

**CITY OF NORWALK
BIKE/WALK COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
December 2, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: Emily Burnaman, Chair; Christine Bisceglie; Nicholas Pappas; Manny Salgado
Becca Stoll

OTHERS: Greg Pacelli; Transportation Planner; TMP; Jahliah Green, Heath Department;
Rick Schreiner, Director of Service Planning, Norwalk Transit District

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

Ms. Burnaman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

At roll call, there were five (5) committee members in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Schreiner introduced himself and said he is the new Director of Service Planning for the Norwalk Transit District and said ten years ago, he worked on the bike plan for Greater Danbury.

CT STATE WELLNESS COMMITTEE AND NORWALK BIKE/WALK PARTNERSHIP

- Brief update on collaboration and activities

Ms. Burnaman said that she and Ms. Green had a kickoff meeting with the wellness team at CT State Community College and are looking forward to doing more activities with the school including the walking path and potentially connecting that to biking, as well as safety courses in the spring.

COMMON COUNCIL REAPPOINTMENTS

- Updates on commission membership status

Ms. Burnaman said the Common Council meeting was held last Tuesday, and she and Mr. Pappas were reappointed, and Ms. Stoll was appointed to the commission.

Ms. Stoll introduced herself and said she lives in East Norwalk has become more of an advocate for pedestrians, scooters, cyclists, and bus users around town, and is excited about being part of making that better for everyone.

TRANSPORTATION, MOBILITY, AND PARKING UPDATES

- Project updates

Mr. Pacelli provided an update and said this past summer TMP has completed the sidewalks in Rowayton which was a transformative project for the Rowayton area. He said they also spent a lot of time around the Fox Run School area and addressed a lot of concerns in the area in coordination with DPW through the paving program and there was great coordination between the two departments. He said that Fillow Street was recently paved and has made improvements to slow vehicle speeds through the area, and also added an additional sidewalk on Fillow Street from Richards Avenue to Little Fox Lane, and improved the sidewalks on Fox Run Road as a continuation to the project that TMP completed last year.

Mr. Pacelli said that a sidewalk segment and retaining wall were installed on Witch Lane, and are also filling a sidewalk gap on Westport Avenue at the intersection of Wolfpit Avenue which is currently under construction. He said a pedestrian island will also be added on Wolfpit Avenue which will shorten the crossing for pedestrians and will be completed by the end of this year. He said in coordination with Westport they will continue the sidewalk in front of Whole Foods to the adjacent crosswalk, and throughout the winter they will be continuing the Wall Street corridor, and Hospital Hill plans and have it out to bid shortly.

Ms. Burnaman asked for the status of the transportation survey that Mr. Benjamin was working on before he left and if that is something the commission can support TMP with. Mr. Pacelli said currently it has been on hold, so he has no update at this time.

ANNUAL MEETING WITH THE MAYOR

- Discussion on meeting and goals for 2025

Ms. Burnaman said she had scheduled a meeting with the mayor and Mr. Livingston and she and Mr. Pappas had reviewed the strategic plan including the accomplishments for this year and outlined the goals and alignments for 2025. She provided an overview of opportunities that were discussed including safe cycling courses and educational materials and the focus in that area as the educational sub-committee grows and continues to collaborate with the different departments in the city. Mr. Pappas said he got the idea that the mayor and Mr. Livingston would offer the commission help and discussed some events they would like to see. Ms. Bisceglie asked if they had mentioned any specific events. Mr. Pappas said “yes” and one, in particular, was the Christmas time bike giveaway that was well received by the public and they provided the contact information on who the event organizers were and will now need to look at the logistics to see if it is feasible to do. Ms. Bisceglie said in the past the police used to give bikes from their auction and suggested using some of the commission’s budget to purchase bicycles. Ms. Burnaman said they had also discussed pop-up events for bike repair opportunities and potentially partnering with a bicycle shop to make them

more reoccurring which is something that CT State would make a good location for the pop-up events site or in the park like was done in the past.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 REVIEW AND 2025 BRAINSTORMING

- Evaluate progress and outline new priorities for the upcoming year.

The committee discussed and reviewed the strategic plan for 2024 and discussed some smart goals for 2025. Ms. Burnaman said her goal is to start putting the list of goals for 2025 together before the next meeting and that she will send the document to the commission to come up with their goals and ideas and review and vote on them at the January meeting.

ACTIVE GRANTS APPLICATION STATUS

- Prepare for upcoming events and community needs for 2025.

Mr. Pacelli provided an update and said the application was successful and the commission was awarded the funds for the Active Transportation Micro Grant. He reminded the commission that the funds from the grant need to be spent and suggested discussing a plan to move forward on the items to be purchased based on the items that were listed in the application that were requested. He said it will be going to the EDC committee meeting for approval on Thursday, and then to the Common Council for approval for the mayor to sign it so the funds should be available in the first quarter of 2025. Ms. Burnaman asked how much was awarded. Mr. Pacelli said 4,788 and there is another solicitation that is due on December 13th. Ms. Burnaman asked Mr. Pappas if he would be able to work on the grant and have it completed by the deadline. Mr. Pappas said where the commission left off was to discuss what would be requested but the commission has not had that discussion and suggested being more strategic on what they are requesting. Mr. Pacelli reminded the commission that that grant has restrictions and is for non-infrastructure-related items. Ms. Bisceglie suggested asking about the costs of covering a mechanic and holding bike repair sessions. Ms. Stoll suggested planning for a bike giveaway or raffle-off helmets/lights. Mr. Pacelli said he would share the current budget status with Ms. Burnaman. Ms. Bisceglie asked if quotes were needed to purchase the items. Mr. Pacelli said “yes” and that at least two quotes would be needed.

EDUCATIONAL SUBCOMMITTEE

- Discuss sponsorship for interested members- Bike League LCI Certification

Ms. Burnaman said the bike co-op used to exist and held bike repair popup events over the summer when Mr. Ebert was on the commission, and the mayor and Mr. Livingston are interested in reviving that opportunity and she would like to discuss that at the next meeting.

Ms. Burnaman said as discussed earlier in the meeting to start the opportunity for bike safety courses which is a big undertaking for the educational subcommittee and are hoping to have bike safety courses at CT State College. Ms. Green said during the meeting with the wellness team they also discussed a new walking path on CT State Norwalk and there is currently and NorWalker map with

two routes landmarked with signage that are not ADA compliant but there is someone who sits on the wellness committee that is in a wheelchair so they are trying to figure out an additional path to add onto the NorWalker map that would be more ADA accessible.

Ms. Burnaman said the League of American Bicyclists certified instructor certification will be held in April in New Haven and she will continue to gauge interest in anyone who would like to attend.

- Filling in the Blanks Tabling and Bike Valet Initiatives

Ms. Burnaman said they have connected with an organization called Filling in the Blanks and are an organization that provides food security to residents in Norwalk and has a bus and holds an event every Saturday in the spring to give away food and has requested the commission do a tabling event because most of their participants attend via walking, biking, or public transportation.

- Upcoming events and bike valet initiatives

Mr. Pappa's said the commission has learned a lot said the start of the bike valet program last year, especially regarding the insurance, and during the meeting with the mayor and Mr. Livingston, he had mentioned they could get a more formal stance as to whether the city insurance is applicable during a private event, as well as contact the event organizers in advance and understanding their expectations is key.

NEW BUSINESS

- Invite Transit District Representatives
- Discuss bus shelters and bike-friendly business application

Ms. Burnaman asked if there is an opportunity for the commission to get involved or collaborate with the Transit District to improve the walkability near the bus shelters across the city. Ms. Bisceglie said it is surprising to her that there is such a lack of covered bus shelters and there are so many people using the bus, especially in the area across from Stew Leonard's. Mr. Schreiner said the state has a new program for bus shelters and benches and is looking for uniformity across Connecticut which is just getting rolled out and they are preparing a list of new shelter locations for the state to go into the program. He said he is aware of the issues for the bus shelter that is located at 527 Main Avenue but there are some complications with that shelter due to the improvements in the area and the footprint but asked if there are other locations. Ms. Bisceglie mentioned the shelter on Westport Avenue near Stew Leonard's. Ms. Burnaman asked what the best way is to provide feedback. Mr. Schreiner said to email him the locations.

APPROVE MEETING MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 4, 2024, MEETING

- ** MR. PAPPAS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.**
- ** MS. STOLL SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. BISCEGLIE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
**** MR. SALGADO SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd