



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Adriano Espaillat

After Another Traffic Death, Espaillat Asks, Again, For a Slow Zone

ADRIANO ESPAILLAT October 17, 2013

And so this afternoon, Washington Heights elected officials are again asking for what the city refers to as a "slow zone."

"I am shocked that D.O.T. has rejected the slow zone application for an avenue lined with schools," said state senator Adriano Espaillat in a statement. "I urge D.O.T. to immediately reconsider this decision—this is one of the most dangerous locations in the city for pedestrians. Drivers exiting the George Washington Bridge or Cross Bronx Expressway race through our neighborhood; speed bumps and other measures would stop them from accelerating down Audubon Ave. unchecked."

At around 4:30 this morning, a pedestrian was killed in a hit-and-run at 177 Audubon Avenue, right in front of a school, according to Espaillat's office.

Washington Heights is one of the most dangerous neighborhoods for pedestrians in the city, and this summer, Espaillat and councilman Ydanis Rodriguez backed a request by a neighborhood group called Families for Excellent Schools for a slow zone bounded by Edgecombe and Audubon Avenues, 165 and 171th streets.

A week ago, Mayor Bloomberg and transportation commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan announced that speed limits would be reduced from the 30 mph to 20 mph in 15 more "slow

zones" across the city, and that those neighborhoods would get traffic calming measures like speed bumps. There are now dozens citywide.

A few days later, Espaillat's office got a courtesy call that their request had been denied.

UPDATE: At 3:20 pm, the NYPD sent out the following details to the press:

On Friday, October 18, 2013 at approximately 0440 hours police responded to a 911 call of a pedestrian struck West 176 Street and Audubon Avenue in the confines of the 33 Pct. Upon arrival police determined that a dark colored auto traveling northbound on Audubon Avenue struck a M/H/40 who was crossing Audubon Avenue. The pedestrian was pronounced DOA at the scene. The vehicle fled the scene.

UPDATE: "Safety is D.O.T.'s number one concern, and we have greatly expanded our fight against dangerous driving across the city through the use of red light cameras, the introduction of speed cameras near schools, expanded safety education campaigns and a record number of speed bumps installed this year," said transportation spokesman Nicholas Mosquera, in an email. "These steps are in addition to [NYPD] enforcement and hundreds of corridor and intersection safety redesigns we've made throughout the city and including in Upper Manhattan, where we just approved a slow zone in nearby Hudson Heights."

-By Dana Rubinstein, Capital NY