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**Age-friendly New York City Community Forum Notes
Carter Burden Center
Council Members Garodnick and Lappin
April 3, 2008**

Approximate number of attendees: 100

Like about the Upper East

- The Carter Burden Center is a good place for meeting others and stopping the problem of isolation. It has nutritious, whole wheat foods and is the best senior center in New York.
- Museums
- Central Park and East River park
- Convenient access to hospitals, parks, senior centers.
- 3 centers just in our area.
- libraries

Don't like

- Construction, cranes and all then noise at night
- Double-parking
- Delivery bikes on the sidewalks
- Too many trucks
- “Age-friendly is a fine idea but we are on fixed incomes. The cost of living is impossible.”

Like to Do

- Museums
- Libraries
- “There's lots. But it's harder now to get where you want to go.”
- “It's complicated to go to the theater. When I was younger, I would just go a half hour early. Now, to get tickets, first you have to arrange

transportation, and to meet up with people, they have to get transportation. Its hard to know how you are going to do anything.”

What specific things should be done better?

- Pollution
- Air quality
- Don't like the frozen meals idea

How do you find out about events?

- PSAs
- Word of mouth
- Go on the computer and all the events are there
- I go to my community board
- I got the email from Quinn.
- We need more computers to find out about things.

Outdoor Spaces

- Every bus stop need to have a fully enclosed shelter and a place to sit
- There are potholes and cracks on the sidewalk. Woman with crutches: “I broke my femur.”
- “I love the accessibility of everything in our area.”
- “Need more benches people can grab onto as they walk down the street. You can see people gripping the storefronts for stability.”
- Need more bathrooms.
- “Albany has talking signals at the crosswalks. We should get those. We have lots of blind people.”
- “The street signs are often turned the wrong way. There used to be numbers visible on all the corners but now there are those signs with names instead. It's disorienting.”
- We should have talking signs.
- We should promote universal design (young woman speaking).
- Bicycles should have horns and lights at night.

Safety/Respect

- Young people do give up their seats on the buses. (about half agreed, half disagreed)
- “There are high school students who need to be more respectful. My friend who has Parkinsons has been knocked down on the street twice

by kids rushing by in groups. There should be seminars or some kind of education in the schools. I don't think they even realize they have knocked people down."

- "You get no help from the 19th precinct."
- We need more police on the streets
- "The police are not user-friendly." They are disrespectful at the precinct house.
- The aides in nursing homes should be trained to be more respectful. (Alex raised the idea of sensitizing training. People liked this)

Transportation

- "It's easy to get around. It would be better if the buses came on time."
- "People should be more prepared when they get in line. They should have their bus pass out before they get on the bus."
- Bus drivers are rude.
- "We need express buses to Brooklyn so we can get to the Botanical Garden, Brooklyn Museum, Brighton Beach."
- The trucks are always unloading at the bus stops.
- Need lower straps for short people to hang onto on the bus and subway.
- Buses need ramps. "I could get out more with my arthritis if they came down lower."
- The hybrid buses have a lower step.
- "This city has the best transportation system in the country." (applause)
- The sound system on the M15 with audible stops is noisy and adds to noise pollution.
- "I had a bus trip that normally takes one hour take 3 hours the other day because there were people with wheelchairs getting on and off at every stop."
- Eliminate taxis
- Eliminate trucks
- Have taxi stands
- The taxi drivers don't speak English. And they go the wrong way.

Housing

- People are taking on roommates and housemates to deal with the cost of living and rent. This is exposing people to some potentially dangerous situations. "I was attacked by my room-mate and the police said she had every right to stay." Bill Daines? added "There is a law that allows

people to maintain residence after 30 days. This should be looked into because it puts older people in a vulnerable situation. They need to be able to test out whether the relationship is going to work and not get stuck.”

- Tenants have to pay the court fees for landlords if they lose, but landlords don't have to pay the fees of the tenant if the landlord loses. “That's an uneven playing field.”
- Need elevators
- The housing authority should subsidize moves to lower floors
- “We need more medium and low income housing. There are too many condos going up. And who are they for?”
- “I moved here from New Jersey, and to get an apartment, because I don't work, I had to use my son's name.” (loss of autonomy, disempowering situation)
- Is it OK for my landlord to raise my rent in the middle of a lease?
- Increase the eligibility threshold for SCRIE and DRIE.
- Something about the community service requirement in public housing....
- Need affordable housing that isn't so high. “Older people just want something nice and quiet.”

Health Care

- “I have Medicare. I've been double-billed and improperly billed. And they bill me for things I don't need.”
- Pharmacy prices are higher in New York City than anywhere else.
- Make generic medications more available.
- Need insurance coverage for alternative therapies

Volunteering

- “We are all guilty of letting people get isolated. The Carter Burden Center has a program where you call homebound people. We all should volunteer. I call three people who are homebound and we talked so much I now visit them one hour a week.”
- “I volunteer for the parks department. They do a 10-year survey of trees.”