Monday Night at the Master

Riverside Lobby

October 26, 7:30pm

An Update on Efforts to Improve Urban Health and the Safety of Our Streets

Sabah Usmani, PhD, MCP and Mary Beth Kelly, ACSW, MFA

Millions of people opt for urban living for the many advantages it offers: educational opportunities, interesting career paths, a wide range of cultural offerings, access to world class health care. However, living in a dense urban environment poses many challenges to our health and the safety of our streets for pedestrians and cyclists.

Sabah Usmani and Mary Beth Kelly, who have focused their energy and expertise on these two critical areas, will provide an overview of their work and current initiatives.

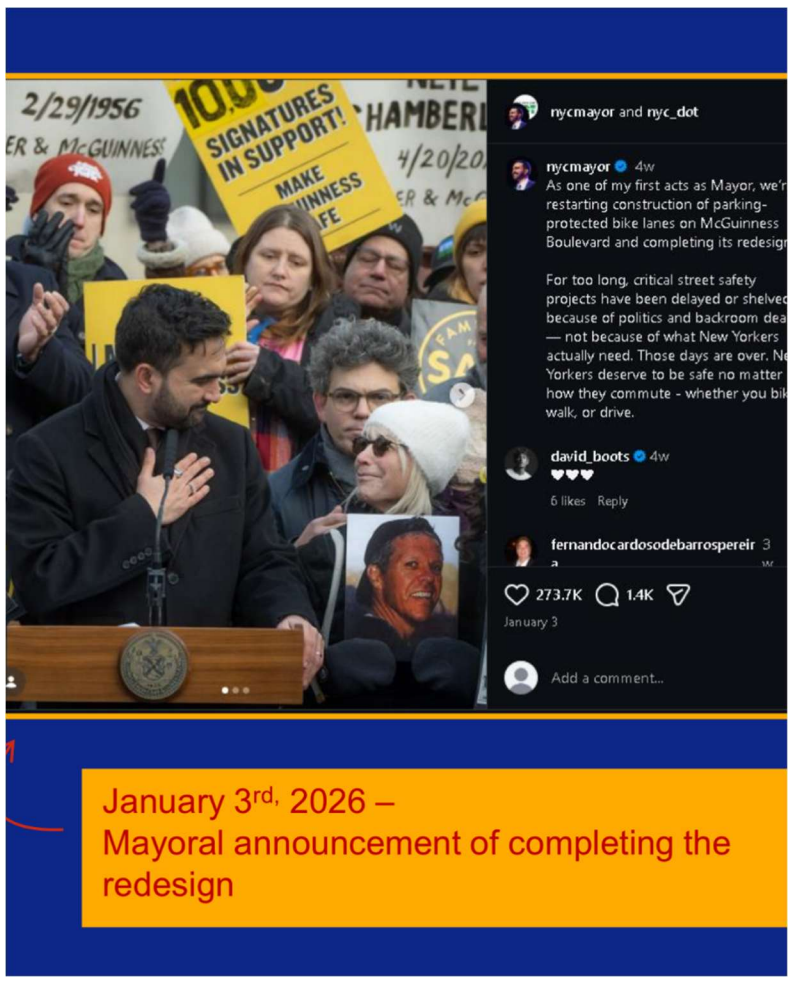


Sabah Usman, PhD, MCP is an environmental health scientist and urban planner who studies how neighborhoods, streets, and transportation systems shape public health. Her research connects the built environment, air pollution, and mobility to health disparities, with the goal of informing urban policies that make cities healthier and more equitable.

In partnership with transportation agencies, Sabah uses urban data and spatial analysis to study the public health implications of transportation policies and street improvements. Her research includes examining how New York City's Open Streets program affects local traffic, alongside ongoing work on e-bikes and their implications for transportation, safety, and health.

She also develops planning tools to help cities understand how neighborhood design influences traffic and air pollution and identify opportunities to improve public health.

Sabah earned her PhD in the Climate and Health Program at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, a master's degree in City Planning from MIT, and a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering (minor: Architecture) from Columbia University.



Mary Beth Kelly, ACSW, MFA is a clinical social worker and family therapist who, with her husband, Dr. Carl Henry Nacht raised their children, Zoe and Asher, here at the Master Apts.

Following Henry's tragic death – hit by tow truck while they were cycling along the Hudson River bike path, she began advocating for legislation and policies to improve the safety and equitable use of streets by pedestrians, cyclists, public transit and vehicles.

Mary Beth co-founded Families for Safe Streets which confronts the consequences of unsafe streets through advocacy and activism for legislative and policy changes at the city and state level. FSS also supports families in the aftermath of injury and death resulting from traffic violence.

After serving for twelve years on the board of Transportation Alternatives, she is currently serving on their Advisory Council. TA's mission is to reclaim NYC streets from the domination of the car, and transform them into safe, sustainable, and equitable spaces for walking, biking, transit, and community gathering across all five boroughs.