



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

Queens Chronicle: New signs warn drivers of cameras

TONY AVELLA January 14, 2015

Although speed cameras seem to be slowing down vehicles near city schools, new signage in Fresh Meadows is warning motorists about the surveillance.

Last fall, Mayor de Blasio announced that 23 speed cameras had been deployed citywide where speeding had become problematic near schools. It is part of his Vision Zero initiative to reduce the number of pedestrian fatalities.

But drivers at the Fresh Meadows site complained that exiting the Francis Lewis Boulevard ramp off the eastbound Long Island Expressway without a warning sign gave them no time to slow down, and many were getting \$50 tickets in the mail based on the cameras mounted on poles.

One of those who was ticketed was Jerry Iannece, a Community Board 11 member and civic activist. He complained that it is difficult to reduce speed quickly enough to 30 miles an hour “and if you comply, you stand a chance of getting rear-ended.”

The cameras are located near PS 4 and St. Francis Preparatory School.

But state Sen. Tony Avella (D-Bayside) announced recently that new signage has been installed after he notified the Department of Transportation about the situation.

The two signs read “Speed Limit 30” and “Photo Enforced” to warn drivers of the impending camera surveillance.

“While no one has a problem with enforcement of the traffic law, motorists must be given fair notification of the speed limit and speed camera enforcement,” Avella said in a prepared statement. “A lack of posted signs not only creates a hazardous condition for students and pedestrians, it also creates a ‘speed trap’ for drivers, who are unaware of the change in speed limit.”

He called the Fresh Meadows location one of the worst speed camera traps in the city.

Meanwhile, the Daily News reported on Tuesday that citywide, the cameras have reduced speeding by 59 percent. The number of speeders dropped from 3,539 a day in September to 1,461 in December.

The city has been authorized to install up to 117 more cameras around the boroughs this year. So far, there are eight locations in Queens.

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