

It's a sweeter ride than the F train. Peter Kalikow, MTA chief and Ferrari collector, will soon take delivery of his newest Prancing Horse, a dark blue 612 Scaglietti customized for him by renowned Italian design house Pininfarina.



Ferrari Scaglietti
Engine: Aluminum V-12
Horsepower: 534
Top speed: 199 mph
Acceleration: 0 to 60 mph in 4.2 seconds
Mileage: 10 mpg (city)
Cost: \$260,000*

* Without modifications



No contract, but a sweet ride



IN THE
 SUBWAYS
**RAY
 SÁNCHEZ**

Peter Kalikow, MTA chairman, appears to have devoted more time custom-rebuilding his dark blue Ferrari 612 Scaglietti than trying to settle the simmering contract fight with transit workers.

"I think if we counted from our side, it would probably be roughly 200 or 300 e-mails that were exchanged," said Paolo Garella, special projects manager for the famed Italian coachbuilder Pininfarina, who knows Kalikow on a first-name basis. "Peter also did some sketches, drawings and small mockups just to illustrate exactly what he wanted."

Kalikow has traveled the 3,961 miles between New York and Pininfarina headquarters in Turin, Italy, at least four times since January, Garella said. The trips started just after the illegal 60-hour transit strike that nearly crippled the city.

While the car is to be delivered at the end of the month, the transit workers still have no contract.

Kalikow has not met face to face with Roger Toussaint, president of Transport Workers Union Local 100, since the eve of the strike. Had he corresponded with the union leader a fraction of the time he spent in touch with Pininfarina officials, perhaps the contract dispute would be history.

Instead, there were theatrics and street protests by supporters of Toussaint, who, incidentally, drives an SUV, a GMC Denali.

There were bitter rants and accusations from Kalikow, a real estate magnate and former New York Post publisher who emerged from bankruptcy in the early '90s to rule over the nation's largest transit network.

"There was a criminal act committed against riders of this system," Kalikow said before the MTA board last week, rebuffing demands that the authority vote on the contract proposal approved by Local 100 members on the second try. "The poorest people in this city were denied paychecks at Christmastime."

The heap of rhetoric spewed by both sides could cover Mount Vesuvius. Toussaint, speaking in a Brooklyn courtroom before serving 3 1/2 days for calling the illegal strike, said Kalikow sabotaged the talks by arriving at negotiations

literally at the 11th hour on the eve of the Dec. 20 strike. Toussaint said the chairman insisted on changes to pension benefits that were nonnegotiable.

"I was in the room," Kalikow said at the board meeting. "I pleaded with Roger Toussaint not to leave. I begged him. I can't remember the last time I begged somebody . . . Roger got up, walked out and sent his union out on an illegal strike."

Kalikow spokesman Marty McLaughlin said Kalikow's Ferrari collection has nothing to do with the transit talks: "Excuse me, there's no progress in the transit talks because the union, who has been offered to negotiate, has refused to sit down and opted to do street theater instead. They've been told the door is open."

The state Public Employment Relations Board has

ordered binding arbitration to end the impasse.

As for Kalikow's frequent trips to Turin, McLaughlin said, "He runs over there for a day or two and comes back."

TWU Local 100 secretary treasurer Ed Watt said through a spokesman, "If Peter Kalikow is spending his money, then he is entitled to what his money buys. Our members are entitled to their contract."

Pininfarina, which produces products from cars to high-speed trains, stripped down and rebuilt Kalikow's \$300,000 612 Scaglietti in less than a year.

Modifications were defined between November and December. Kalikow delivered the car to Italy from his prized Ferrari collection in early January — before transit workers rejected the strike-ending contract proposal.