

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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March 19, 2013

Start: 9:58 a.m.

Recess: 10:45 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
JAMES VACCA
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Council Member Vincent Ignizio
Council Member Dan Garodnick
Council Member Debbie Rose
Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer
Council Member Peter Koo
Council Member Gale Brewer
Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez
Council Member Oliver Koppell
Council Member Jessica Lappin
Council Member David Greenfield

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2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I thank you all
3 for coming. Today is March 19th, 2013. I will now
4 call the meeting of the transportation committee
5 to order. On my extreme right we have Council
6 member Vincent Ignizio.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: [Off mic].

8 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I knew that was
9 coming. That's what Halloran said yesterday. Dan
10 Garodnick, Debbie Rose, I'm James Vacca chair of
11 the committee, Jimmy Van Bramer, Peter Koo, Gale
12 Brewer, Ydanis Rodriguez.

13 We will today be voting on two
14 resolutions we heard yesterday. And the
15 resolutions go to the state recommending action.
16 Resolution 916 and resolution number 1332(a).
17 Resolution 916 is sponsored by Council member Van
18 Bramer to my left, and it calls upon the governor
19 to sign legislation and for the New York State
20 legislature to pass legislation which would permit
21 the city of New York to set up a demonstration
22 project involving speed camera enforcement.

23 And resolution number 1332(a),
24 sponsored by Council Member Vallone and myself,
25 calls upon New York State legislation to act

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2 S3644(a)2012, and for the Governor to sign, and
3 this would enforce the vehicle and traffic law
4 section 1146 even if the police officer was not
5 present at the time of the crash so that officers
6 who have reasonable cause to believe the violation
7 was committed by the driver could take appropriate
8 action.

9 As I indicated, we discussed both
10 items yesterday and we had public hearings on both
11 of these resolutions, and should they pass they
12 will go to the full Council for their vote.
13 Without further business do any members of the
14 Council have a statement or comment they wish to
15 make, will be heard in any way. There being none.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER: Off mic.

17 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: About this issue.
18 You want to explain your vote or do you want to
19 speak now?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER: Off mic.

21 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. We will
22 call the vote to order. We will couple both
23 resolutions if that's, there's no objection. Let
24 me start with the sponsor Council member Van
25 Bramer.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you
3 very much Mr. chair. I'm very proud to be the
4 sponsor of 916(a) with 17 of our colleagues.
5 Obviously we spoke at length yesterday, we will
6 again tomorrow hopefully. So tomorrow will be
7 extremely brief, but this is a good pilot project
8 that could, and I believe will save lives. And it
9 is the furthest thing from my mind is raising
10 revenue.

11 This is about good public policy.
12 It makes our streets safer and I'm proud that
13 speaker Quinn joined us last week in announcing
14 her support for this resolution. And I know
15 things are moving in the state, and hopefully this
16 will encourage movement, even more so, our strong
17 stand on this issue.

18 This is something I care about a
19 great deal. Nine years ago an 11-year-old girl on
20 my block was killed when she was hit, and ever
21 since then I've cared a great deal about making
22 our streets safer. And just like speed bumps and
23 four-way stop signs and all those things that so
24 many of us fight for on a daily basis, speed
25 cameras can and will be an effective tool in

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2 slowing drivers down. Even five or 10 miles per
3 hour slower can result in a serious injury as
4 opposed to death.

5 In the case of Hallie Geyer, her
6 father told me just a couple of days ago that he
7 believes if that car had been going just five or
8 10 miles per hour slower his daughter would be
9 alive today. So it is very important for me. I
10 know it's very important for so many people. And
11 I just hope that everyone can support this
12 resolution.

13 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council member
14 Ignizio.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Yes, I'm
16 voting no on 916(a) and I - - . If I can briefly
17 explain my vote, I don't question the intention of
18 my colleague who just spoke Council member Van
19 Bramer, I know his intentions are well. I just
20 think this is a wrong approach. I think not for
21 him, but I think for the administration.

22 This is more about revenue
23 generation then it is curtailing speeding in our
24 city. If it wasn't, there is other ways of doing
25 this. We can set up a situation whereby these

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2 cameras would send initial warnings to people in
3 the mail. And then upon a second violation by the
4 same registration, then you would get a fine.

5 Or you would have a pilot program
6 whereby the fine would be so much lower as you
7 would first start this pilot for the first two
8 months, the first five months, the first year.
9 But that wasn't the case. This was, we're going
10 for it all, we're going for it once and we're
11 going to utilize the full extent to penalize
12 people.

13 And I just genuinely believe the
14 heart of this debate is based in revenue
15 generation for the administration and not about
16 slowing down traffic, and that's why I'm opposed
17 and I'm voting no and I hope my colleagues in the
18 state legislature of which I used to serve, do not
19 pass this as well. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council member
21 Dan Garodnick.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DAN GARODNICK: Vote
23 I. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council member
25 Rose.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Permission to
3 explain my vote. I'm voting today with
4 ambivalence. I too feel that unlike, like most
5 legislation that starts out with the most
6 benevolent of reasons have recently turned into
7 revenue generators. And causes an under burden, I
8 think on the boroughs outside of Manhattan because
9 as my colleague from Queen said yesterday: very
10 rarely can traffic in Manhattan travel more than
11 30 miles per hour, whereas in the other boroughs
12 we often do.

13 But with that said, I have had a
14 number of fatalities in my district that I do
15 really believe could have been avoided had
16 speeding not been an issue, and that I've received
17 overwhelming support from my district for this
18 bill.

19 And upon reading the assembly bill
20 it states that these cameras are to be placed in
21 areas around schools and naturally evolving
22 senior, sort of retirement areas. As the person
23 who has put in legislation for school safety zones
24 utilizing whatever materials, or whatever are
25 available to remediate this situation to ensure

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2 that our schools are safe, it then behooves me to
3 vote I for this bill.

4 But sort of with the Council that I
5 will be looking into legislation that assures that
6 this, that the, I guess the nature of the bill
7 actually be held true. That it is purely for
8 safety measures and not revenue generation by
9 looking into city Council legislation, making sure
10 that they are placed in school zones and around
11 seniors, and that the original bill said that it
12 would be a demonstration pilot for five years. So
13 I hope to be a part of legislation that ensures
14 that those parts of the assembly bill are actually
15 enforced. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: We've been
17 joined by council member Koppell, Lappin and
18 Greenfield. I'll now call council member
19 Rodriguez - - .

20 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I.

21 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council member
22 Brewer. Sorry. Council member Ydanis Rodriguez
23 would you vote again please?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I.

25 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council member

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Brewer.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I'm voting I on the hearing. Yesterday was really helpful. I just want to add that most people in New York in any borough do not know what the speed limit is, and I do think we need signs to indicate as such.

I know that the department of transportation, and I have great respect for the Commissioner, is trying to eliminate signs and I've had arguments with her about eliminating the no honking signs, which I think people need to be able to know and to point to when people are honking so they have some verification of the law.

But I'm obviously voting yes, but I do think that you need to warn people and tell them what the speed limit is. You can't fine them for something that they don't even know what the law is. But I vote I.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council member Koo.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I will I on both.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council member Koppell.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I on both.

2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council member
3 Lappin.
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5 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: I

6 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council member
7 Greenfield.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Vote I.

9 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Council member
10 Vacca votes I. Very briefly, I think that if we
11 have people doing 40 and, if we have people doing
12 50 and 60 mile per hour on side streets bordering
13 schools and senior centers, that they belong in
14 the Daytona 500 they don't belong on city streets.
15 They're posing a public danger to our people. And
16 that's the reality of what we have on many streets
17 in our city today.

18 So if a camera is another tool that
19 we can use, I am for it. I am for more police
20 oversight, and I am for using cameras to do what
21 we have to do to protect innocent people. Would
22 you please announce the total vote?

23 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: William
24 Martin, Committee clerk. Resolution 1332 is
25 adopted by a vote of 11 in the affirmative, zero

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2 in the negative with no extensions. And
3 resolution 916(a) is adopted by a vote of 10 in
4 the affirmative, one in the negative and no
5 abstentions. Council members please sign the
6 committee reports. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: There being no
8 further business, this committee is adjourned.

9 Who are we missing? All right, I
10 will resend the adjournment. That was the
11 shortest adjournment that ever existed in the
12 history of the city of New York.

13 We will leave the record open for
14 15 minutes so that members, who may be late,
15 traffic and all, are allowed to arrive, okay.

16 [Pause]

17 It's now 10:45 and the hearing--do
18 you want to get a picture of me doing this? Let
19 me sit down. My pleasure to adjourn meetings is
20 great.

21 The time is now 10:45 and this
22 hearing of the transportation committee of the New
23 York City Council is now officially adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Daniel Louk 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

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Daniel Louk", is written over a horizontal line.

Date 4/2/2013