

May 23, 2023

Dear East Tremont Coalition,

Thank you for your letter dated April 19th regarding the capital project to improve pedestrian safety at E. 177th Street from Devoe Avenue to Bronx Park Avenue; E. Tremont Avenue from Bronx Park Avenue to Boston Rd; and Devoe Avenue from E 177th Street to East Tremont Avenue. As you noted, the goals of this project include connecting the Bronx River Greenway between Starlight Park and Bronx River Park, shortening pedestrian crossings with refuge medians and simplifying complex intersections, and upgrading essential infrastructure including streetlights, traffic signals, water mains and sewers.

As the managing agency of both the design and construction, DDC works in tandem with both the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), as well as non-City agencies like the New York State Department of Transportation (SDOT) and the private utilities. Before a design can be finalized, DDC must ensure that the “end users” are comfortable with each design element. Since the project began, there have been a host of challenges and delays that have hindered the efficient and effective forward progress towards implementation. These include:


- Unique engineering challenges posed by the intersections, including the elevated subway at East Tremont Avenue and Boston Road;
- Numerous stakeholders involved in the project’s approval process, including SDOT, as well as New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), New York City Department of Education (DOE) and the private utility companies, each of which has their own set of regulations, approvals, and changes based on design decisions being proposed;
- Interagency process challenges coalescing around finalizing design decisions and scope additions/subtractions.

The City agencies recognize that despite these challenges, the design should not have taken this long to complete. We recently held a joint interagency meeting, which included City Hall leadership, to address not only how we can ensure that the project moves forward without further delay, but also how to implement future process improvements on other essential projects.

We project that the design will be finalized by the end of 2023, followed by construction procurement. We are aiming for a construction start of fall 2024, with a total construction duration of 3 years. The DDC/DOT teams will be providing a formal update this fall to Bronx Community Board 6 and additional stakeholders.

Thank you again for sharing your concerns.

Sincerely,



Thomas Foley, P.E., CCM
Commissioner

Cc: Ydanis Rodriguez, DOT Commissioner
Rit Agarwala, DEP Commissioner