

CITY OF NORWALK
TRAFFIC AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE
May 20, 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 Garrett Bolella at gbolella@norwalkct.gov to provide written comment prior to the meeting.

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Rilling; Commissioner Collier-Clemmons; Commissioner Sumpter

STAFF: Chief James Walsh; Deputy Chief Melissa Lepore, Deputy Chief James Dinho; Kyle Benjamin, Traffic Analyst; Nathan Fankhanel, Junior Engineer, TMP.; Benjamin Yeung, Senior Traffic Engineer, TMP.

OTHERS: Tanner Thompson, Chair, Bike/Walk Commission, Ben Hanpeter

CALL TO ORDER

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Cece said she understands the request came from a resident for the “no parking” regulation on Myrtle Street and realizes they are trying to remedy a safety issue but wants to be sure we are not correcting one problem and creating another, especially when there is a potential pending zoning application for a significant use on Norden Place. She said she is concerned that the traffic may find it to be a better route by using Myrtle Street. She said she also spoke with another resident and there is still a sightline concern at the top of Strawberry Hill Avenue with the parked cars along Strawberry Hill Avenue and suggested that be investigated.

Ms. Cece said she did send an email to the Bike/Walk Committee regarding the open streets event and while she thinks it is a wonderful event she has a lot of concerns about it being held on a Saturday in June and suggested it be moved to the fall.

Ms. Cece said that she would like to see TMP’s recommendation for modifying the intersection on Fifth Street @ Strawberry Hill Ave on a future Traffic Authority agenda for discussion. She said the Traffic Authority and the past Police Chief had supported looking at a roundabout as opposed to any other solution, and she hopes that nothing has advanced through TMP beyond a possible conception and design.

1. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF APRIL 15, 2024

Change “Mr. Benjemin” to “Mr. Benjamin” throughout.

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

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. APPROVE THE PARTIAL ROAD CLOSURE FOR CALF PASTURE BEACH OPEN STREETS EVENT ON JUNE 1, 2024, FROM 6:30AM TO 3:30PM

Mayor Rilling asked which part of the beach will be closed to traffic. Mr. Thompson said this request was presented to the Traffic Authority approximately two months ago as the event was scheduled to take place on the Saturday following the I-95 closure. He said the southbound lane of Beach Road will have one lane open in both directions, and the northbound lanes will be open for walking and biking, but not to car traffic. Mayor Rilling asked if the parking for Ripka’s will be affected. Mr. Benjamin said “no” that will not be affected. Mr. Thompson noted that there have been no changes to the traffic pattern since it was originally presented to the Traffic Authority.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked what the hours of the event are. Mr. Thompson said the event is four hours and they are advertising to the public the hours of 9:00AM to 1:00PM., but the approval they are seeking today is a closure from 6:30AM to 2:30PM. Commissioner Collier-Clemmons said the motion

is seeking approval for the hours of 6:30AM to 3:30PM. Mr. Hanpeter said the cleanup should not take more than 1 1/2 hours so they should be done by 2:30PM.

Commissioner Sumpter asked if the police would be present for traffic control. Mr. Thompson said the last time they presented to the Traffic Authority they requested three officers, but the police department requested five officers and a supervisor. Chief Walsh confirmed that the jobs for the extra officers have been posted.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if there were any issues with the traffic the last time the event was held. Chief Walsh said “no”.

Mayor Rilling said he understands Ms. Cece’s concerns and there could be a significant amount of traffic, but this event could possibly be a traffic calming event because people tend to go down Beach Road at a faster rate of speed. He requested that the Police Department provide an after-action report to the Traffic Authority following the event with any concerns that were noted.

**** COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE PARTIAL ROAD CLOSURE FOR CALF PASTURE BEACH OPEN STREETS EVENT ON JUNE 1, 2024, FROM 6:30AM TO 3:30PM.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. APPROVE PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT CHANGE LETTER TO OSTA FOR THE PONUS NEIGHBORHOOD

Mr. Benjamin said a few months ago TMP had requested a change to the speed limit in a few different neighborhoods and this request is along the same lines and is between Ponus Avenue and New Canaan Avenue. He said they have received a few customer service requests from residents in the area regarding speeding in these areas and TMP had investigated and found some minor speeding issues between 25MPH and 30MPH, but the way the roads are designed they are warranted for 25MPH. He said there are no speed limit signs and if approved, they will install 25MPH speed limit signs as a form of speed mitigation in this neighborhood.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT CHANGE LETTER TO OSTA FOR THE PONUS NEIGHBORHOOD.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. APPROVE PROPOSED ‘NO PARKING’ REGULATIONS ON IVY PLACE

Mr. Yeung said that TMP is proposing to create a “no parking anytime” restriction at the Corner of Ivy Place and West Cedar Street. He said this is an issue that had been brought to them by a resident at 164 West Cedar Street that mentioned when coming out of the driveway there are some cars parked along the side of the road which creates some issues with potential head on collisions because Ivy Place particularly at that section is very narrow. He said that TMP had investigated, and the road was found to be approximately 22’ wide and thought it was prudent that parking be eliminated on both sides of Ivy Place just for the 75’ to 85’ section immediately north of West Cedar Street. He said there are already some existing sections of “no parking” further up the street, but there would be plenty of remaining space for on street parking for residents should they have to relocate.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if there has been evidence of people parking around the cul-de-sac. Mr. Yeung said there is already “no parking anytime” restriction in the island so the existing restriction will remain in place, and they will possibly be reinforcing that restriction with additional signage.

Commissioner Collier-Clemmons asked if the 25’ parking restriction as Ivy Place enters Taylor Avenue is already in effect. Mr. Yeung said the citywide ordinance is in effect there for those particular corners so they will be reinforcing that ordinance with “no parking anytime” signs.

Mayor Rilling said some of the streets in that area, such as Nash Place, are relatively narrow and thinks it would be advisable to investigate the area for other potential issues that may arise because of the way other people are parking.

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE PROPOSED ‘NO PARKING’ REGULATIONS ON IVY PLACE.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. APPROVE THE PROPOSED “NO PARKING” REGULATIONS ON MYRTLE STREET

Mr. Benjamin said that TMP has received some customer service tickets regarding parking in front of 44 Myrtle Street causing vehicles to move into the center of the road which is causing the possibility of collisions. He said he looked at the crash data and there was a collision a few years ago which was a head on collision that did result in a possible injury, so based on that collision and what they have seen there it does make sense to eliminate some parking which should help to mitigate that issue.

Mr. Benjamin said to Ms. Cece’s point regarding trucks turning down Myrtle Street TMP will look at that but there are already speed humps along Myrtle Street which he believes would disincentivize through traffic especially trucks on that street, but again will take a larger look especially as part of the Fitch Street @ Strawberry Hill Avenue concepts that they are doing at that intersection. He said this plan should help to mitigate crashes and they don’t believe it will incentivize trucks to go down the street any further.

Mayor Rilling said it is very dangerous to pull out of Myrtle Street onto Strawberry Hill Avenue. Mr. Benjamin said that TMP will look at that but believes the parking that is on Strawberry Hill Avenue creates more of a safe zone for cars to pull up and look down the sight line on either side. Mayor Rilling said that people exceed the speed limit on Strawberry Hill Avenue quite regularly, so something also needs to be done in that regard.

****COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED “NO PARKING” REGULATIONS ON MYRTLE STREET.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. APPROVE THE PROPOSED “NO PARKING” REGULATIONS ON MONTEREY PLACE

Mr. Fankhanel said this item was brought to TMP’s attention via a customer service ticket and the intersection of Monterey Place @ Grove Street is only 26’ across and is too narrow for cars to park on both sides of the street. He said they are only requesting lengthening the 25’ corner ordinance to approximately 60’ and install signage.

****COMMISSIONER SUMPTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED “NO PARKING” REGULATIONS ON MONTEREY PLACE.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER COLLIER-CLEMMONS MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:37PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd