

CITY OF NORWALK
TRAFFIC AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE
DECEMBER 16, 2024

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Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via e-mail in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Ben Yeung at byeung@norwalkct.gov to provide written comments prior to the meeting.

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Rilling; Commissioner Tony Lopez; Commissioner Ronald Paladino; Commissioner Nate Sumpter

STAFF: Benjamin Yeung, Senior Traffic Engineer, TMP; Chief James Walsh, Deputy Chief Terry Blake; Deputy Chief Joseph Dinho; Deputy Chief Melissa Lepore; Nathan Fankhanel, Junior Engineer, TMP

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public participation.

III. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NOVEMBER 18, 2024

**** COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. APPROVE THE BOSTON BUILDUP 10K SUNDAY JANUARY 5TH, 2025

- **Highland Avenue from Roton Middle School Driveway to Wilson Avenue**
- **Wilson Avenue from Highland Avenue to Bluff Avenue**
- **Bluff Avenue from Wilson Avenue to Westmere Avenue**
- **Westmere Avenue from Bluff Avenue to S Beach Drive**
- **S Beach Drive from Westmere Avenue to Crescent Beach Road**
- **Crescent Beach Road from Captains Walk to Ensign Road**
- **Ensign Road from Crescent Beach Road to Gull Road**
- **Gull Road from Ensign Road to Pine Point Road**
- **Pine Point Road from Gull Road to Roton Avenue**
- **Roton Avenue from Pine Point Road to Wilson Avenue**
- **Wilson Avenue from Roton Avenue to Indian Spring Lane**
- **Indian Spring Lane from Wilson Avenue to Hunt Street**
- **Hunt Street from Indian Spring Lane to Rowayton Avenue**
- **Rowayton Avenue from Hunt Street to Woodchuck Lane**
- **Woodchuck Lane from Rowayton Avenue to Flax Hill Road**
- **Flax Hill Road from Woodchuck Lane to Highland Avenue**
- **Highland Avenue from Flax Hill Road to Roton Middle School Driveway**

Mayor Rilling asked if this event had been held in the past. Mr. Yeung said “yes” and that it is a reoccurring event and is a 10K road race in the Rowayton neighborhood and is scheduled for Sunday, January 5, 2025. Deputy Chief Dinho said he has not yet spoken to Mr. Gerwick but that the event is a reoccurring event that happens each year with no issues.

Commissioner Paladino asked what the timeline of the event is. Mr. Yeung said it will begin at 9:00 AM with the setup at 8:00 AM and will end at 11:00 AM at the latest.

Mayor Rilling asked if the route is the same as has been used in the past. Mr. Yeung said “yes”.

Commissioner Sumpter asked for clarification on where the porta-johns will be located. Mayor Rilling asked how long after the event the porta-johns be removed. Mr. Gerwick said they have not used porta-johns in the past and have utilized the school's restrooms so he will need to amend the special event permit application.

Chief Walsh asked if the event organizer was aware that he would need to hire police officers because there are several key intersections throughout the race route that will need to be covered. Mr. Gerwick said “yes” as they have in the past. Chief Walsh said Deputy Chief Dinho would be in contact with him tomorrow to arrange that.

Commissioner Lopez said that the special event application, states that it has not yet been reviewed and approved by the Police Department, DPW, or TMP. Mr. Gerwick said he anticipates that the departments will sign off on the event this week and they would need to sign off on the event before a permit is issued.

**** COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM CONTINGENT ON RECEIVING APPROVAL FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, DPW, AND TMP BEFORE THE EVENT.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. APPROVE THE CONVERSION OF LAURA STREET & AUSTIN STREET TO ONE-WAY

- **Laura Street Southbound from Ely Avenue to Austin Street**
- **Austin Street Eastbound from Ely Avenue to Lexington Avenue**

Mr. Yeung said the South Norwalk Elementary School is currently under construction and a majority of the students that will be attending this elementary school are going to be within walking distance, so TMP has been tasked with building out a well-connected pedestrian sidewalk network in this area and have been successful in securing a good amount of ARPA and grant funding for the construction of these sidewalks. One of the locations that lacked sidewalks or were disconnected at a certain point was along Laura and Austin streets and wanted to install sidewalks at this location however, during the walkthrough they noticed there was a very high demand for on-street parking on both of these streets and there is a limited right of way, so the solution was to convert the current two-way streets to one-way streets for certain segments so they would be able to accommodate the sidewalks and keep on-street parking. He said that a public meeting was held and approximately 15 people had attended, and notices were given out in both English and Spanish for the public meeting and they have had several conversations with the affected property owners on these streets, and so far, have not received any opposition. He said they have also spoken to the Common Council members in this area, and they are also in support. He said to recap they are proposing to build out a sidewalk network on Laura and Austin Streets and to do so will need to convert a short segment of these two streets to one-way streets from Ely Avenue to Austin Street and one-way on Austin Street to Snowden Street.

Commissioner Sumpter asked if there are currently sidewalks in the area. Mr. Yeung said “yes” on certain portions but in the sections, they are proposing the street direction conversion there are currently no sidewalks and there will be a lot of students for the new elementary school and the only way to get to the school from these streets is by car or walking, so to help give them options and promote the complete streets philosophy which has recently been enacted they want to build out this well-connected sidewalk network so students and parents have the option to walk to school. Commissioner Sumpter asked if the sidewalks would be on both sides of the street. Mr. Yeung said “yes” and will also maintain on-street parking on both sides of the street, but the caveat is that now they will be narrowing the travel lane they will not be able to fit two-way traffic.

Mayor Rilling said if not done so already it is critically important to notify EMS and Fire Department, so they are aware of the change. He also said with parking being allowed on both sides of the street, they need to make sure that the ambulance and fire trucks can get through. Mr. Yeung said he believes that conversation has already begun with emergency services but before this is implemented, they will make sure the signage is installed and that emergency services are aware of the changes. He also said they are expecting to have a minimum 14’ travel lane which has been designed to be more than enough room for a

fire truck to traverse. Commissioner Lopez asked if these streets were on a bus route. Mr. Yeung said it may be a bus route for other schools and converting this to one way should make bus and fire truck traffic simpler and safer.

Commissioner Sumpter asked once the changes are made how people will be made aware of the change to a one-way street. Mr. Yeung presented a map of the changes and said there will be do not enter signs installed in the curb extension which will make it very obvious that the section on Austin Street past that will be one-way in the other direction, so it should work well to deter any drivers accidentally going the wrong way.

Mr. Yeung noted that the item listed as the proposed one-way conversion on Austin Street from Laura Street to Lexington Avenue should be changed from Laura Street to Snowden Street.

**** COMMISSIONER PALADINO MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONVERSION OF LAURA STREET & AUSTIN STREET TO ONE-WAY.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

C. APPROVE OSTA LETTER FOR REDUCTION FROM 30 MPH SPEED LIMIT TO 25 MPH SPEED LIMIT IN THE LAURA AND AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD.

- Ely Avenue from Mulvoy Street to Laura Street
- Laura Street from Ely Avenue to Austin Street
- Austin Street from Ely Avenue to Lexington Avenue
- Lexington Avenue from Ely Avenue to Knapp Street
- Knapp Street from Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard to Oxford Street
- Oxford Street from Knapp Street to Meadow Street Extension
- Meadow Street Extension from Oxford Street to Meadow Street

Mr. Fankhanel said this is in the same neighborhood as the last item and in conjunction with the sidewalk project they are also requesting a reduction in the speed limit from 30 MPH to 25 MPH on the streets listed in the Laura Street and Austin Street neighborhoods in an effort to lower speeds considering there will be more students and pedestrian traffic in the area.

**** COMMISSIONER LOPEZ MOVED TO APPROVE OSTA LETTER FOR A REDUCTION FROM 30 MPH SPEED LIMIT TO 25 MPH SPEED LIMIT IN THE LAURA AND AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

V. ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd