

NOW LEASING — PRIME CORNER with parking
91 Pennsylvania Avenue, Brooklyn NY 11207

CRAIN'S insider

B L O G S I N S I D E R

Dems toe Bloomberg transit line

ANDREW J. HAWKINS
JUNE 19, 2013 3:27 PM

Recommend 6

Tweet 2

Share

Print

Email

RELATED NEWS

Poll shows support for bike share, composting plan

Weiner leads in NY mayoral race for first time, poll shows

Mapping Bloomberg's impact on streets

City tries again to get new tax on the road

On education, Lhota lines up with Bloomberg

They all love bike lanes, just not all bike lanes. They want to bring back the commuter tax, but begrudgingly admit that doing so is unrealistic. They want to expand transportation options to underserved boroughs, but can't say how to pay for it. And none of them are too impressed with the so-called "Taxi of Tomorrow."



Traffic congestion has long been a core NYC transit issue.
Photo: Bloomberg News

Four of the six Democrats running for mayor bandied about a number of transportation issues Wednesday at a forum sponsored by the University Transportation Research Center at Baruch College. But aside from the obvious gibes at Mayor Michael Bloomberg's transportation policies, the candidates did not stray far from the mayor's core vision for the city's streets.

"You're always going to hear extremist views from the fringe on any issue but the general agreement among serious mayoral candidates on transportation makes it clear that the mainstream is firmly behind modern transportation policies like pedestrian plazas and bike lanes," said Michael Murphy, a spokesman for Transportation Alternatives, after the forum.

The candidates—city Comptroller John Liu, former city Comptroller Bill Thompson, former Councilman Sal Albanese and former Congressman Anthony Weiner—all vowed to expand bus service, listen to community concerns before creating more bike lanes and shine more light on the decisions of the Taxi and Limousine Commission. (Neither Council Speaker Christine Quinn nor Public Advocate Bill de Blasio attended.)

There was some sniping among the candidates—Messrs. Thompson and Albanese over the commuter tax and Messrs. Thompson and Weiner over Mr. Thompson's job at the Battery Park City Authority—and between the panel of transportation experts and the candidates.

In prefacing his question, Transportation Alternatives Executive Director Paul Steely White noted that bike lanes and bike share are popular among New Yorkers, and currently out-poll any of the mayoral candidates. To which Mr. Weiner responded, "I actually have some polling here that says the proposal to give rocket-packs to every citizen has 90% support."

About this blog

The Insider delivers news and analysis on the political plays and players affecting New York City's economy, entrepreneurs and executive classes.

Follow @crainsinsider 1,005 followers

Subscribe to The Insider

NOW LEASING PRIME CORNER with parking
91 Pennsylvania Avenue Brooklyn NY 11207

Most Popular in Blogs

- Mayor says too many whites stopped, frisked
- Voting rights ruling touches NYC
- Mapping Bloomberg's impact on streets
- Weiner's rivals don't believe the hype
- Key union split on mayoral race
- Why, yes, politics did fuel the paid-sick deal
- Sampson steered \$10k toward aide now running for council
- Williamsburg site for sale
- Mash-Up: June 24, 2013
- Hotel Trades Council to back Quinn

Most Recommended

- Create an account or [Log In](#) to see what your
- Soledad O'Brien to contribute to Al Jazeera Am**
3 people recommend this.
 - Push launched for \$2.8B in 9/11 insurance mon**
17 people recommend this.
 - Scent maker enjoys the sweet smell of success**
21 people recommend this.
 - Rents rise in Manhattan, drop in Brooklyn**

Mr. Weiner bragged about his use of the new Citi Bike program and pivoted to criticize the current administration for turning biking into a controversial issue.

"Part of it is a governing ethos that has a respect for the idea that when you're doing structural things...that the conversation hasn't been much of a conversation, it's been just dripping with condescension," he said.

He also referred to his past comment about ripping out bike lanes, [which appeared in a New York Times story](#), as a "clever joke" that he has since walked back. "I consider myself a pro-bike Democrat," Mr. Weiner added.

Mr. Liu, who chaired the transportation committee in the City Council, took issue with some outerborough bike lanes that appeared underused. And Mr. Thompson said that the Department of Transportation has gotten better about listening to community concerns. He also vowed to expand the bike share program if elected.

On taxis, the candidates sought to distance themselves from Mr. Bloomberg's efforts to transform the industry. Mr. Thompson gave a rambling answer to a question posed by Ira Goldstein, executive director of the Black Car Fund, that could be summarized as "I will listen better to the industry."

Both Messrs. Liu and Weiner slammed the TLC for operating largely in the shadows (although many of the commission's votes are open to the public and reported on frequently in the daily press). Mr. Liu referred to the Bloomberg administration's stalled "Taxi of Tomorrow" project as "the Taxi of Yesteryear." And Mr. Weiner tried one-upping that by slamming the project as "anti-free market."

(The TLC plans on voting Thursday to tweak the rules with regard to the Taxi of Tomorrow, in the hopes of satisfying the concerns of a state judge who blocked the project in May.)

The candidates were critical of Mr. Bloomberg's handling of last year's school bus strike, and called for further discussions around how to make bus routes more efficient and less costly. Mr. Thompson said he favored bringing back the commuter tax to help pay for transportation infrastructure needs, but acknowledged "we're never going to get that back."

Still, the idea prompted a mocking response from Mr. Albanese: "That's pie-in-the-sky; that's never going to happen."

Mr. Weiner pushed for city-control of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority—another "pie-in-the-sky" idea that will likely never happen. "We need to get control of the MTA," Mr. Weiner said. "I don't know what a representative from Buffalo has to do with who's getting off the G."

[Print](#) [Email](#) [Reprints](#) [Comment](#)

[BATTERY PARK CITY AUTHORITY](#)

[METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY](#)

[MICHAEL BLOOMBERG](#)

[CHRISTINE QUINN](#)

[BILL THOMPSON](#)

[TRANSPORTATION](#)

[POLITICS](#)

[BATTERY PARK CITY](#)

[JOHN LIU](#)

[ANTHONY WEINER](#)

[BARUCH COLLEGE](#)

[BILL DE BLASIO](#)

[DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION](#)

[OPINION](#)

[THE INSIDER BLOG](#)

2 people recommend this.



No. 6 Mary Ann Tighe - 50 Most Powerful Women

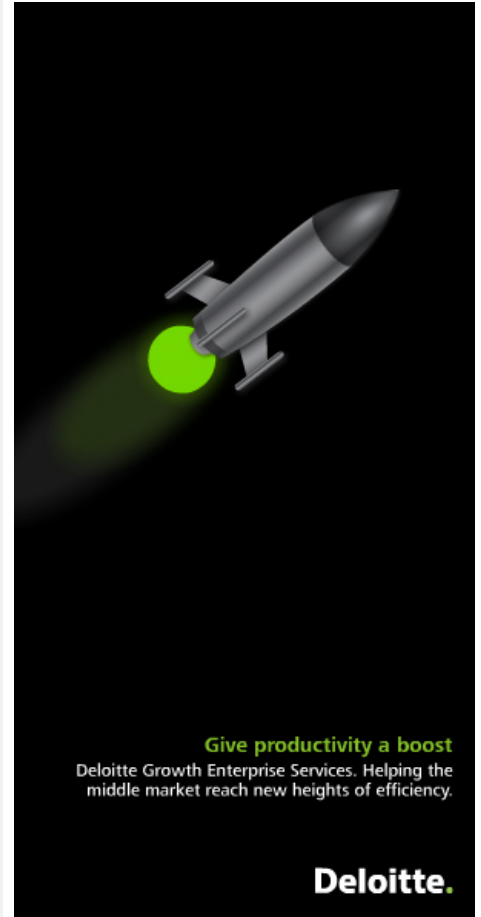
5 people recommend this.



Rockaway Taco returns

16 people recommend this.

Facebook social plugin



Give productivity a boost
Deloitte Growth Enterprise Services. Helping the middle market reach new heights of efficiency.

Deloitte.

Crain's Connects

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [RSS](#)

- [Advisory Panel](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Staff Directory](#)
- [About Us](#)

[PREVIOUS ARTICLE](#)

[Union big to serve as WFP mayoral placeholder](#)

[NEXT A](#)

[Mash-Up: June 24, 2013](#)

Crains recommends

- Belatedly, Facebook likes midtown south
- Cuomo commission | Time Warner HQ | Dolan accusation
- Childrenswear, teen retailers go international
- NY radio stations get ad sales boost
- Qdoba pulls plug on its 7 Manhattan eateries

From around the web

- 10 Things to Never Put on Your Resume *Salary.com*
- Who Actually Earns \$400,000 Per Year? *Moneyning.com*
- TV Chef Marries Pro Wrestler: Honeymoon Pics! *Food Network*
- Breaking: The Plane Carrying Vittorio Missoni Has Been Found *ELLE*
- The Five Year Rule for Buying a House *Moneyning.com*

[what's this?]

Comments

POST A COMMENT

Be the first to comment!

[Sign in](#) or [register](#) to comment...



Crain's New York Business

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- RSS
- About Us
- Staff Directory
- Privacy
- Terms and Conditions
- Advertise
- Reprints
- Contact Us
- Newsstands
- Site Map
- Corrections
- Editorial Calendar
- Subscribe

Media Partners

- Crain Publications
- Advertising Age
- Business Insurance
- Crain's Detroit
- Crain's Chicago
- Crain's Cleveland
- Investment News
- Modern Healthcare
- Pensions & Investments
- Staffing Industry Analysts

CRAIN'S
NEW YORK BUSINESS

ENTIRE CONTENTS ©2013 CRAIN COMMUNICATIONS INC.