto:livablenewyork@erols.com)

NEWSLETTER FALL 2011 Vol. 24, Issue 1

## Madeleine Polayes

Madeleine Polayes, founder, dynamic, fearless leader and president of the Coalition for the Livable West Side since 1981 (the heart and soul of CLW) has stepped down from her active role in CLW but continues to serve as President Emeritus.

She regrets that illness has made this necessary and wishes to thank you for the support you have given her and CLW for many years.

And on behalf of the community, we thank her for spearheading CLW efforts through the years that have made a difference in our community and for her tireless 53 years of service to our community.

Batya Lewton, President

## Community Forum on Pedestrian Safety Planned

Assembly member Linda Rosenthal and the Coalition for a Livable West Side are sponsoring a pedestrian safety forum. Sponsor list in formation. Date, place and time will be announced.

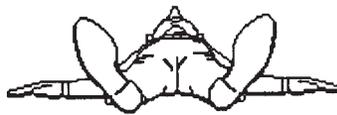
The purpose of the forum will be to inform interested community members about four pedestrian safety issues:

- 1) the progress made on improving pedestrian safety at and near P.S. 199;
- 2) promotion of a complete network of pedestrian safe streets along West 70th Street from Riverside Boulevard to Amsterdam Avenue;
- 3) better traffic management on Riverside Boulevard (W. 62<sup>nd</sup> - W.72<sup>nd</sup> St.); and
- 4) other safety measures that can be made if NYS – S5411-2011 is passed by the NY Legislature and signed into law by Governor Cuomo. The bill would require state and local transportation agencies to explore designs that will make streets more accessible to pedestrians, motorists and cyclists.

The forum will also seek community opinion regarding speed cameras versus red light cameras. The best research on both technologies will be presented. Audience feedback will be essential to refining needed recommendations.

Community Board 7 (CB7) will be asked to adopt a resolution that incorporates the pedestrian safety measures the community supports. The CB 7 resolution would be submitted to the NYC Department of Transportation for action.

*Did you know that pedestrians struck by cars at 30 mph have an 80% chance of surviving the accident. A pedestrian struck by a car at 40 mph has a 70% chance of dying. When you are driving, that 10mph shift is subtle...but the effect it can have on a pedestrian, is life or death.*



## The Coalition Needs Your Financial Support Now!

The Coalition, a 'watchdog' group, has accomplished much with limited resources. It keeps you informed. It takes action to improve the community's quality of life. Join today. Contributions are tax deductible and will be matched by a Challenge Grant.

**Coalition for a Livable West Side**  
PO Box 230078  
New York, New York 10023

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via our Challenge Grant

## Recommendations for Pedestrian Safety - W. 70th Street (Amsterdam Ave - Riverside Boulevard)

Coalition's recommendations to date for a complete network of pedestrian safety (West 70<sup>th</sup> from Amsterdam to Riverside Boulevard and on Riverside Boulevard) are contained in four reports by our consultant Amy Pfeiffer. They are online at [www.livablenewyork.org](http://www.livablenewyork.org). Click on the link on the left-hand side of the page.

The NYCDOT has responded only to the recommendations in the April 2011 report. NYCDOT's proposed actions are italicized after each recommendation.

Requests proposed to Community Board 7 (CB7) by the P.S. 199 PTA in April 2011 and approved by CB7.

- Instituting a 20 mph school speed zone along West 70th Street.

*DOT Action: DOT has installed two speed bumps: one at the entrance to school and one at the playground.*

- Installing red light safety cameras at the intersection of West End Avenue and West 70th Street (including the western, northern and southern approaches) in order to discourage red light running.

*DOT Action: On hold (NYCDOT reached legislative limit on red light cameras.)*

- Day lighting<sup>1</sup> to increase pedestrian visibility by removing several parking spaces at the intersection of West End Avenue and West 70th Street.

*DOT Action: Signs stating "No Standing Anytime" were installed at these locations. No day lighting.*

- Adding leading pedestrian intervals<sup>1</sup> (LPI) across West End Avenue to give pedestrians a head start crossing the street.

*DOT Action: Under evaluation, along with pedestrian countdown signals.*

- Installing neck downs<sup>1</sup> and pedestrian refuges<sup>1</sup> at West End Avenue and West 70th Street to reduce the crossing distance.

*DOT Action: Interested but does not have monies to install.*

- Installing pedestrian medians<sup>1</sup> at West 70th Street and West End Avenue.

*DOT Action: Believes street is too narrow.*

Coalition's analysis includes expanding the NYCDOT study to include additional traffic-calming measures.

In July 2011, DOT issued its recommendations for pedestrian safety on Riverside Boulevard. CLW's consultant found that the DOT's recommendations omitted pedestrian safety and CLW has advocated for the following safety measures for Riverside Boulevard:

- (1) Install a temporary traffic control device at the new intersection of Riverside Boulevard and Riverside Drive.
- (2) Install a temporary traffic control device at West 68th Street, the main entrance to the park.
- (3) Install speed bumps on Riverside Boulevard at West 66th and West 67th to slow motor vehicles at school entrances.
- (4) Install flexible bollards throughout the length of the center striped median to prevent motorists from driving in this area.
- (5) Extend the center median so both the northbound and southbound travel lanes are 11 feet wide.

CLW received numerous requests from the community to address the issue of pedestrian safety from West End Avenue to Riverside Boulevard on West 70th Street. Amy Pfeiffer, CLW's consultant, analyzed the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street corridor (Riverside Boulevard to West End Avenue). In September 2011, she listed her recommendations. They are:

- (1) Install speed cushions 50 feet west from intersection at West End Avenue and at Freedom Place in both directions along West 70th Street;
- (2) Install floating parking on north side of West 70th Street from West End Avenue to Riverside Boulevard;
- (3) Open West 71st Street to two-way traffic between West End Avenue and Riverside Boulevard and
- (4) Install protected bus stops at stops along West 70th Street.

<sup>1</sup>See glossary of traffic calming terms on page 5

## Department of Transportation (DOT) Completes Safety Plan for the 'Bowtie of Death' Intersection Where Broadway and Amsterdam and West 71st St. Converge

DOT's safety improvements include reducing crossing distances for pedestrians by extending sidewalks, curbs and medians further into the street.

Josh Orzeck, Community Coordinator, NYCDOT said that the Pedestrian Safety Plan has been completed.

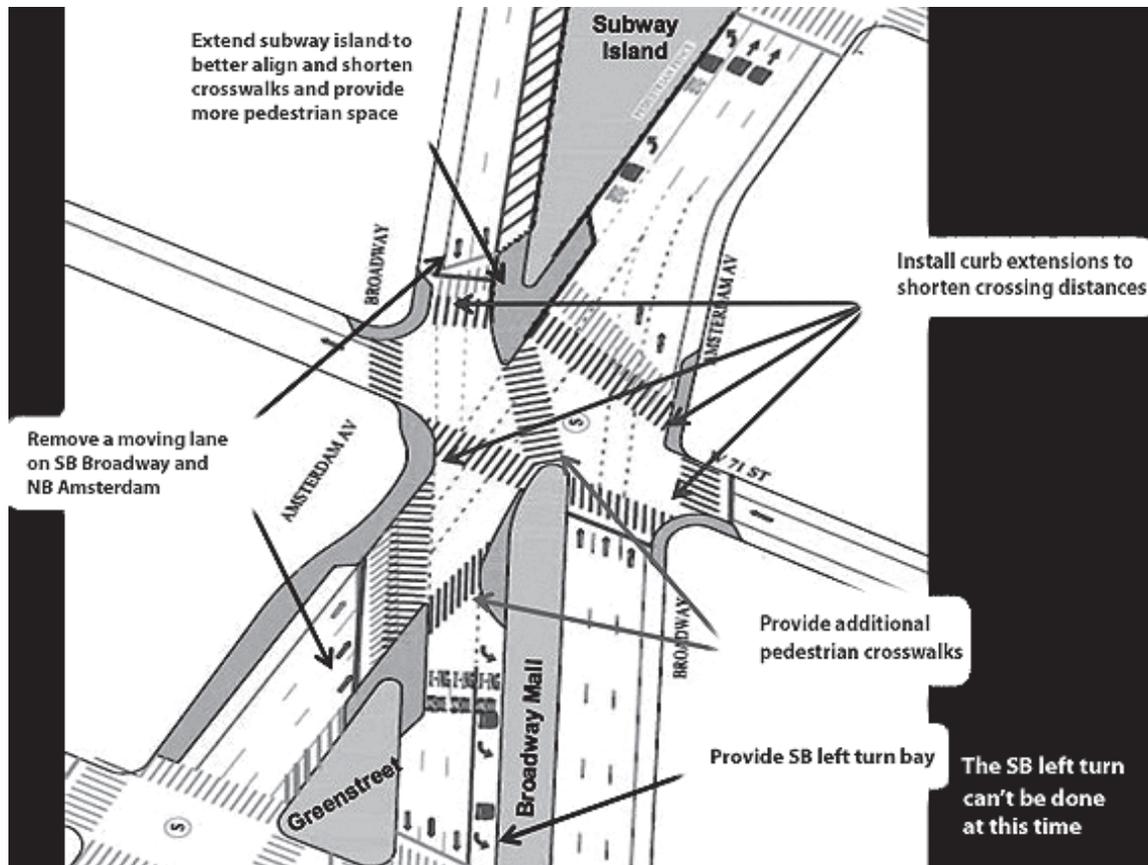
NYCDOT has:

- (1) cut away portions of the walls at the Broadway Mall median to accommodate new crosswalk;
- (2) constructed a new asphalt pedestrian ramp on the west side of the Broadway Mall median (for new crosswalk);
- (3) installed new signal pole and pedestrian heads;
- (4) installed new lane markings and pedestrian space markings;
- (5) installed granite blocks and planters;
- (6) added flexible delineators which create a separation between roadway and pedestrian area. They were put around the edge of the pedestrian areas.
- (7) removed one moving lane going south on Broadway between 72nd and 71st Street; and
- (8) removed one moving lane on Amsterdam Avenue going north, between 70th and 71st Street.

You can email Mr. Orzeck ([jorzeck@dot.nyc.gov](mailto:jorzeck@dot.nyc.gov)) if you want to receive timely updates or ask questions, make suggestions or inform him of other pedestrian safety issues that need to be addressed by NYCDOT. Please send a copy of your email to: [CLW at livablenewyork@erols.com](mailto:CLW@livablenewyork@erols.com).

We thank Borough President Scott Stringer and Assemblywoman Linda Rosenthal for highlighting the need for DOT to make pedestrian-protecting improvements at the "Bowtie of Death". And we thank DOT for making the improvements.

NYCDOT Schematic of its Pedestrian Safety Plan



## **NO FRACKING IN NEW YORK STATE ! NO POISON IN OUR DRINKING WATER !! Environment/Public Health Advocates Find Flaws in NYS Regulatory Plan for Fracking.**

The New York Water Rangers Campaign, a collection of seven public health/environmental advocate groups, issued a press release that itemizes what the groups have collectively prioritized as the Top Ten Fracking Flaws in the preliminary revised regulations. Below is an abbreviated version of the list.

1. **New York State isn't proposing to ban any chemicals, even those known to be toxic and carcinogenic.**
2. **The preliminary draft allows drilling waste to escape treatment as hazardous waste, even if it is in fact hazardous under the law.** This means fracking waste could be sent to treatment facilities unable to properly treat it, putting the health and safety of our waters and communities at grave risk.
3. **The state proposes allowing sewage plants to treat drilling wastes.**
4. **Drinking water supplies would be inadequately protected. The preliminary draft increases buffers and setbacks from aquifers and wells. However, the protections are inconsistent and can be waived in some instances.**
5. **Some fracking restrictions would have sunset dates.**
6. **The preliminary draft does not analyze public health impacts, despite the fact that fracking-related air pollution and the potential for water contamination have serious effects on people**—especially the elderly and children, and communities downwind and downstream of proposed fracking operations. There is growing evidence of negative health impacts related to gas extraction in other states.
7. The DEC proposes issuing permits *before* formal rulemaking is complete, a backward move that leaves New York's waters and communities at risk.
8. **The state is breaking up environmental impact reviews.** The thousands of miles of pipelines or compressor stations required for drilling to get the resulting gas to market will be reviewed by a different agency under a different process. The agencies include New York's Department of Health, the Department of Transportation, the Public Service Commission and the Department of Agriculture and Markets.
9. While proposing to put the New York City and Syracuse watersheds off-limits to drilling, **critical water supply infrastructure would not be protected.** The state proposes (an inadequate) buffer around New York City drinking water infrastructure in which only an additional review would be required and upon which projects could be permitted—not a formal ban.
10. **New York's environmental agency has been subject to steep budget and staff cuts** and does not have adequate staff or resources to properly oversee fracking, even if every possible protection were in place.

"Without providing the necessary measures that will prevent pollution from drilling and fracking, New York's communities and environment will suffer like Pennsylvania's, where drilling is running wild. On the whole, the revised Draft doesn't cure the ills of gas development that are the most dangerous so the industry's interests will win out over public health," said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network."

"A press release by the New York State Environmental Conservation summarizes the preliminary changes. The recommendations contain these major revisions: (1) High-volume fracturing would be prohibited in the New York City and Syracuse watersheds, including a buffer zone; (2) Drilling would be prohibited within primary aquifers and within 500 feet of their boundaries; (3) Surface drilling would be prohibited on state-owned land including parks, forest areas and wildlife management areas; (4) High-volume fracturing will be permitted on privately held lands under rigorous and effective controls; and (5) DEC will issue regulations to codify these recommendations into state law."

The full 1,095 page Preliminary Revised Draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement is available at [www.dec.ny.gov/data/dmn/ogprdsgeisfull.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/data/dmn/ogprdsgeisfull.pdf)

See page 5 for what you can do to stop Hydro-fracking in New York State



## No Hydro-Fracking in New York State

### What You Must Do

Write letters to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and to Governor Cuomo during this public comment period. A written letter has greater value than an email.

It is imperative that Governor Cuomo and the DEC know how much you value clean air, land, and water in your community. Tell him that fracking is an unacceptable risk to our water, air and public health.

### Other Tips:

- Governor Cuomo do not squander your opportunity to be a true leader and put health, air and water quality, and safety of New Yorkers first.
- New York's second draft of the Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) shows that the DEC has done little in the past two years to demonstrate that fracking can be conducted safely.
- The public comment period is too short and should be extended to March 2012.

Remember to include your name and address in your letter:  
ATTN: SGEIS Comments, NYS DEC  
625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-6510

Honorable Andrew Cuomo, Governor  
State Capitol, Albany, NY 12224

More on Fracking on Page 6

## Glossary of Traffic Calming Terms

### Bollard

A thick, heavy concrete or metal post set into the street or sidewalk to warn or to restrict motorists.

### Curb Extension/Neckdown



Curb extensions are sidewalks that project into traffic intersections to slow turning drivers and protect crossing pedestrians. They are also known as bulb-outs or neckdowns and extend the sidewalk or curb line out into the parking lane (one car length) which reduces the effective street width.

### Day Lighting

"Day lighting" is a term referring to the removal of parking spaces at the near and far sides of an intersection to make pedestrians waiting to cross the street more visible to motor vehicles approaching the intersection.

### Leading Pedestrian intervals (LPI)

LPIs are traffic signals that give people on foot a head start before the light turns green for turning drivers. This allows people on foot to get about half way into the intersection before drivers start turning, making them more visible to drivers.

### Speed Cushions

Speed cushions are basically small speed bumps made from either rubber or asphalt, spaced on the roadway so that the wide wheel-base of buses or emergency vehicles can track between the cushions, but requiring other motorists to slow down.

### Fire truck driving through speed cushions



### Temporary Traffic Control Device

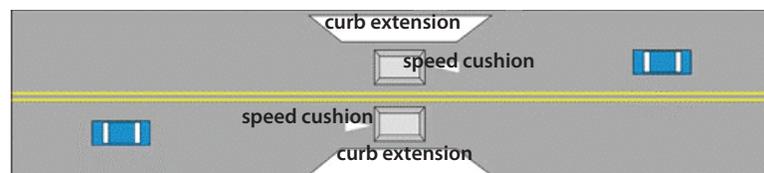
Installing a TTC signal alerts drivers of a new interchange or connection.

For example a TTC would alert drivers of the new connection of Riverside Boulevard to Riverside Drive, at West 72nd Street. This is a stronger safety measure than waiting to see how the connection operates without a traffic signal.



### Protected Bus Stops

Protecting the space at and near bus stops allows buses to move more efficiently through a corridor. Below is one example of a protected bus stop, along with speed cushions:



## DEC Cancels Fracking Advisory Panel Meeting

DEC cancelled the Oct. 14th scheduled hydrofracking advisory panel meeting and Environmental Advocates of New York says it knows why. They say Gov. Andrew Cuomo is pushing the state towards *drilling faster than state agencies can prepare*.

The Fracking Advisory Panel meeting was canceled because New York's Department of Health, Department of Transportation, Public Service Commission and Department of Agriculture and Markets *have not completed estimates of the demands that drilling 1,400 new gas wells each year will place on their agencies in terms of staff and resources,*" said Environmental Advocates in a statement.

Clearly, state agencies are caught flat-footed by Governor Cuomo's rush to drill. We're less than two months from closing the simultaneous comment periods on the environmental impact statement, regulations and draft permit, and the Governor and New York State's agencies still don't know how many tens of millions of dollars this industry will cost the state. This is further evidence that New York is unprepared to provide responsible oversight of fracking and guarantee that our drinking water and communities are protected. Excerpt from article by David King. GothamGazette.com, Oct. 14, 2011

## EPA Plans to Issue Rules Covering Fracking

The EPA took another step toward tightening oversight of hydraulic fracturing today, announcing it would initiate a process to set national rules for treating wastewater discharged from gas drilling operations.

Until now, the agency has largely left it to states to police wastewater discharges. Some have allowed drillers to pump waste through sewage treatment plants that aren't equipped to remove many of the contaminants, leading to pollution in some rivers and to problems at drinking water facilities.

Cynthia Dougherty, EPA's director of ground water and drinking water, told a Senate panel today that the agency has an important role to play in bolstering state standards.

"I wouldn't say they're inadequate," she said of states' regulations, "but they could use the help."

When drillers frack a gas well, they inject thousands of gallons of chemicals, some of which are highly toxic even at low concentrations. When the fluid comes back up, it carries extremely salty water that can contain heavy metals and radioactive elements. Excerpt from article by Nicholas Kusnetz, ProPublica, Oct. 2, 2011.

## Don't Let Governor Cuomo Fast Track Hydro-Fracking

Hydro-fracking could begin in early Spring 2012. There are only 90 days for the public to review and comment on the over 1,000 page complex (SGEIS) document, and DEC will hold only 4 public hearings.

The bottom line is that if the process goes forward as the Governor and the DEC plan, the period for public comment will last only until December 12, 2011. Then the DEC will take the public's input under advisement, release final permit conditions and then *issue permits - at which point the fracking will begin*.

Is it true that fracking revenues are being put in the 2012 budget? Is that why the Governor will not extend the comment period to 180 days? Why isn't the Governor concerned that the devastating flooding of the Marcellus Shale area in New York State raises the frightening prospect of fracking disasters caused by floods? The State already knows that fracking is dangerous. That is why New York State comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli is moving to create an industry-supported fund to pay for potential environmental damage caused by hydro-fracking and other forms of gas drilling. How about not doing the damage in the first place! Go to : [www.livablenewyork.org](http://www.livablenewyork.org), and click on No Hydro-fracking for more good information on the danger of Hydro-fracking.

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Annual Dues: \$25  New Member  Renew - Year 2011 Dues  Pre-Pay Year 2012 Dues

My contribution is:  I wish to support the Coalition for a Livable West Side's efforts on behalf of the community.

\$500  \$75   I can help with publicity.  I can attend important meetings, hearings, etc.

\$250  \$50   I can distribute the Coalition newsletters, important flyers, etc. in my building.

\$200  \$25   I need \_\_\_\_\_

\$100  other   I can help with \_\_\_\_\_

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**Mail to:** CLW, Inc., P.O. Box 230078, New York, N.Y. 10023. **Contributions are tax deductible [section 501c3]**

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