



JUNE 4, 2022 - NYC RESIDENT PARKING PERMITS IN THE NEWS

Weekend Column: NYC Needs Residential Parking Permits*

By Renee D. Baruch

New York is the only modern Western city without a residential parking permit program. The lengthy list of cities with such programs includes London, Paris, Boston, and Philadelphia, as well as Hoboken, New Jersey, and Rye, New York.



Photo credit: Raysonho, Wikimedia Commons.

Parking permits—for residents and those regularly working in neighborhoods—would greatly reduce traffic coming into the city and lessen the chaotic and time-consuming competition for parking spots in such congested areas as the Upper West Side.

Too many Upper West Side parking spots are occupied by cars registered elsewhere by NYC residents, because they claim primary residences outside the city or find another way to register their vehicles in another place.

So, a parking permit program might prompt a reduction in car ownership. Or it could prod these residents to register their cars in NYC and, in some cases, start paying income taxes here.

Individual permit costs might be a comparative bargain for car owners, but the annual fees and potential additional taxes could add significantly to the city's revenues. The environmental impact alone would be positive.

In sum, permits would not only benefit residents with cars who frequently find themselves driving around for an hour or more to find a scarce parking spot, but virtually everyone living in New York City.

So why does NYC not have residential parking permits—particularly when Ydanis Rodriguez, the city's transportation commissioner, declared upon taking office earlier this year that **he wants such a program?**

For one reason, City Council Member Gail Brewer, when she was Manhattan Borough president, commissioned a 2019 study that concluded that the details involved with parking permits would make them very difficult to implement.

Another may be that the city transportation department says it's up to the state legislature to authorize parking permits. While that's true, this kind of authorization is routinely approved upon localities' requests.

Political interest is so low that the Upper West Side's state assembly member, Linda Rosenthal, recently declined to even comment on the issue.

A political movement for parking permits is long overdue. To begin to make that happen, a growing group of NYC car owners recently formed a new organization, NYC Resident Parking Permits, to convey to officials at all levels the need for and benefits of a parking permit program.

It's really very simple. Parking spots in many neighborhoods are way too scarce. Income tax-paying residents and regular neighborhood workers should have greater access to this limited resource. A residential parking permit program is the way to try to insure that.

Longtime Upper West Side resident Renee D. Baruch is a founder and leader of NYC Resident Parking Permits. Find out more and join the movement by signing up at www.nycresidentparking.org.

*Weekend column reflects the views of the writer, not WSR.