

CITY OF NORWALK
TRAFFIC AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE
MARCH 17, 2025

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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 Fran Collier-Clemmons; Commissioner Nate Sumpter

STAFF: Chief James Walsh; Deputy Chief Terry Blake; Deputy Chief Melissa Lepore; Deputy Chief Joseph Dinho; Nathan Fankhanel, Junior Engineer, TMP; Ben Yeung, Senior Engineer, TMP; Vanessa Valadares, Chief of Operations and Public Works, Wilber Giron Senior Engineer, DPW; Dan Stanton, Senior Engineer, DPW

OTHERS: Brad Craighead; Councilman Johan Lopez; Willard Lawless

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM

II. ROLL CALL

Mayor Rilling called the roll, and all those listed in attendance were present.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation this evening.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. February 24, 2025

****COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. APPROVE THE PROPOSED FULL CLOSURE ON PARK STREET BETWEEN LEWIS STREET AND EAST WALL STREET FOR THE EARTH DAY FESTIVAL ON THE NORWALK GREEN.

Mr. Lopez said he is a member of the organizing committee for the Earth Day Festival, and the proposal is to have a full closure between Park Street, Lewis Street, and East Wall Street. He said he has been assisting Mr. Craighead in satisfying all the requirements for the proposal. He submitted the traffic and detour plan proposal to Chief Walsh for review and input, and he recommended three police officers to mitigate any traffic instances. He has also been working with Mr. Yeung from TMP on the traffic plan.

Mr. Craighead provided a brief overview of the event and said it is the fourth time it will be held, and they expect approximately 1,500 to 2,000 people to attend. The event is planned for Saturday, April 26, 2025, from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. They have worked with TMP and Chief Walsh on the traffic plan and proposed detours. They have experience with the flow of both vehicles and pedestrian traffic and some of the issues they had in the past. He said they also have a comprehensive parking plan, which will be included on their website and other promotional materials highlighting where people need to park.

Commissioner Lopez asked if Lewis Street would be open to local traffic. Mr. Craighead said “yes”, and that local traffic could access the entire area except for the front steps of the First Congregational Church. Commissioner Lopez asked if the businesses in the area would have access. Mr. Craighead said “yes” and that there would be full access. Mayor Rilling asked if the

businesses in the area had been notified. Mr. Craighead said not yet but that he would notify them.

Commissioner Sumpter asked what the procedure is for handicapped parking. Mr. Craighead said they had not considered it but suggested it in the exhibitor drop-off and pick-up area.

Commissioner Sumpter asked if handicapped signs would be posted. Mr. Craighead said they could have them posted.

Mr. Craighead said that Chief Walsh has requested one additional police officer this year for crowd control in addition to the three officers for traffic control. Chief Walsh said the request depended on whether alcohol would be served at the event. Mr. Craighead said this was a family event, and although there was a beer garden, which enhanced the festival, only one vendor was selling beer. Mayor Rilling asked if the vendors had their proper liquor licenses. Mr. Craighead said "yes" and that they are city-sanctioned vendors. Mayor Rilling said alcohol should be limited to a particular area. Chief Walsh agreed and said he would speak with Ms. Dixon regarding the special event permit. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if it is anticipated that additional vendors would be selling beer this year at the event. Mr. Craighead said that, as far as he knows, there is only one targeted vendor to sell beer. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons suggested there be a concentrated effort not to allow it to increase to other vendors. Commissioner Lopez asked how the area where the alcohol will be served would be limited. Mr. Craighead said they would meet to review the site plan and report to the commission on the picnic and concentrated areas where the beer would be sold. Mayor Rilling said the liquor commission would often require the designated area to have some fencing so that when people purchase a beer, they would have to stay there to drink it.

****COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**B. APPROVE THE PROPOSED FULL CLOSURE ON RIVER STREET BETWEEN
BURNELL BOULEVARD AND WALL STREET FOR ROCKIN RIVER STREET DERBY
DAY SPECIAL EVENT.**

Mr. Lawless said he owns BJ Ryan's on River Street and is the president of the BJ Ryan's Foundation, and the permits, including the liquor permit for the event, will be under that foundation. He provided an overview of the event and said this is the second year the event will take place. They hope to block off River Street from Wall Street to Burnell Blvd. from 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM and fence off a section of River Street for alcohol consumption. Greer's Southern Table will be participating in the event as well. He said he met with Chief Walsh and will have three police officers present for the event, and LAZ Parking employees will assist with parking.

Mayor Rilling said blocking off River Street is no issue with proper detour signs. Mr. Lawless said he is working with DPW on the detour signs and traffic barrels.

Commissioner Paladino asked how many people are expected to attend the event. Mr. Lawless said they had approximately 500 people last year, and the goal is to have 500-800 this year.

Commissioner Sumpter asked if the only two vendors at the event would be BJ Ryan's and Greer's Southern Table. Mr. Lawless said "yes" for distributing alcohol, but he is trying to get the other restaurants in the area to participate.

Commissioner Lopez asked about the area where alcohol would be restricted. Mr. Lawless said they would be following the same guidelines as last year.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if there is a charge for the event. Mr. Lawless said "no" and noted that it was open to the public.

**** COMMISSIONER PALADINO MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

C. APPROVE THE PROPOSED FULL CLOSURES OF ARBOR DRIVE, SOUNDVIEW AVENUE, LOWE STREET, AND WASHINGTON STREET AT FLAX HILL ROAD AND PARTIAL ROAD CLOSURES OF FLAX HILL ROAD BETWEEN WASHINGTON STREET AND ARBOR DRIVE FOR SNEW WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT PROJECT.

Ms. Valadares said that DPW plans to install sidewalks on the north side of Flax Hill Road between Arbor Drive and Washington Street. Before any roads are paved, DPW contacts the utility companies to make sure they do not have any planned work. In this case, SNEW would like to replace their water main because the current one is old, and they would like to do that before or at the same time the road is paved, and the sidewalks are installed. Because DPW would like to complete this project by the end of this year, they have been working with SNEW and decided to bid on this project as one. The city would pay for its part of the project, which is the paving and sidewalk replacement, and SNEW would pay for the replacement of the water main, but the city would be taking the lead in advertising the project. Alternating one-way travel will need to be in some areas where the contractor will work to replace the water main. When the water main is being connected on the side streets, there will be some closures of no more than a few days, and that is when the detour will be proposed.

Ms. Valadares said she plans to advertise the project by the end of the month. She hopes to break ground in June and complete it by the end of this construction season.

Mayor Rilling asked if the residents would be notified. Ms. Valadares said, "Yes," considering this is a DPW project. They notify the residents who will be affected by the work a few weeks before it begins. There will also be notifications via social media.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons said the sidewalk project has been going very well around Norwalk. It has improved the walkability around the city and has been done with quality work, with few traffic interruptions that she has seen. She commented on the great work being done.

**** COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**D. APPROVE THE ROAD CLOSURES ON HEATHER LANE AND CORY LANE FOR
DPW LOCKWOOD LANE AND HEATHER LANE STORM DRAINAGE
IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.**

Mr. Stanton said he had previously come before the commission to implement one-way traffic on Heather Lane and Cory Lane. The contractor then requested closures in several areas due to the manhole and drainage work needed for the pipe installation. Due to the size of the structure and width of the road, they felt it would be safer to close the road during the day and re-open it to one-way traffic at night and on the weekends. The work would be from 7:00 AM to 5:00 P.M. and the total duration (in days) of each closure would be limited to the durations indicated on the submitted plans. The neighbors in the area have been notified.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**E. APPROVE THE OSTA LETTER FOR THE PROPOSED SCHOOL ZONE AND SPEED
LIMIT CHANGES ON PERRY AVENUE AT SILVERMINE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.**

Mayor Rilling said the Traffic Authority would send OSTA a letter requesting the speed limit be changed from 25 MPH to 20 MPH.

****COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**F. APPROVE THE OSTA LETTER FOR THE PROPOSED SCHOOL ZONE AND SPEED
LIMIT CHANGES ON WEST ROCKS ROAD AT ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC SCHOOL,
WEST ROCKS MIDDLE SCHOOL, AND WINSTON PREPARATORY SCHOOL.**

Mr. Fankhanel said this will be installed at the same time as the sidewalk project planned for West Rocks Road.

**** COMMISSIONER LOPEZ MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VI. ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd