

CITY OF NORWALK
TRAFFIC AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE
OCTOBER 21, 2024

Members of the public can call in and listen to a meeting. They will not be able to speak or see any of the meeting participants. Each meeting will use a unique Meeting/Webinar ID. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to provide “live comments” will need to register in advance and use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the “raise your hand indicator” and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to view the meeting, but are not participating, can view a live stream on the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. This stream is delayed by approximately 20 seconds. Please find the information using the link above. The meeting recording and minutes will be posted on the City of Norwalk website within seven (7) days after the meeting.

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 Garrett Bolella at gbolella@norwalkct.gov to provide written comments prior to the meeting.

ATTENDANCE: Commissioner Fran Collier-Clemmons; Commissioner Tony Lopez,
Commissioner Ronald Paladino; Commissioner Nate Sumpter

STAFF: Kyle Benjamin, Traffic Analyst, TMP; Chief James Walsh, Deputy Chief
Terry Blake; Deputy Chief Joseph Dinho; Deputy Chief Melissa Lepore;
Daniel Stanton, Senior Engineer, DPW; Benjamin Yeung, Senior Traffic
Engineer, TMP

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

1. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2024

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. APPROVE THE PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2025

****COMMISSIONER PALADINO MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. APPROVE THE FULL ROAD CLOSURE FOR THE 2024 ELECTION JEFFERSON SCHOOL VOTING LOCATION ON NOVEMBER 5, 2024.

Mr. Benjamin said the Registrar of Voters came to the Traffic Department stating they will be using Jefferson School as a voting location for the upcoming election on November 5, 2024, and there will be officers on site for traffic control and a shuttle service from the parking lot. He said they did have a safety concern on Grandview Avenue because some vehicles move down the street quickly to get to the highways which TMP has confirmed, so they have requested that the street be closed and open to local traffic only to make the voters feel safer and it should not affect any residences and TMP supports the request.

Chief Walsh said they have attended many planning meetings for the elections, and this is the first time he has heard of this closure and does see some issues with it because it is in the middle of the road closure and the officers that were hired will be there for security not for traffic control. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if there was a reason that the Police Department was not included in the discussion and planning for this closure before including it on the agenda. Mr. Benjamin said he received this notice last Thursday and it was his understanding that they were going to discuss it with the police, and he understands Chief Walsh's concerns and he concurs with them and can send this request back to the police department to see if it is feasible to do. Chief Walsh said the election is in two weeks and if approved by the commission two additional officers will need to be hired, and the road closures will need to be at Spring Hill Avenue and Prospect Street. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked Mr. Benjamin to make the Registrar of Votes officer aware that street closures such as this for an event involving so many people it is vitally important that they discuss it with the police department before placing it on the agenda for approval.

Chief Walsh asked Deputy Chief Blake if he thought leaving the road open and hiring extra officers to cross the traffic would be more feasible. Deputy Chief Blake said "yes" and that he concurs with that idea. Having one officer assigned to the intersection of Grandview Avenue and VanBuren Avenue would be more appropriate than a road closure because closing the road will fix one problem but will create two other problems. He said the intersection has a large crosswalk, and traffic controls for that crosswalk, and with an officer stationed there the officer can safely cross pedestrian traffic throughout the day and evening.

****COMMISSIONER LOPEZ MOVED TO APPROVE AMENDING THE MOTION TO INCLUDE THE HIRING OF POLICE OFFICERS TO BE STATIONED AT THE CROSSWALK ON GRANDVIEW AVENUE TO SAFETY PATROL PEDESTRIAN CROSSING TO AND FROM THE SCHOOL PARKING LOT, AND LEAVE TRAFFIC FLOW OPEN AND NOT INHIBIT ANY SUCH TRAFFIC FROM GETTING TO THE POLLING STATIONS SUBJECT TO THE NORWALK POLICE DEPARTMENTS REVIEW OF ANY POTENTIAL BOTTLENECK THAT MAY UNDERMINE THE TRAFFIC FLOW TO THE VOTING POLLS.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. APPROVE THE FULL CLOSURE FOR DPW'S LOCKWOOD LANE DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS FROM DECEMBER 12, 2024, TO DECEMBER 30, 2024

Mr. Stanton said that 300' will be closed from George Avenue from Lockwood Lane to Byselle Road to perform a needed drainage improvement project in that neighborhood. He presented the detour map and said the detour route was proposed by the contractor and has been reviewed by TMP, DPW, and Deputy Chief Blake. Commissioner Lopez asked if there is a way to make people aware that when traveling on George Avenue they will be diverted back to East Avenue. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons agreed and said there needs to be a sign installed for people traveling north on Strawberry Hill Avenue as well as on East Avenue.

Commissioner Paladino asked if the affected homes had been notified. Mr. Stanton said "no" because the affected homes would still have access. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if the work is planned from December 16, 2024, to December 30, 2024. Mr. Stanton said they would like to amend those dates from January 6, 2025, to January 31, 2025, and recognize this work is being proposed during the winter months and weather permitting but will not keep the road closed any longer than they would need to. Commissioner Lopez asked if that time could be reduced. Mr. Stanton said that based on the productivity and the risk of weather feels comfortable with requesting this duration of time. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons recommended that the motion be tabled until the commission receives a better-constructed letter that reflects all the intentions, and a special meeting can be scheduled if needed due to timing because as presented it does not reflect everything that needs to be done as far as detours and resident notification. Commissioner Lopez asked if there has been coordination with DPW and the Norwalk Hospital regarding the detour. Mr. Stanton said "Yes", and there is a universal road closure email that is generated that copies a significant number of staff. Commissioner Lopez asked if there would be police for traffic control. Mr. Stanton said "Yes". Deputy Chief Blake said the original dates would be in serious conflict to have that road closed with the holiday traffic specifically for the exit from Stew Leonard's that forces traffic to George Avenue.

****COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE AMENDING THE MOTION TO CHANGE THE DATES FROM DECEMBER 16, 2024, TO DECEMBER 30, 2024, TO JANUARY 6, 2025, TO JANUARY 31, 2025, AND A LETTER BE SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION FOR APPROVAL THAT REFLECTS THE CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE ROAD CLOSURES AND DETOURS.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. APPROVE THE “15-MINUTE” PARKING REGULATION ON COVE AVENUE

Mr. Yeung said that TMP had received a request from the Norwalk Police Department for two 15-minute parking spaces which would only be enforced during the daytime hours from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday through Saturday and will not be metered and will only be time-limited. This will be to support sufficient parking turnover for the local businesses. He said that TMP thinks the request is valid and has done some door-to-door outreach for every business and residence on both sides of the street for the entire block and has not received any complaints thus far. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if there were any concerns from the Police Department. Chief Walsh said “No”.

****COMMISSIONER PALADINO MOVED TO APPROVE THE “15-MINUTE” PARKING REGULATION ON COVE AVENUE.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. APPROVE THE OSTA LETTER FOR SPEED LIMIT CHANGES AND A SCHOOL ZONE ON STRAWBERRY HILL AVENUE

Mr. Yeung said the intent is to set a consistent state-approved speed limit for all of Strawberry Hill Avenue which will be from Winfield Street to Wolfpit Avenue and due to the schools that are on Strawberry Hill Avenue there are a lot of pedestrian bicyclists activity along the road, and speed is one of the major concerns so would like to set a 25 MPH speed limit along the entire length of Strawberry Hill Avenue, and while they don’t have an OSTA or state-approved school zone currently in this area, going forward would like to establish one so the proposal does not include the school zone per se, but will set them up for doing further investigation into enhanced school zone measures. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if there were any concerns from the Police Department. Chief Walsh said “No” and anywhere that speeds can be reduced in Norwalk will be a benefit.

****COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE OSTA LETTER FOR SPEED LIMIT CHANGES AND A SCHOOL ZONE ON STRAWBERRY HILL AVENUE.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7. APPROVE THE OSTA LETTER FOR SPEED LIMIT CHANGES IN THE ROWAYTON AREA

Mr. Yeung said this is to make the speed limits consistent with what drivers are already doing or what they should be doing, the two key roads are Bluff Avenue and Old Trolley Way, and would like to establish a 25 MPH speed limit along the neighborhood and have all the streets be consistently a 25 MPH zone as part of that goal. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if there were any concerns from the Police Department. Chief Walsh said “No”. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons said some years ago a four-way stop was installed at Witch Lane and Old Trolley Lane and also a 15 MPH speed limit on the curve that comes down Witch Lane and invariably people are going more than 15 MPH and do not stop at the stop sign and her concern is that there is going to be an accident and asked what can be done about that. Mr. Yeung said that staff can investigate some traffic calming measures that can be done and enhance the visibility of the stop sign. Mr. Benjamin requested that Commissioner Collier-Clemmons submit her concerns via e-mail to him and Mr. Yeung and they will submit a customer service request.

****COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE OSTA LETTER FOR SPEED
LIMIT CHANGES IN THE ROWAYTON AREA.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

****COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**
The meeting was adjourned at 5:08PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd