

Making Streets Safe for Seniors: The 145th Street Project

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES' Safe Routes for Seniors campaign recently held the first of three workshops to redesign a portion of 145th Street from Fredrick Douglass Boulevard (8th Avenue) to Lenox Avenue to make it safer not just for seniors, but for everyone. Although the first workshop focused on 145th Street at 7th Avenue, the seniors at A. Philip Randolph Senior Center voiced their concerns about transportation at several intersections. Of the 24 seniors completing surveys during this workshop, 17 said that vehicles did not stop for them in the crosswalks, 16 said they did not have enough time to cross the street and 16 said that potholes and uneven sidewalks made walking difficult for them. Seventy percent of the seniors surveyed said they would walk more if these problems were resolved. The next two workshops will focus on finding these solutions and building support to make 145th Street a safer place to walk.

ON JULY 7TH, THE SAFE ROUTES FOR Seniors team went to the A. Philip Randolph senior center on 146th Street in Harlem to survey the seniors about their daily activities and to get their views on how to make crossing 145th Street easier for them.

There are thousands of intersections within the Safe Routes for Seniors project boundary including all Manhattan streets north of 110th Street, so why focus first on 145th Street at 7th Avenue? Using Crashstat.org,



Crossing 145th Street at 7th Avenue in Manhattan

Transportation Alternatives' crash mapping system, we found that this intersection had the highest number of pedestrian injuries and fatalities out of all of the intersections within our study area. In addition to a staggering 50 injuries and fatalities from 1995-2001, 14% of these crashes involved people 60 and older. This rate is high for an intersection with a relatively small number of senior pedestrians nearby. The seniors we surveyed were not surprised by these statistics and agreed that this intersection could use a make-over. Here are some key problems that seniors identified and a variety of solutions that Transportation Alternatives is recommending to put an end to injuries to our seniors at 145th Street and 7th Avenue.

At next month's workshop the seniors will finalize these solutions so we can work with the City Department of Transportation to get the recommendations built.

Current Street Conditions:

- Too much asphalt in the center of intersection
- Both 7th Avenue and 145th Street are wide and have wide lanes
- High volumes of cars and trucks in all directions

Driver Behavior Problems:

- Car and truck drivers take turns too quickly and do not look for pedestrians in crosswalks
- Car and truck drivers speed through the intersection
- Drivers tend to run red lights at the intersection

Possible Solutions:

- Extend medians into the intersection and create small refuges on 145th Street
- Extend curbs into street at all corners
- Install red-light cameras



"On 145th Street at 8th Avenue, 7th Avenue and Lenox, there is too much red light running and general speeding."



"145th Street is sometimes too hard to cross, especially in the downtown direction."



"At 145th Street at Lenox Avenue, the cars getting off the bridge do not slow down for seniors in the crosswalk."

ALL PHOTOS: AMY PEIFFER

