

**CITY OF NORWALK
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 17, 2024**

Via Videoconference and Teleconference

ATTENDANCE: Lisa Shanahan, Chair; Josh Goldstein, Johan Lopez, Nora Niedzielski-Eichner, Jalin Sead

OTHERS: Atty. Brian Candela, Council Member Nicole Eaddy (7:30 p.m.), Council Member Jim Frayer (7:30 p.m.), Atty. Adam Blank, Garrett Bolella, P.E., PTOE, Assistant Director, Diane Lauricella

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Shanahan called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC HEARING
(possible action)

There was no public hearing needed at this time.

PUBLIC HEARING DISCUSSION

There was no discussion at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Diane Lauricella of Little Fox Lane, greeted the Committee and said that she wished to comment on two of the items on the agenda.. She thanked the Council, the Committee and the administration for moving the Complete Streets program forward.

Ms. Lauricella said that she agreed with Council Member Niedzielski-Eichner comments at the last meeting about having a member of the Council on the Committee. She expressed concerns regarding past Planning and Zoning chairs ignoring the public and noted that the Planning and Zoning Commissioners are not elected. She would like to see at least two elected officials on the committee and she added that some BOE members should also be included.

Regarding progress reporting mentioned in 1-9, Ms. Lauricella said that she felt that amount of \$50,000 was too high a threshold for requiring Council approval and that it should be reduced to \$25,000. She would like the Committee to reconsider the amount and cut it in half.

Ms. Lauricella then spoke about her concerns regarding Chapter 90, Public Works involving the collection and disposal of solid waste in accordance the State statutes. She noted that there was no mention of reduction or recycling in the current solid waste statutes. There should be something included about identifying, assessing and reducing waste streams or energy efficiency.

In Section 90-2, she pointed out that the Chief would no longer need to be a licensed, professional engineer. This is an important and administrative position and needs to have qualifications due to the amount of engineering work that the position is involved with.

Ms. Lauricella asked why Items B and C were crossed out in Section 9-7 which involves record keeping. She also wished to know where these records would be located and who would be accountable for them for the public and the Council.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

• September 3, 2024 Minutes

**** COUNCIL MEMBER GOLDSTEIN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE SEPTEMBER 3, 2024 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OLD BUSINESS

• Discuss and vote on the City of Norwalk Complete Street ordinance.

Council Member Shanahan said that Council Member Goldstein had been coordinating the work on the ordinance. Council Member Goldstein replied that Council Member Shanahan had been also very helpful in bringing this item forward.

Council Member Goldstein spoke about the fact that there were not many changes since it was last discussed. There have been meetings with TMP and DPW about this ordinance.

Atty. Candela then displayed the document with the changes noted on screen.

Council Member Goldstein noted that there was one definition that was changed and many of the other changes were simply grammatical corrections. He then proceeded to review the details of these changes with the Committee members.

Council Member Goldstein noted that the \$50,000 threshold was set at that level so that the department would report on larger infrastructure projects. Mr. Bolella explained that was intended for end of year reporting and this threshold allows for the installation of a crosswalks, sidewalks or curb cuts without having to go to the Council for permission.

Council Member Shanahan commented that this ordinance had been discussed with TMP, DPW, Corporation Counsel and the Mayor's Office. Council Member Goldstein agreed and said that there had been input from City staff and outside stakeholders as well like the Bike/Walk Commission. Council Member Shanahan explained that Planning and Zoning had also discussed the definitions for DPW and Complete Streets.

The Committee then continued to review the proposed changes and edit the document. The discussion moved to potentially changing the 30 day deadline. Council Member Goldstein said that it would be important to have a deadline and if there were problems, they could extend the deadline if necessary.

Council Member Niedzielski-Eichner felt that there should be a public hearing on the first design guide, which will change the timing. She said that there was one for the amendments. Council Member Goldstein pointed out that the design guide was a very technical document. Mr. Bolella agreed. Discussion followed about adjusting the language. Atty. Candela noted the changes in the document.

Council Members Frayer and Eaddy joined the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

The discussion returned to the editing of the document.

Council Member Niedzielski-Eichner asked for clarification on how this program would relate to Public Transit. Mr. Bolella said that they could be more strongly connected and listed a number of items, such as walkability and lighting. The program will support transit and can be expanded in the future. Discussion followed.

Council Member Niedzielski-Eichner expressed her concern about Council participation on Complete Streets. She said that having Council Members part of the conversation for the larger capital projects would be important in terms of accountability.

Council Member Goldstein said that the Committee was functioning as a review board. He noted that this was a case by case review of the items. By having elected officials on the board, it removes a level of political lobbying. Council Member Shanahan pointed out that participating on the review board requires a level of expertise and that the Review Board would be handling exceptions to the rules. There are places for public accountability through DPW and other committees. Council Member Goldstein said that if in the future, they felt that they needed to change something, they can amend the ordinance. He hoped that the exceptions would be rare and not used to delay projects. Discussion followed.

Council Member Frayer commented that the level of excitement is fairly high.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER GOLDSTEIN MOVED TO SCHEDULE THIS ITEM FOR A PUBLIC HEARING AT THE OCTOBER MEETING.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

NEW BUSINESS

• Discuss and vote on Chapter 90, Department of Operations and Public Works, Section 90-1 through 90-12

Council Member Goldstein said that Section 90 concerns itself with Department of Operations and Public Works. He also spoke about how the Complete Streets Ordinance was included.

Atty. Candela then displayed the document with the changes noted on screen.

Council Member Goldstein reviewed Section 90-2 regarding the need for a professional engineer in the section. Council Member Shanahan said that she would speak with the DPW Director and the Mayor about this. The discussion then moved to the requirements for notifications being published in the newspaper. Atty. Candela said that he was reviewing some of the legal requirements for DPW for accuracy.

Council Member Shanahan noted that they were still working on Section 90-6, which involves the Complete Streets. Council Member Goldstein indicated where the new ordinance would change the process.

Council Member Goldstein reviewed the requirement for the TPM signing off on projects and noted that requiring that staff member to be an engineer would be helpful.

Council Member Niedzielski-Eichner said that it would be good to get feedback from DPW about these changes. Discussion followed.

Council Member Shanahan said they could invite everyone to the next Ordinance Committee meeting on October 15th. She said that this was basically an chance to introduce these changes to the Council Members. This item will go to the Mayor's Office and to DPW for comments on all the changes.

Council Member Goldstein noted that the Committee should consider reviewing some of the ordinances that have not been updated in years.

• Discuss and vote on the draft resolution concerning Sportech Venues, Inc. d/b/a Winners

Council Member Sead said that this company was in his District. Currently, the ordinance does not allow the betting venue to place bets on Sundays. He said that it would be important to allow the business to operate on Sunday.

Atty. Blank said that he was present to answer any questions or concerns. Council Member Shanahan said that they would adopt the resolution and forward it to the full Council. Council

Member Goldstein said that there had been other municipalities have changed their ordinances to allow them to operate on Sunday.

Council Member Goldstein asked how many jobs were involved and what kind of revenue was generated. Atty. Blank said that currently, this would involve four employees and when the bets are placed on site, the City receives revenue. When the bets are placed via the app, the City does not receive any revenue. He added that there were plans to upgrade and renovate the building by the owner.

Council Member Sead thanked the Committee for considering this and noted that it was important to support businesses He said he was excited to hear that the building was going to be renovated.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE DRAFT RESOLUTION CONCERNING SPORTECH VENUES, INC. D/B/A WINNERS.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DISCUSSION ITEM

There were no items to consider at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NIEDZIELSKI-EICHNER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services