

**CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 4, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: Tanner Thompson, Chair; Emily Burnaman; Nicholas Pappas; Christine Bisceglie; Manuel Salgado

STAFF: Greg Pacelli, Transportation Planner

OTHERS: Ben Hanpeter; Shari Brennan; Jahliah Green

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone, Zoom, and/or the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at <http://www.norwalkct.org/meetings>.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:05PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Burnaman introduced Mr. Ford and said that they had met at the Gratitude on Green event, and he runs an organization called Pray for Peace and she wanted to give him the opportunity to speak to the Bike/Walk Commission about opportunities to do the walks that he has been doing around Norwalk and across the country.

Mr. Ford said he has been organizing Pray for Peace walks since 2008 and the sole purpose of the walks is to spread the message of praying for peace and the walks vary in size from three people to 50 people and would like to partner with the Bike/Walk Commission. Mr. Thompson said if the walk will require closing a road to car traffic as that would need to be approved by the Traffic Authority, but if it is a smaller group that will be on the sidewalk it could be self-organized but he does not know if this is related enough for the Bike/Walk Commission to sponsor this in particular because there is a religious element and asked if there is a specific request. Mr. Ford said he would like to organize a walk that would go from Norwalk to Darien to Stamford and another one from Greenwich to Stamford and would be called the Fairfield County Pray for Peace walk. Mr. Thompson said the Bike/Walk Commission can advise on matters having to do with walking and biking and have done events to raise awareness about pedestrian safety and to encourage people to walk and bike for recreation and for transportation, asked Mr. Ford what type of support he is looking for. Ms. Burnaman the areas that Mr. Ford has proposed for the walking event is along route 1 where there may not be sidewalks and may not be a safe place for walkers to be and asked if the commission can advise him on routes to take. Mr. Thompson said he does not know

if that can be done in an official capacity, but the members may be able to help independently with that. Ms. Burnaman asked if the commission can help to promote the event. Mr. Thompson said they can cross promote if there is a website or social media post. Mr. Ford said that he will put together a clearer request. Mr. Thompson suggested he work with Ms. Burnaman and requested that she keep him updated.

BIKE PARKING STANDARDS- ZONING REWRITE

Mr. Thompson said for the last several months the city has been working to completely rewrite the city's zoning code and Mr. Kleppin had attended a Bike/Walk Commission meeting several months ago and presented a summary of the regulations. He said the new regulations as proposed would require larger multi-family developments to include bike parking and after a certain size would be required to have covered bike parking. He said as a commission he thinks we can lend a little more expertise for stricter standards so that bike parking can be built. He shared a model of a sample legislation which can be adopted, and with the commission's approval he would like to send a recommendation to Planning and Zoning for more detailed bike parking standards which would provide specifications for bike parking that is built at commercial and multifamily developments. He said he is concerned that the regulations as written would allow developments to install bike racks that are not as practical or secure and that are not very accessible. Ms. Burnaman agreed that this is a good conversation to have with Planning & Zoning before it is put into effect.

**** MS. BURNAMAN MOVED TO APPROVE DRAFTING A LETTER TO PLANNING AND ZONING REQUESTING TO IMPROVE THE BICYCLE PARKING STANDARDS IN THE ZONING CODE INCLUDING A REFERENCE TO THE MODEL ORDINANCE FOR THEM TO USE AS A GUIDANCE AND INCLUDING A LIST OF THE PRIORITIES THAT MR. THOMPSON OUTLINED.**

**** MS. BISCEGLIE SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Thompson provided a brief overview of the agenda.

CT DEEP RECREATIONAL TRAILS GRANT

Mr. Pacelli said the Fairfield County Bike Partnership is a collection of cities along the I-95 corridor and is looking to create a bike network along the eastcoast greenway. Earlier this year Greenwich in cooperation with Stamford had put in for recreational trails grant for a feasibility study for a multi-use path in between Old Greenwich and Stamford and were awarded a grant for this. He said that Mr. Thompson requested that a grant application be done for this year for the recreational trails grant and is something the city would like to apply for but due to the amount of work that is going on within the TMP department he suggested that the commission take on most of the lift of the application. He said last year the application period closed on March 1st and suggested a working group within the commission to put together the grant application and as part of this would need to coordinate with Darien to create the connection and TMP would help with the application where necessary and assist with the completion of the application.

Mr. Thompson shared the application from last year that Greenwich and Stamford had done and said this application and it is a fair amount of work that he is not sure the commission has done in the past, but he

is interested in doing a little more work to determine how feasible it is. It was decided that the commission begin working on the application. Mr. Pacelli suggested that the commission review last year's application and a major component is an educational component and if any assistance is needed from TMP they would just need enough time to do their portion. Mr. Thompson volunteered to be the networker and connect the people and he has already contacted Darien to see if someone can champion this and asked if there is someone on the commission that can take on the organizational piece and essentially be the project manager. Ms. Burnaman asked if this is something the NRVt can get involved in as they have a grant writer. Mr. Thompson said their support would be welcomed and suggested contacting them for their advice and potentially for help, but the project manager should be someone on the commission. Ms. Burnaman volunteered to be the project manager.

BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE EDUCATION MATERIALS UPDATE

Ms. Burnaman provided a brief update and said they have formed the educational subcommittee, and it includes herself, Ms. Bisceglie, Mr. Salgado; and Ms. Green and they have also connected with someone who is an injury prevention coordinator from the trauma service and department of surgery at the Norwalk Hospital. She said she will be scheduling a meeting with the team to discuss bike and pedestrian safety and concussion education. Mr. Pacelli said that TMP is happy to assist as well and whenever the first educational posting is done TMP staff would be happy to provide comments so that everything is in alignment and to discuss ways it will be promoted besides on social media such as educational materials to be handed out during events and how it will fit into the strategic plan and asked Mr. Thompson if there are any updates on the Strategic Plan. Mr. Thompson said he would like to revisit it and he drafted the plan for 2023 and received some feedback from the commission and suggested scheduling a meeting to discuss it outside of a regular commission meeting. Mr. Pacelli said he just wants to keep that on the radar as that is something the commission needs to do as it is helpful to what kind of metrics that the commission did or did not achieve this year, and what they aim to do next year and should be updated on an annual basis.

Ms. Bisceglie said that she would like to schedule a meeting on May 18, 2024, to hold the event and she would like to begin to develop a calendar for the meetings that would be required. Mr. Thompson said to attend the Traffic Authority meeting the special event application will need to be done which will require a site and event plan and the next step is to schedule a meeting with Mr. Stowers. Ms. Bisceglie said that she would like to be part of that meeting and she will schedule the meeting.

Ms. Burnaman left the meeting at 7:00PM.

COMMISSION REVIEW AND EXPENDITURES

Mr. Pacelli provided an update on the budget and said that the commission has an \$8,000 budget for the year and there is a balance of \$4,184 and provided an overview of the purchases. Mr. Thompson said he would like to order taillights to match the headlights. Ms. Bisceglie suggested that Sound Cyclists be used for purchases in the future. Mr. Pacelli suggested using some of the funds for educational components and having more of a presence in other city functions and spending money on those events. Mr. Thompson said there is an educational committee as part of the commission and suggested they present a proposal. He also said in past years budgets that money was set aside for promotional materials and event materials for the grand opening celebration for the NRVt and conceivably can do that celebration in the spring

when it opens, and in past years have also allocated budgets to send a member of the commission to the National Bike Summit and had allocated money for Ms. Burnaman to attend. Mr. Hanpeter suggested purchasing an ad that would provide an explanation for the bike facilities that have been installed. Ms. Bisceglie said the pedestrian piece is also important and suggested purchasing safety vests and also suggested being a sponsor for the Business and Tourism events. Mr. Pappas recommended spending money on the open streets event. The commission discussed proposed purchases for the remaining budget for this fiscal year.

There was a discussion to schedule a meeting to discuss the Strategic Plan. Ms. Bisceglie suggested that the current strategic plan be sent to the committee prior to the meeting. Mr. Thompspon requested to see if there is an avenue by which a meeting can be held hybrid at city hall. It was decided that a special meeting will be held on Monday, December 11, 2023, at 6:30PM.

APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 6, 2023, MEETING

The minutes were tabled due to a lack of a quorum.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. BISCEGLIE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. PAPPAS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30PM

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd