



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
COMMUNITY BOARD 9
MANHATTAN

Morningside Heights
Manhattanville
Hamilton Heights

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Ratification of Reso re: Disapproval of new Link5ZG Kiosks within MCB9

January 16, 2023

Edward F. Pincar
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 37th Floor
New York, NY 10038

Matthew C. Fraser
Chief Technology Officer
NYC Office of Technology & Innovation
2 MetroTech Center, P1
Brooklyn, NY 11201

RE: Disapproval of new Link5G Kiosks within CB-9M

Dear CTO Fraser and Commissioner Pincar,

At its regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting of Community Board 9 Manhattan held on January 12, 2023, the Executive Committee acting on behalf of the full board approved the following resolution by a vote of 15 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions and 1 not voting for cause; 2 other CB9 members who are not members of the Executive Committee present voting in favor:

WHEREAS; New York City, through its Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI), has contracted with CityBridge to install and operate a citywide wireless communications network; and,

WHEREAS; CityBridge installed its LinkNYC network as the initial deployment of the citywide wireless communications network intended to replace outdated public pay phones; and

WHEREAS; LinkNYC provided free wireless internet connectivity using towers placed on sidewalks throughout NYC, many of which include electronic display screens; and

WHEREAS; Community Board 9 and constituents of its district have reported adverse impacts resulting from existing LinkNYC infrastructure, including visual impacts, inappropriate usage, impacts on sidewalk clearances, and rat infestation; and

WHEREAS; CityBridge is now in the process of upgrading its LinkNYC network to Link5G to accommodate technological upgrades that have recently become commonplace in cellular communications; and

WHEREAS; Link5G infrastructure is a 32' tall tower that is installed on sidewalks in the public right-of-way; and

WHEREAS; Link5G towers in commercial districts include electronic screens similar to those found on LinkNYC kiosks that display advertising and public information; and

WHEREAS; the design of the Link5G towers has been approved by the Public Design Commission; and

WHEREAS; Link5G must adhere to siting requirements determined by NYC Department of City Planning, and must obtain Landmarks Preservation Commission approval if sited in historic districts; and

WHEREAS; CityBridge and OTI have proposed 4 sites across Community District 9;

WHEREAS; CityBridge and OTI have stated that the siting of proposed Link5G towers in Community District 9 are based on gaps in coverage and locations where excess demand for the network exists as determined by commercial cellular carriers; and

WHEREAS; 4 of the 18 sites proposed are either in or near the Morningside Historic District or the central Columbia University campus and the historic St. John the Divine Church, where renowned architecture and iconic streetscapes would be interfered with if Link5G structures were installed; and these addresses are:

- 2880 Broadway, *between* 112th Street and 113th Street, Residential
- 1060 Amsterdam Avenue, *between* 112th Street and 113th Street, Residential / *across from* the Cathedral of St. John the Divine
- 1125 Amsterdam Avenue, *between* 115th Street and 116th Street, Residential /St. Luke's Hospital
- 1181 Amsterdam Avenue near Columbia University, *between* 118th Street and 119th Street, Columbia University

WHEREAS; locations proposed along Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue would be in conflict with strict guidelines for illuminated storefronts and signage; and

WHEREAS; residents of Community District 9 have strongly objected to the design and the visual impacts that Link5G towers would have on streetscapes, both with and without screens; and

WHEREAS; there are widespread concerns that 5G towers will be constructed at distances considered too close to adjacent buildings, as has already occurred in front of 520 East 90th Street in Manhattan Community District 8, and

WHEREAS; 10' of distance from a tower to a residence that is permitted is extremely insufficient and should be revisited as a policy; and

WHEREAS; Neither CityBridge nor the cellular network providers that Link5G service is intended to supplement have provided any evidence that dropped calls and limited capacity are present at the proposed Link5G locations;

WHEREAS; the proposed sites for Link5G don't include any locations in areas known to be potential digital deserts within Community District 9; and

WHEREAS; OTI and CityBridge have not provided detailed plans regarding the full build-out

of Link5G, both within Community District 9 and in areas north of 96th Street and in the outer Boroughs; and

WHEREAS; there is a desire for any telecommunications infrastructure to be buried underground both for reliability purposes and to minimize visual impacts; and

WHEREAS; there has not been any information presented to Manhattan Community Board 9 that these street sites for Link5G poles are necessary to correct coverage gaps that could not otherwise be covered through normal wireless antenna placements on local structures, which is the routine method by which wireless carriers provide 5G and other wireless service coverage in an area; and

WHEREAS; the community-at-large has expressed their views that Link5G is unnecessary and unwanted in Community District 9 at present and until many of the issues identified have been resolved;

WHEREAS; New York City is in control of this process through its contract with the provider.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 9 Manhattan disapproves the proposal as presented to install Link 5G towers in Community District 9; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a moratorium be placed on construction and planning of Link5G poles and devices in Community District 9 Manhattan.

Please advise us of any action taken on this matter.

If you have any questions and/or further information is needed, please do not hesitate contacting me or District Manager, Eutha Prince, at the board office (212) 864-6200.

Sincerely,



Barry Weinberg
Chair

cc: Honorable Eric L. Adams, Mayor of the City of New York
Honorable Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate of the City of New York
Honorable Jerrold Nadler, 12th Congressional District Representative
Honorable Adriano Espaillat, 13th Congressional District Representative
Honorable Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Honorable Cordell Cleare, NYS Senator, 30th Senatorial District
Honorable Daniel J. O'Donnell, NYS Assemblymember, 69th Assembly District
Honorable Inez Dickens, NYS Assemblymember, 70th Assembly District
Honorable Al Taylor, NYS Assemblymember, 71st Assembly District
Honorable Shaun Abreu, Member of the NYC Council, 7th Councilmanic District
Honorable Kristin Richardson Jordan, Member of the NYC Council, 9th Councilmanic District
Honorable Charles Schumer, U.S. Senator, State of New York
Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand, U. S. Senator, State of New York