

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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February 14, 2011

Start: 10:15 am

Recess: 11:17 am

HELD AT: Committee Room  
250 Broadway - 14<sup>th</sup> Fl.

B E F O R E:  
JAMES VACCA  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Gale A. Brewer  
Daniel R. Garodnick  
David G. Greenfield  
G. Oliver Koppell  
Jessica S. Lappin  
Ydanis A. Rodriguez  
Deborah L. Rose  
James G. Van Bramer  
Vincent M. Ignizio  
Peter A. Koo  
Eric A. Ulrich

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2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Please, I'd like  
3 to call this meeting to order. Good morning. My  
4 name is James Vacca and I'm Chairman of the  
5 Committee on Transportation for the New York City  
6 Council. I'd like to welcome you all here today.

7 Today we're voting on three bills  
8 related to pedestrian safety. As I stated at the  
9 first hearing on these bills, this issue of  
10 pedestrian safety is very important to me and very  
11 important to this Council. The legislation we're  
12 voting on today will go a long way toward not only  
13 increasing safety, but increased participation  
14 will be assured from local communities into the  
15 process of how we make streets safer in the city  
16 of New York. And that's very important to all of  
17 us. While the number of fatalities on our roads  
18 has declined, we can always do better by employing  
19 the right strategies. Doing so starts with  
20 getting enough information, giving the community a  
21 voice in these strategies and gathering the  
22 information. I thank all those who have given  
23 their input into these bills. They've gone  
24 through a couple of amendments as bills always do,  
25 but I think they're basically a good step in the

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right direction.

Proposed Intro 374A was introduced by Council Member Rosie Mendez and it would require DOT to compile data regarding crashes among bicycles and between bicycles, pedestrians and other vehicles. Now as we all know, bicycling is becoming an expanding type of network here in the city of New York. And as it expands, we were concerned that no one was keeping track of statistics and this bill would change that. We want to make this bill the first step, I hope, in looking at the entire use of bicycles in our city, as per the hearing at the Committee on Transportation that I chair had several months ago and as part of the process, safety for pedestrians and safety for bicyclists is what council Member Mendez addresses in this piece of legislation.

Proposed Intro 377A, which I introduced would require the DOT to provide greater detail when denying a traffic control signal, such as a stop sign, traffic light, et cetera, when request by a council member or community board. The time and date of any traffic studies and the time period of any crash data

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2 studied will also be automatically given. In  
3 addition, upon request a further summary of the  
4 data involved will be provided. This will aid  
5 communities in their dialogue with DOT about these  
6 issues.

7           Just to explain briefly, right now  
8 when a community board or a councilperson requests  
9 a traffic signal, a traffic calming measure, they  
10 get a letter for DOT, which just says that your  
11 request has been denied. Our study took 12 weeks,  
12 and based on our factors, the request is denied.  
13 My legislation now requires DOT that when the  
14 community board of a councilperson - - proceed  
15 further, we want to know why. What warrants were  
16 not met? Why was the signal rejected? Because  
17 sometimes council members will want to fashion a  
18 traffic improvement plan for a series of blocks.  
19 Maybe if one block doesn't qualify, the next block  
20 would, and it allows you to develop strategies,  
21 knowing transparently why one location was  
22 rejected, when the survey was taken, what day,  
23 what time. Many of our schools approach us and  
24 they say to us, "that the test for the stop sign  
25 or speed bump, when was that taken?" Well, if you

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2 take it at one in the afternoon, you may get a  
3 different result than if you take it at three in  
4 the afternoon. So, this bill will change all  
5 that.

6 Proposed Intro 370, introduced by  
7 Council Member Lappin, will do two important  
8 things. It will require the placing on the  
9 website of crash data that will be sortable by  
10 intersection and it will require the monthly  
11 updating of this data. In addition, there will be  
12 a roadway safety plan required to be formulated by  
13 DOT in consultation with NYPD, which will be  
14 presented to the Mayor and the City Council. The  
15 goal of this plan will be in part to identify key  
16 agencies and groups that DOT should meet with. Do  
17 I have any members who wish to be heard on any of  
18 the three bills that we are proposing for adoption  
19 by the Committee today? Council Member Lappin.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Thank you  
21 very much, Chair Vacca and I want to thank you for  
22 your persistent work on these issues. This is a  
23 city of walkers and we know that seniors  
24 unfortunately make up over 1/3 of the fatalities  
25 on our city streets, but if a corner is unsafe for

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2 a senior, it's really unsafe for all of us. And  
3 giving communities this information empowers them  
4 to work with the Police Department and the  
5 Department of Transportation and with their  
6 elected officials like us to make their  
7 neighborhoods safer. So I am very happy that the  
8 Council is passing this bill, and that soon,  
9 people who live in the city will be able to go  
10 online and see for themselves which intersections  
11 are dangerous in their neighborhoods.

12 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you,  
13 Council Member Lappin. Council Member Mendez is  
14 here? No, I'm sorry. She's not. Okay, Council  
15 Member Debbie Rose?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I just want  
17 to thank you, the Chairs of who sponsored these  
18 three bills and especially, Chair Vacca. As a  
19 community board member for about 28 years, one of  
20 the most frustrating issues were that the  
21 communities know what intersections are not safe.  
22 They know that there needs to be additional  
23 precautions and time after time, we've gotten a  
24 ruling back that it was unwarranted and I am just  
25 so glad that--there has to be more transparency

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2 and that there's going to be a process by which  
3 City Council members can pursue these unsafe  
4 intersections. And I want to thank the Chairs for  
5 that.

6 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you.  
7 Thank you so much, Council Member Rose. I hear no  
8 other speakers. We will now call the roll and the  
9 Chair recommends a yes vote on all three pieces of  
10 legislation and the three pieces will be coupled,  
11 unless there is an objection. There being no  
12 objection, we will now call for a vote.

13 KEVIN PIN: Kevin Pin. Roll call  
14 on the Committee on Transportation. Councilman  
15 Vacca?

16 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I vote aye.

17 KEVIN PIN: Garodnick?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

19 KEVIN PIN: Lappin?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Aye.

21 KEVIN PIN: Rodriguez?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye, and  
23 I would like to add my name to Intro 370A and  
24 377A.

25 KEVIN PIN: Rose?

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye, and I  
3 would like to add my name to Intro 374A.

4 KEVIN PIN: Van Bramer?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

6 KEVIN PIN: Ignizio?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Aye, and I  
8 too want to congratulate the Chairman. For many  
9 years, the opaque rules of DOT--would send you a  
10 letter about federal warrants and denied and  
11 nobody knew why, so this I hope will be able to  
12 give us more ammunition from which to go back and  
13 really protect our neighborhoods. Thank you very  
14 much, Mr. Chairman. I vote aye on all.

15 KEVIN PIN: Koo?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I vote aye and  
17 I would like to add my name as a sponsor to 377A  
18 and 374A.

19 KEVIN PIN: By vote of 8 in the  
20 affirmative, zero in the negative and no  
21 abstentions, all items have been adopted. Members  
22 please sign the Committee reports.

23 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I thank the  
24 Committee members for their assistance and their  
25 support. And I think that these three bills go a

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2 long way, and I know we will be doing more when it  
3 comes to safety on our streets. There being no  
4 further questions or statements, I now adjourn  
5 this Committee meeting. I thank you all.

6 [gavel]

7 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: The vote on  
8 this Committee will stay open for a half hour, so  
9 that members who are not here yet will have an  
10 opportunity to vote as well.

11 KEVIN PIN: Koppell?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Aye.

13 KEVIN PIN: The vote stands at nine  
14 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no  
15 abstentions.

16 KEVIN PIN: Ulrich?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: I vote aye  
18 on all.

19 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Announce the  
20 new total now, sir. We're waiting for one or two  
21 more members, but--

22 KEVIN PIN: [Interposing] The vote  
23 stands at nine in the affirmative, zero in the  
24 negative and no abstentions.

25 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you.

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[background conversation]

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council Member  
Greenfield?

KEVIN PIN: Greenfield?

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Aye on  
all.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you.  
Total now?

KEVIN PIN: The vote stands at 11  
in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no  
abstentions.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. Thank  
you.

KEVIN PIN: Brewer?

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I vote aye.  
Thank you.

KEVIN PIN: The vote stands at 12  
in the affirmative, zero in the negative and zero  
abstentions. The time now is 11:17. This final  
vote in the Committee on Transportation is 12 in  
the affirmative, zero in the negative and no  
abstentions.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberley Uhlig certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature

Kimberley Uhlig

Date

February 28, 2011