On November 17, at approximately 2:31 pm, MTA New York City Transit (NYCT) bus #5483, traveling westbound on East Fordham Road, was approaching the intersection with Bainbridge Avenue, when an auto traveling in the same direction to the left of the bus initiated a right turn in front of the bus. In an attempt to prevent a collision the bus driver swerved to the right and applied the brakes. However, the left corner of the front bumper made contact with the right rear door of the auto. Eight bus passengers and the auto driver claimed various injuries, were transported to local hospitals, treated and released. The bus sustained no damage with moderate damage to the auto.

NYC Police responded to the accident and no summonses were issued.

In the vicinity of the accident site, East Fordham Road is a 60 foot wide, two-way road divided by a full barrier yellow pavement marking, accommodating two eastbound and two westbound travel lanes. There is a designated bus lane in each direction. Parking is not permitted at the curbs. The cross street, Bainbridge Avenue is a 33 foot wide one-way northbound road with no pavement marking. Parking is permitted at the curbs. Both roadways are straight, level and asphalt paved. The traffic at the intersection is controlled by four traffic signals. At the time of the accident it was daylight and the weather was dry and clear. The area speed limit is 30 mph.

Bus #5483 is a 1999 New Flyer Articulated transit type bus with a seating capacity of 62 passengers. A review of the bus records indicated that Preventive Maintenance Inspections (PMI) at Kingsbridge Depot are performed at 3,000 mile intervals. The most recent PMI was completed on October 29, 2007. The bus had traveled 1,422 miles at the time of the accident. There were no safety or recurring defects noted in the 45 days prior to the accident. A post accident inspection of bus #5483 was conducted by the Public Transportation Safety Board (PTSB) staff in conjunction with NYCT staff on November 19, 2007 and no defects were found that would be considered causative factors in this accident. Decelerometer tests were performed on the braking systems and showed stopping distances that met the MTA NYCT adopted standards for passenger vehicles of NYS DOT Regulations (Title 17 of NYCRR, Article 3, Part 720).
The bus driver was hired by NYCT on June 3, 2002, and completed the standard “New Bus Operator Training Program”. A review of the bus driver’s Department of Motor Vehicles showed no violations or suspensions. New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law, Article 19-A records were complete and up-to-date. A review of the driver’s NYCT records for the last three years revealed one preventable, not major collision accident on 04/06/07, resulting in a verbal warning, and one non-preventable collision accident on 12/02/06. A post accident drug and alcohol test administered to the bus driver 4 hours and 48 minutes after the accident was negative. The delay in administering the drug and alcohol test was due to the bus driver being detained at the scene for the purpose of investigation.

In an interview with the PTSB staff, the bus driver indicated that the bus was moving westbound on East Fordham Road approaching the intersection on a green traffic signal, when he noticed a white SUV moving in the same direction to the left of the bus. He stated that the SUV activated the right turn signal and attempted to make a right turn in front of the bus. The bus driver applied the brakes and swerved to the right. He stated that the SUV struck the bus.

In an interview with the NYCT road supervisor the auto driver claimed that while driving straight on East Fordham Road, the bus cut her off.

An off duty bus driver standing near the front of the bus stated that he observed the white SUV cut the bus off from the left side and the bus stopped.

The investigation showed that according to the final rest positions of the bus and the auto, the location of the collision debris, the statements of the bus driver, the auto drive and a witness, it is most likely that the bus moving in the number one travel lane was approaching the intersection with Bainbridge Avenue on a green traffic signal. At the same time the auto moving to the left of the bus attempted to make a right turn in front of the bus. The left front corner of the bus made contact with the right rear side of the auto.

The Public Transportation Safety Board staff finds that the most probable cause of the accident was the auto which was attempting to perform a right turn from the #2 travel lane in front of a moving bus.

Contributing to the accident was the bus driver who failed to utilize his training in defensive driving techniques while driving through an intersection.
The NYCT reviewed the accident on November 29, 2007, and found it to be preventable. The bus driver was issued a twenty day suspension which he accepted. The bus driver was retrained, his performance was evaluated as satisfactory and he was returned to passenger service.

INVESTIGATOR: Mikhail Palanker

__________________________________________  __________________________
CHIEF, ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SECTION      DATE

__________________________________________  __________________________
DIRECTOR, PCSB, NYSDOT                    DATE